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Manitoba History

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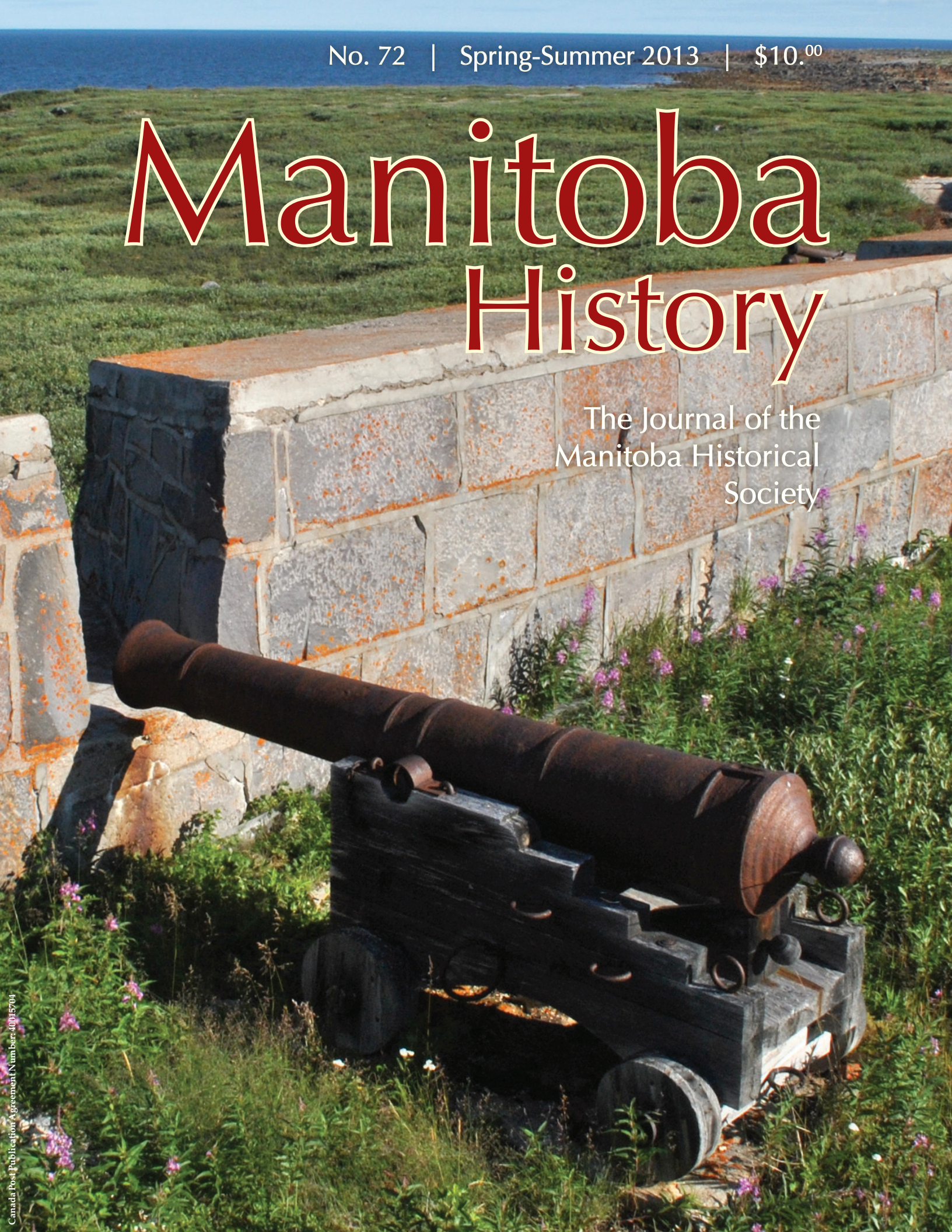

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Cannon at Prince of Wales Fort near Churchill.

Source: Chelsea Synychych, August 2011.

Constructed between 1732 and 1772, Prince of Wales Fort had forty-two cannon mounted along the parapet commanding every approach to the fortress. Without firing a shot, the cannon and the fort were captured and partially destroyed in 1782 by Jean-Francois Compte de La Perouse.

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"Mariposa! Mariposa! And as we listen, the cry grows fainter and fainter in our ears and we are sitting here again in the leather chairs of the Mausoleum Club, talking of the little Town in the Sunshine that once we knew."

Stephen Leacock
Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town (1912)

Reviews

The Guns of Manitoba: How Cannons Shaped the Keystone Province, 1670–1885

by Major David Grebstad
The Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, Toronto

Introduction

The use of artillery pieces is a valuable analytical tool for historians. As expensive, technically-demanding combat equipment, artillery symbolizes a commitment on the part of the employer that is indicative of the importance ascribed to the endeavour. The deployment and employment[1] of cannon in Manitoba during the 17th to 19th centuries is reflective of the political and social evolution of the province. Not only are artillery pieces historical indicators of Manitoba's past, but in many ways the guns of Manitoba were also the authors of its future. This article will demonstrate how the use of artillery ordnance between 1670 and 1885 shaped the course of Manitoba's history.

The Final Argument of Kings

Louis XIV of France, the Sun King, ordered that the motto *Ultima Ratio Regnum*—the Final Argument of Kings—was to be etched into the field pieces of his armies.[2] It may be tempting to dismiss this as mere hyperbole or powdery-wigged, French-baroque machismo, but in reality this act was indicative of the importance then ascribed to artillery ordnance. One could not simply wander about the countryside and find an artillery piece, or "swing by the market" and pick one up. Their construction, transportation, and sustainment with shot and powder, were costly endeavours. Moreover, the technological advances that were required to prevent the piece from exploding and killing everyone around it entailed a hefty price tag. As more and more metal was required to ensure the safety of *employing* the piece, concordantly the weight of the piece increased and thus made it more challenging to *deploy* as well. This eventually led to the requirement for horses to manoeuvre it about, along with an increased number of personnel to service the cannon. Whereas every infantryman could carry his own gunpowder and musket balls, cannon required dedicated transport and storage facilities. To this end, the deployment and employment of cannon during the period in question became cost-prohibitive in terms of money, manpower and munitions for all but the richest kings and countries. In his seminal work on the history of artillery, *Field Artillery and Firepower*, Major General J. B. A. Bailey observed that employment of artillery denotes a certain majesty, if not authority, as it represents the "military power, and the economic strength that pays for it."[3] Only kings, and later States and state-sponsored economic endeavours, had ample treasure to acquire cannons for employment.

Royal Canadian Artillery Museum

A 12-pound cannon used during the South African War (1899–1902) is featured at the Royal Canadian Artillery Museum in Shilo.

Artillerists, cannoneers, gunners—whatever title they assume—are a unique phylum of mankind. It takes a special person to stand beside a steel tube and cause a very large controlled explosion to occur therein. Early cannons were apt to explode, killing the operator, until artillery technology advanced to such a degree as to allow for the safety of the crew firing it. It is no wonder that gunners adopted Saint Barbara as their patron saint; her pagan father was consumed by lightning from the heavens immediately upon beheading her after her conversion to

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Christianity.[4] The robust technical acumen required to employ artillery efficiently meant that those admitted to the fraternity had to be substantially more intellectually competent than the average soldier. Whereas the recruiting standards for infantry musketeers required no more than two opposing teeth to rip open the gunpowder bag[5] and a trigger finger (it appears intellectual capacity was not a criterion), the standard for the artillerymen was more robust. During the Victorian period, Bailey reports, "unlike the officers of other arms of the British Army, officers of the Royal Artillery had to undergo extensive professional training, were promoted on merit, and could not purchase their commissions."[6] Bailey's observation demonstrates how artillerymen were a cut above the average soldier.

Not only are artillery pieces historical indicators of Manitoba's past, but in many ways the guns of Manitoba were also the authors of its future.

The high professional standard associated with artillerymen came at a cost which was somewhat painful to absorb, in particular if there were no immediate wars demanding the artillerist's skills. The Chief Factor at the Hudson's Bay Company post at Albany bemoaned the expense of his artillerymen who paid no dividend during times of peace when he referred to them as "costly and idle specialists."[7] In other words, an artilleryman's skills and knowledge rarely came to the fore until required for actual combat, where they proved critical.

Such factors demonstrate how the use of cannon in Manitoba illustrates the political and social evolution of the province and its people. A cost-benefit analysis of the high cost of acquiring artillery ordnance, the logistical demands of employing and deploying it, and the high standards required of personnel operating it reflects a significant commitment to the endeavour on the part of the employer. When considered in conjunction with the distance from the force generation base—namely Europe—and the primitive transportation networks extant in Manitoba between the 17th and 19th centuries, the deployment of cannon represented a significant economic and political commitment. Sending cannon to Fort Garry from half-way across the world signified a major undertaking.

Beginnings

The early history of Manitoba is inextricably linked to two fur-trading companies, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. The two companies took very different approaches to the fur trade, both physically and philosophically. The Hudson's Bay Company initially preferred setting up shop on the margins of Hudson Bay where native fur traders would come to them along the northern river systems. The Hudson's Bay Company had relative success with this system. As such, situated as they were on the coast, the Hudson's Bay Company forts along the Manitoba margin of Hudson Bay were vulnerable targets for marauding French ships during the numerous conflicts that characterised the 17th and 18th centuries, and therefore required a robust defence. As a result, as early as 1686 two nine-foot-long "great guns" firing nine-pound shot were deployed to the Hudson's Bay Company post on the Hayes River, later to become Fort York.[8] After suffering the privations of French raiders during the latter part of the 17th century, the Hudson's Bay Company decided that, in order to solidify its economic future in the region, some serious investment would be required to maintain its forts. Consequently, the defences at Fort York were improved between 1723 and 1729 to include "two bastions with stone as a defence against fire arms… [and] six *great guns*."[9] Additionally, work on vastly improving the fort on the Churchill River, eventually renamed Prince of Wales Fort, began shortly thereafter. Eventually Prince of Wales Fort was completed as a European-style, star-shaped stone fortress constructed with:

> four bastions connected by curtain walls along which ran boarded runways for guns...*forty-two* cannons were mounted on the walls, and across the river a battery with emplacements for six additional cannons was constructed to aid in closing off the mouth of the river to hostile shipping.[10] [emphasis added]

The six 24-pounder[11] cannons deployed across the Churchill River at what was called the Cape Merry Battery, were delivered by the *Seahorse* in 1744.[12] Building the fort took forty years due to its isolation and the lack of sufficient material in the immediate vicinity. This large deployment of cannon from Europe to the far-flung and desolate outposts of Hudson Bay was a major logistical undertaking that came with a substantial price tag. Such an outlay of treasure and effort reflected a substantial commitment on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company to the development of the Manitoban interior. As E. E. Rich observed in his history of the Hudson's Bay Company, "the first stone fort in the Arctic, accepted as the post-Utrecht period ends in 1730, was the logical culmination of the [company's] resolve to resist French threats and defend their rights against European attacks."[13]

Artillerists … are a unique phylum of mankind. It takes a special person to stand beside a steel tube and cause a very large controlled explosion to occur therein.

The forts as defensive structures did not enjoy complete success for the purpose for which they were intended. Despite the formidable capacity for defensive fire, Prince of Wales Fort and York Factory were captured by the French under the command of Jean-François Galaup, Comte de LaPérouse in 1782. At Prince of Wales Fort the governor, Samuel Hearne, was "stricken with terror by the approach of four hundred Frenchmen"[14] and surrendered the fort without firing a shot. LaPérouse absconded with several of the cannon from Prince of Wales Fort and proceeded to York Factory where the defences "consisted of thirteen cannon, twelve and nine pounders, which formed a half-moon battery in front of the Factory."[15] A contemporary witness described the French assault:

> About 10 o'clock this morning [22 August 1782] the enemy appeared before our gates; during their approach a most inviting opportunity offered itself to be revenged on our invaders by discharging the guns on the ramparts, which must have done great execution; but a kind of tepid stupefaction seemed to take possession of the Governor (Humphrey Martin) at the time of the trial and he peremptorily declared that he would shoot the first man to fire a gun. Accordingly, as the place was not to be defended he, resolving to be beforehand with the French, held out a white flag with his own hand, which was answered by the French officer's showing his pocket handkerchief.[16]

Cannon are only as effective as those who operate them. Both Prince of Wales Fort and York Factory could have inflicted a withering fire upon their assailants, had the defenders put up a fight. Although both forts were returned to Great Britain as part of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, LaPérouse's undermining of the walls, spiking of the guns and destruction of the gun carriages meant Prince of Wales Fort never regained its military prominence.[17]

Whilst the Hudson's Bay Company was building its subarctic redoubts, private fur traders plied the river highways of the interior from Montreal to the prairies. In 1783, a number of these traders united to form the North West Company, and became known colloquially as Nor'Westers. The Nor'Westers dominated the inland St. Lawrence-Great Lakes-Winnipeg River system with *voyageurs* and *bateaux*. They became far more interactive and integrated with the native population.[18] Like their Hudson's Bay counterparts, the Nor'Westers also looked to artillery ordnance to provide firepower defence for their trading posts in the interior. In his journal, North West Company trader Alexander Henry the Younger mentions that in 1808, while in charge of the North West Company post at Pembina, he ordered a carriage built for a Coehorn mortar.[19] The Coehorn was a small, but very effective mortar originally designed in 1720 by the Dutch engineer Baron Meeno van Coehorn and capable of firing up to 800 metres. It proved so effective that the design was still in use during the U. S. Civil War.[20] Such was the nature of the artillery ordnance deployed to the interior at this early date, because the logistical demands of moving any more robust an artillery piece by canoe from the Bay would have been taxing to say the least.

The success of the Nor'Westers' trade in the interior solicited a response from the Hudson's Bay Company who abandoned the previous strategy of coastal fortresses and began dispatching trading parties to penetrate the northwestern interior where they established inland trading posts. This move brought them into direct competition with the North West Company. Until the early 19th century, the fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company had collided solely in the account books, but their destinies were to become far more entwined. Violence and conflict were the result. Consequently, the more deliberate penetration of the interior by the Hudson's Bay Company at the beginning of the 19th century entailed more frequent deployment of cannon. Whereas previously the artillery ordnance in the interior was likely to be smaller and more mobile, like Henry's Coehorn, during the second decade of the 19th century the region of The Forks was to see the arrival of a battery of guns that would be instrumental to the evolution of the province.

The Red River Colony

The story of Lord Selkirk's colonizing of the Red River Settlement is well known and need not be relayed in great detail here. A commonly overlooked element of Selkirk's colonization, however, is the role that artillery ordnance played in it. Selkirk and his subordinates must have had some reason for caution when outfitting their expedition to the Red River. In his seminal work *The Selkirk Settlement and the Settlers,* historian Charles Bell recounted the importance that Selkirk and his appointed governor Miles Macdonnell placed on the requirement for adequate firepower:

> Two old iron swivel guns had been taken from the stores of Lord Seaforth at Stornoway, but [Miles Macdonell], not satisfied with them, asked for some "sound brass pieces," 3-pounders, with carriages, etc., complete. Without doubt these guns were sent, and transported to Red River, for carriages in a state of decay and bearing that date are still to be seen about the old buildings of Fort Garry. A few years after, the Northwest Company took possession of nine cannon stored in the warehouse of Lord Selkirk at what was termed the "Government House," which a few months later became Fort Douglas. These cannon played a very prominent part in the history of the Selkirk settlement from 1811 to as late a date as 1870, when Riel, as President of the Provisional Government, commanded the situation largely through being in possession of them. They are now scattered, most of them being in the custody

> of private individuals who use them to adorn their lawns, or have consigned them to the lumber heaps of their back yards.[21]

Curiously, in *The Story of Manitoba* Frank Schofield states that Macdonnell purchased several small cannons in Yarmouth when bad weather had forced his ship to seek harbour while en route to Stornoway.[22] Regardless of when or where they were acquired, both accounts serve to illustrate the importance that the cannon had in securing the settlement. That Macdonell was insistent on an increased amount of firepower indicates that there was a certain apprehension as to what type of welcome they would receive in Red River. Similarly, the fact that the settlers were committed to shipping up to nine brass field pieces across the Atlantic from Scotland to The Forks, followed by an arduous navigation down the Manitoba river systems, illustrates the level of commitment of the settlers. Once in place in the Red River Settlement, these field pieces were to become critical factors in determining the destiny of Manitoba.

The Red River Settlement was divisive from the very beginning. It sat astride the North West Company trade routes and thus directly challenged the profitability of that company of traders. Although the Settlement was nominally neutral, the fact that Selkirk himself owned a controlling share of the Hudson's Bay Company demonstrates that the colony was more or less an adjunct of the company. Is it any wonder that the Nor'Westers were reticent to live peaceably with their new neighbours?

Tension escalated during the first few years of its existence, exacerbated by the constant threat from the Métis and poor growing seasons. The third draft of settlers, who arrived in July 1814, found the colony filled with "turbulence and uncertainty."[23] The North West Company agents, under Duncan Cameron, struggled to drive the settlers out of the area using a variety of tactics, even offering to provide transport to send the settlers back east. In the spring of 1815, 140 of the 200 settlers took up the offer.[24]

The possession of artillery by the Selkirk settlers and Hudson's Bay personnel meant that Cameron was reluctant to resort to force, as he and his North West Company compatriots had "an abiding fear of [the cannon]."[25] During the spring of 1815, Cameron's allies amongst the settlers (those who would eventually quit the settlement) took advantage of the absence of Miles Macdonell, who had spent the winter on the plains, to break "into the [Hudson's Bay Company] storehouses and [take] to the North West Company post at Fort Gibraltar the field pieces upon which Miles had relied so heavily (and legitimately) for defense."[26] A number of these cannons were dragged away and distributed to various North West Company forts in the region, altering the balance of power.[27] Presumably, the presence of the cannon in the Red River Settlement had deterred any violent behaviour amongst the North West Company and their Métis allies. Once that deterrence was removed, violence escalated. In June, the settlers who had agreed to the Nor'Westers' terms left the settlement in North West Company canoes.[28] For the sixty settlers who remained, "the Métis rode through their crops, burned their houses and finally drove them to their boats" in which they fled north, returning several months later under the guidance of the new Hudson's Bay Company governor, Colin Robertson.[29]

The settlers returned to a generally peaceful setting, and a repaired colony. After they had fled, four Hudson's Bay Company employees had stuck it out in Red River. John McLeod and three colleagues saved the crops, repaired some homes and even rebuilt the governor's house, but only after they beat back a number of Nor'Wester assaults. Here is McLeod's account as related by Schofield:

> The brunt of the struggle was near the [Hudson's Bay Company] post, close to which was our blacksmith's smithy—a log building about ten feet by ten. Being hard pressed, I thought of trying the little cannon (a three or four pounder) lying idle in the post where it could not well be used. One of our settlers (Hugh McLean) went with two of my men, with his cart, to fetch it, with all the cart chains he could get and some powder. Finally, we got the whole to the blacksmith's smithy, where, chopping up the chain into lengths for shot, we opened a fire of chain shot on the enemy which drove back the main body and scattered them, and saved the post from utter destruction and pillage... For many days after we were under siege, living under constant peril; but unconquerable in our bullet-proof log walls, and with our terrible cannon and chain shot.[30]

Shortly after the return of the settlers, the North West Company post at Fort Gibraltar was seized in a bloodless *coup de main* led by Colin Robertson and most of the remaining field pieces were recovered.[31]

The return of the settlers and the recovery of the field pieces caused the balance of power to shift once again and consequently tensions between settlers and Nor'Westers re-escalated. Amongst the settlers, apprehension grew that the Métis were gathering with the intent of driving them off. The tension culminated at the Battle of Seven Oaks on 19 June 1816, where a party of twenty Red River settlers confronted a superior Métis force. The situation degenerated and ended with all but one of the settlers being killed. It is instructive to note that, upon realizing that he was outnumbered, the new governor of the colony, Robert Semple, sent one of his number back to the fort to bring up one of the field pieces. Unfortunately for Semple and his party, he was too impatient, and confronted the Métis without the support of the cannon.[32] The outcome may have been substantially different had Semple and his

colleagues waited to deploy their superior firepower. The Métis proceeded to re-occupy Fort Douglas and the balance of power was restored in their favour, for the time being.

Starting in May 1815, Selkirk wrote repeatedly to the Hudson's Bay Company and the government requesting infantry and artillery support to help protect the colony.[33] The government, under Governor General Drummond, demurred, and it fell to Selkirk to raise a band of mercenaries from among ex-soldiers of Swiss regiments who had fought for the British during the War of 1812 and settled in Canada at the end of hostilities.[34] In June 1815 Selkirk led this little band of reinforcements out of Montreal bound for Red River. This force was able to seize the North West Company at Fort William (present-day Thunder Bay) by surprise and took possession of the two cannon that the Nor'Westers had in their possession. From there, he dispatched a smaller force to seize the North West Company fort at Lac la Pluie (Rainy Lake) and thought of sending the two cannon along with them, only to find that they would be unable to man-handle the cannon across the portages.[35] This small force, under Captain Orsonnes, took the fort at Lac la Pluie with no violence, and eventually made its way to Red River, leaving on 10 December "dragging two brass field pieces mounted on runners with them."[36] In a demonstration of some fortitude, this small force decided against making the journey along the traditional Winnipeg River waterway, and instead struck out across land from Lake of the Woods, pausing at Fort Daer near Pembina, and arriving at Red River on 10 January 1817, all the while dragging their field pieces along the way.[37] Finding that the Nor'Westers and their Métis allies had re-occupied Fort Douglas, but that the post was garrisoned by only 15 men, Orsonnes and his compatriots were able to take the fort by a night-time raid.[38] The arrival of the main body of the Swiss-Canadian force and Lord Selkirk himself at Red River over the next several weeks put an end to the militant to-ing and fro-ing in the settlement. By 1821 the North West Company had been absorbed by the Hudson's Bay Company.

One last chapter in the story of the military conflict between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Nor'Westers was to be written before the amalgamation, however. The initiative having changed, once again in favour of the settlers and their Hudson's Bay Company allies, Hudson's Bay Company trader William Williams undertook a short, punitive campaign in 1819 with the intent of avenging the Battle of Seven Oaks. Taking two cannon, one of which he mounted on a barge, and two swivel-guns, he established an ambuscade near Grand Rapids where the Saskatchewan drains into Lake Winnipeg, awaiting the arrival of Nor'Wester wintering parties bringing their furs to the markets in the east. As the Nor'Westers rounded a bend in the river, they found themselves face-to-muzzle with Williams' little battery and had no recourse but to surrender and subsequently be placed under arrest.[39]

The struggle for the little settlement at The Forks was minuscule in comparison with the epic struggles occurring in Europe at the time, but nonetheless it was a key period in defining the nature of Manitoba. The deployment and employment of artillery ordnance was a key element of the balance of power. The use of artillery reflected not only the commitment on the part of the concerned parties to their own preferred destinies, it also—depending on who was in possession of the equipment—drastically altered the destiny of the province. Cannon shaped the course of Manitoban history in its infancy, and would continue to do so throughout the remainder of the 19th century.

Pax Manitobensis

Between the culmination of the struggle for the Red River Colony and the eruption of the Red River Rebellion, Manitoba underwent a rather tranquil period. The focus of this particular era was on settlement and growth, with the artillery playing an extremely limited role. When artillery pieces did arrive on the scene, it was in reaction to an outward threat rather than internal strife. The blood feud between the Nor'Westers and the Hudson's Bay Company having passed, the new threat to Manitoba originated in the United States and was manifestly more dangerous.

After the Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812, American expansionism, blocked to the north, found its outlet to the west and south.[40] Manifest destiny flowed westward around the southern shores of the Great Lakes like a river around a boulder, eventually extending its reach to the southern tracts of the Red River Settlement. The United States even went so far as to construct a military post only eighty kilometres south of Fort Garry.[41] Lacking any man-made transportation infrastructure, the Red River Colony was isolated from the rest of Canada save for the rivers that had been the fur traders' highways for decades. Manitoba seemed easy pickings for the rapidly expanding American empire, and their covetous gaze was felt keenly in Manitoba and Ottawa. Between the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company, and the outbreak of the Red River Rebellion, three military excursions were dispatched to the colony as a deterrent to American expansionism.

In May 1846, a contingent of the 6th Foot (Royal Warwickshires) was dispatched under Major John Crofton consisting of "infantrymen, gunners and sappers, accompanied by 17 women and 19 children, in all 383 individuals, young and old." [42] Along with them they carried two 3-pounders and one 6-pounder cannon.[43] The force took the Bay route, travelling up the Hill/Nelson River system and south through Lake Winnipeg to arrive at Fort Garry. The 6-pounder would have weighed 850 lbs. alone, so one can imagine the tribulations that would accompany moving the piece from Upper Canada to Red River via Fort York. When the apparent threat from the U. S. subsided, the Warwickshires were withdrawn in 1847. They were replaced by British Army pensioners who, it was hoped, would settle in the region and provide a sort of militia for the colony. Unfortunately, they were found to be "a useless

lot, lazy and indifferent."[44] Soldiers were again dispatched to the colony in 1857, this time in the person of the Royal Canadian Rifles with twenty gunners and sappers joining them.[45] Like their predecessors, the Warwickshires, the Rifles were not meant for a long sojourn in Red River. Three years later, the small contingent packed up and moved back to Upper Canada. Although numerous petitions were sent to London requesting troops for the protection of the colony, the Imperial Government was disinclined to acquiesce. Any troops would have to come from a militia formed by the Hudson's Bay Company.[46]

The period between 1821 and 1869 was singularly uneventful, from an artillerist's point of view. Despite the arrival of the cannon with Crofton's force in 1846, artillery played little to no role in the continuing evolution of the province. What was the fate of those field pieces? Did they return with Crofton? Little is known from available sources. However, the lack of conflict caused the demand for the gunners' skills to decline precipitously. Nonetheless, when the spectre of American expansionism re-appeared in the1840s, the threat was sufficiently pressing to warrant the dispatch of Crofton's small battery of guns. The mere presence of troops and artillery might have played some small part in dissuading American interest in the region. Regardless, in 1870 the *pax Manitobensis* came to an abrupt halt, and cannon were once again thrust to the fore.

The Red River Rebellion

Cannon were an integral factor during the Red River Rebellion, the direct outcome of which was the formation of the Province of Manitoba. In brief, Canadian interest in acquiring what was known as Rupert's Land[47] had grown substantially in the latter half of the 19th century. Canadian interest in acquisition grew proportionally to the British disinterest in retention and the Hudson's Bay Company's declining fortunes. This situation culminated in the attempted purchase by the Dominion of Canada of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company for £300,000 on 1 December 1869.[48] Settlers, mostly Métis, of Red River, indignant at the lack of consultation and fearful of losing their land rights to a new, Ontario-based survey system, confronted the Dominion surveyors, barred the entry of the appointed Lieutenant-Governor, and established a Provisional Government in Fort Garry under the leadership of Louis Riel. Amid revolution and counter-revolution in Fort Garry between the Provisional Government and a pro-Canada faction, violence erupted. The Dominion government took a number of diplomatic and military steps to address the situation. On the one hand the Dominion government entered into negotiations with the Provisional Government and eventually passed the Manitoba Act which created the Province of Manitoba; on the other, Ottawa dispatched a military force under Colonel Garnet Wolseley to suppress the rebellion. Fortunately, before Wolseley's expedition arrived at Fort Garry, Ottawa and the rebels reached a diplomatic solution, and bloodshed was averted.

Although a foundational moment in Manitoba's history, the "rebellion" was far more of a "resistance." Thankfully, although tensions were high, the amount of violence that the uprising precipitated was actually minimal. The overwhelming military power that the Dominion government could bring to bear, in particular the artillery that accompanied Wolseley, was an important factor in the peaceful settlement of the resistance.

As in the extended struggle between the Selkirk settlers and the Nor'Westers, the party that controlled the artillery also held the balance of power. The cannon that had, during the previous episode, resided in the main at Fort Douglas, were now kept at Fort Garry. Fort Garry, built in 1822 and refurbished in 1835 after a severe flood, had become the political and administrative hub of the colony. It is no surprise then that, after the proclamation of the Provisional Government, Riel's first move was to seize the fort. On 2 November 1870, Riel and his colleagues took the fort, where he was able to take control of 390 rifles and 13 cannon that belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company.[49] While the fact that the fort was the strategic centre of the colony no doubt played into Riel's plans, the primary impetus for his movement was to secure the firearms and cannon.[50]

Riel's ability to secure the cannon was a key element in the fate of the rebellion, and had the cannon been put out of reach, Riel may not have achieved the success he did. The Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Sir Stafford Northcote, who went to Ottawa during the rebellion to represent company interests, was critical of the Governor of Rupert's Land and Assiniboia, William Mactavish, for not ensuring the cannon remained out of Riel's hands. Northcote lamented in his diary that Mactavish "had undoubtedly shown great want of energy at the beginning of the affair, especially in not removing the guns from Fort Garry to the Stone Fort, where they would have been quite safe under the protection of the English."[51] The result was the loss of these important military instruments.

Possession of the artillery afforded Riel the upper hand during the subsequent counter-revolution by the pro-Canadian element. Donald A. Smith, of the Canadian Pacific Railway, dispatched to Fort Garry as a representative of the federal government, recorded in his diary:

> the French [Riel *et al*.] now reunited, who, to the number of at least seven hundred were prepared to offer the most determined resistance, which, as they were in possession of a number of guns (six and three pounders), ample stores of ammunition, provisions, and every other requisite, they in a great measure could have done most effectually.[52]

Later, on 1 December 1870, as the pro-Canadians were assembling in the home of one of their leaders (Dr. John Schultz, later the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba), Riel "assembled his armed Métis supporters and, directing a 9-pounder gun at Schultz's building, demanded a surrender

within fifteen minutes. He received it."[53] The mere presence of artillery proved persuasive.

While cannon dominated the armed struggle around Fort Garry, more cannon and their keepers trekked from Toronto to Fort Garry with the intent of bringing the rebels to heel. As mentioned above, Wolseley's expedition was dispatched by Sir John A. Macdonald, ostensibly under a mission of peace.[54] That the force was one of peace was purely subterfuge. Directly upon arrival in Winnipeg, Wolseley formed his soldiers in open column to march on Fort Garry. According to an officer present, Captain G. L. Huyshe of the 60th Rifles, there was considerable excitement, and hope, amongst the soldiers that Riel was intending to fight. This enthusiasm turned to dismay upon their learning of his flight.[55] Such martial spirit and disposition hardly lends credibility to any claims of peaceful intentions.

Riel's ability to secure the cannon [at Upper Fort Garry] was a key element in the fate of the rebellion, and had the cannon been put out of reach, Riel may not have achieved the success he did.

The force was one of combined arms, comprising three battalions: one of British regulars from the 60th Rifles, and two *ad hoc* battalions of Militia volunteers styled the Ontario Rifles and Quebec Rifles. Accompanying them were the usual support organizations—a detachment of Royal Engineers, a detachment of the Army Hospital Corps and Army Service Corps, and a detachment of Royal Artillery under Lieutenant Alleyne.[56] Lieutenant Alleyne's battery consisted of four seven-pounder brass mountain guns.[57] Concerning these four brass guns, two key points must be made. First, just getting the guns to Fort Garry was a real achievement. The gun barrel itself, excluding carriage, shot and propellant, weighed some 250 lbs. As no continuous railway line existed, and the government of the United States forbade travel over its sovereign territory by British and Canadian military elements, the tortuous route taken by the force consisted of trains and steamships to Fort William. From Fort William to Fort Garry these pieces were sent by canoe and arduous portage through forest, rapids, lakes and rocky landscape of Northwestern Ontario.[58] The physical stamina and devotion to duty that would be required to undergo such an excursion is commendable.

Second, the fact that artillery was included at all—the powers-that-be were well aware of the challenges of the trek—illustrates the value which the government ascribed to the intent of this force. No doubt motivated by the possession of the Hudson's Bay Company cannons by Riel and his supporters, and notwithstanding any claims to peaceful intentions, the inclusion of these four artillery pieces, and the fact that they were subsequently left in Fort Garry after the departure of the Wolseley Expedition, demonstrated the level of commitment the Dominion government gave to securing Manitoba.

In the end, the rebellion was resolved relatively peacefully. Riel departed with some haste, and Manitoba was admitted to the Confederation as the fifth province in May 1871, with Rupert's Land coming under Canadian control as a series of territories. Artillery pieces—many of which were veterans of the Selkirk struggle—played an integral role in both the prolongation and culmination of the resistance. Had the guns been put out of reach, as Northcote observed, perhaps Riel would not have been able to establish the control he did over the settlement in the first instance. Additionally, deployment of Lieutenant Alleyne's four-gun battery represented a substantial commitment on the part of the Dominion government to the resolution of the conflict. These guns were to become an important element in the continued evolution of Manitoba as a fully fledged member of the Canadian confederation. The embryonic province made a substantial commitment to national security and its own order and governance when, for the first time, it generated its own indigenous artillery organization as part of Canadian national defence.

The Winnipeg Field Battery

Until the end of the Red River Rebellion, the story of cannons in Manitoba and their importance to that province's evolution was one, in the main, of cannons and their operators travelling to Manitoba from both eastern Canada and abroad. Whether it was the cannons of the Hudson's Bay Company guarding their forts on the Bay coast, or the guns of the Dominion that accompanied Wolseley and his men, it was cannon and cannoneers from abroad that shaped the fortunes of Manitoba. In the aftermath of the Riel Rebellion, the creation of the Winnipeg Field Battery as an official military unit of the Dominion government represented the growth in prominence and sophistication of Manitoba.

As mentioned previously, when Wolseley and his force departed from Fort Garry shortly after the Riel Rebellion, the two Militia battalions that had been part of his force were left behind to garrison the new province. Their residency was temporary, and they too departed several years later. The four seven-pounder brass guns that accompanied Wolseley, however, remained in Manitoba, and became the nucleus of the Winnipeg Field Battery.

As during the *pax Manitobensis*, the main military threat to Manitoba after the Riel Rebellion was from the south, although the threat was fomented by disaffected colleagues of Louis Riel. Thinking he could take advantage of the strife caused by the uprising, William O'Donaghue enlisted the aid of the Fenian organization.[59] In 1871, the Fenian movement was declining after a spectacularly unsuccessful attempt to wrest Canada from the British Empire. "General" John O'Neil was enticed by O'Donaghue to make another attempt at invading Canada, this time by

Archives of Manitoba, Camp Sewell 33.

A gunner with 18-pound cannons at Camp Sewell, around 1912.

taking advantage of the tumult still simmering in Manitoba. A half-hearted and poorly organized invasion penetrated no farther than the Hudson's Bay Company post slightly north of the border, and then ended ingloriously when the invaders were arrested by a small detachment of American troops.[60] While the Fenian incursion was more bark than bite, it did for a time raise some concerns within Manitoba. The Lieutenant-Governor, William Archibald, managed to secure some 1000 militiamen as a defensive force, even dispatching a vanguard of about 400 men in two companies to meet the invaders. Amongst this force was one of the 7-pounder brass cannon that had come out from Toronto with Wolseley.[61]

Judge Walker of Brandon, then Captain Walker, was "a member of that body which took with them a small brass rifled cannon, which was afterwards reorganized as the Winnipeg Field Battery."[62] The small force that moved out to confront the Fenians never actually made contact with the enemy. As Frank Schofield described it, once the invasion force seized the Hudson's Bay Company post at Pembina, the "army" seemed to be content to loot the place and subsequently fled ignominiously at the approach of an American cavalry squadron sent to apprehend them. The whole episode concluded with the dismissal of the *ad hoc* Manitoba militia on 7 October 1871.[63] Notably, the inclusion of a single cannon provided an impetus for the creation of the Winnipeg Field Battery.

The creation of the Winnipeg Field Battery reflected both the growing status of Manitoba and Winnipeg within confederation, as well as the continuing perceived threat from the United States—their official assistance to Canada during the Fenian incursion notwithstanding. Shortly after the Fenian affair, the citizenry of Winnipeg moved to create a field battery "with a view to training in the science of gunnery, a specially selected number of the residents of the Red River Settlement... as an additional aid towards the preservation of peace, order and good government."[64] The Winnipeg Field Battery was authorized on 13 October 1871 in Militia General Order Number 22 as "a Field Battery of Artillery at Winnipeg"[65] under the command of "Captain and Adjutant William N. Kennedy, M.S., from 57th Battalion, and Winnipeg Rifle Company [and] 1st Lieutenant William Morris, Gentleman, M.S."[66] The battery was initially outfitted with two of Wolseley's four cannons and two smoothbore 3-pounders that were brought to the Red River Settlement by Selkirk's settlers.[67] As these guns were without limbers (having been transported by canoe), the limbers were outfitted by the initial members of the battery at personal expense.[68] These cannon comprised the main armament of the battery until replaced by two 9-pounder, rifled, muzzle-loading cannon in 1876.[69] Presumably the battery profited substantially from professional mentorship when elements of "A" Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery—one of the first two permanent-force units of the Canadian Army[70]—was stationed in Fort Garry in 1875 from Quebec, on garrison duty for a year.[71] The Winnipeg Field Battery furnished sixty-two men for the North West Rebellion in 1885 and was one of the first units dispatched to the theatre of operations.[72] It performed excellent service during the campaign, fighting during the battles of Fish Creek and Batoche, although during the Battle of Batoche it seems to have demonstrated some difficulty in accuracy. Charles Pelham Mulvaney, who participated in the campaign, reported that:

> In the afternoon some of the Winnipeg Field Battery went down below the church to shell some houses on the opposite side of the river. The guns were placed side by side about one hundred and fifty yards from the cemetery fence. The house aimed at was about one thousand five hundred yards distant across the Saskatchewan. We always had a sort of an idea that an artilleryman could hit his mark with much greater accuracy than we could with our rifles, for the muzzle of a nine-pounder is not so likely to describe figures in the air as a weapon whose holder feels a strong inclination to duck his head at the whizz of a passing ball. But from what we saw that day we think we could do better. How many shots were fired I do not like to say, but they went all round that house and apparently any where [sic] but through it, until we got rather tired of the order: 'Common shell, percussion fuse—load.'"[73]

Despite this singular example of inaccuracy, the Battery was very successful during the campaign. One of the battery's officers, Captain George H. Young, seems to have particularly impressed his superiors. Captain Young was made the Brigade Major[74] by the Commanding General, Major General Frederick Middleton. Middleton was suitably impressed by the Winnipeg gunner, enough at least to report in his memoirs that "whatever duty I assigned to Captain Young, I could always depend on his performing it thoroughly and well."[75] It is likely on account

Archives of Manitoba, John A. Campbell Collection #143, N26655.

An unfair fight? Boys posed with bows and arrows beside cannons at York Factory, 1916.

of his reliability that Young was subsequently asked to command the escort that ferried Louis Riel to Regina for prosecution. Young displayed a particularly commendable devotion to duty during this task as Middleton recorded that he "never let [Riel] out of his sight until he had handed him over to the Police Authorities in Regina, even sleeping under the same blankets with him."[76]

The conclusion of the North West Campaign was a seminal moment in Manitoba history. For the previous two centuries, nations had sent men with cannon to conquer or keep Manitoba. The departure of the Winnipeg Field Battery, manned by Manitobans, to conduct counter-insurgency operations in the west at the behest of the federal government represented Manitoba's coming of age as an integral part of the Dominion of Canada.

Conclusion

The history of Manitoba, the land and its people, is intimately entwined with the history of artillery in the province. The story of cannon in the Keystone Province, and the evolution of the people of Manitoba is a symbiotic tale whereby each played a significant role in shaping the other. Historians have underrated the employment and deployment of cannon in the study of Manitoba's history. In reality, the evolution of Manitoba to its present state was made possible only by the use and presence of artillery pieces, but has been defined by those equipments as well. The deployment of large numbers of fortress artillery pieces in the Hudson's Bay Company forts represents the commitment on the part of that company to the economic exploitation of the region. The dedication to the penetration inland of both the Company and the Selkirk settlers is reflected in the deployment of heavy, unwieldy field pieces and their constituent support requirements along the rivers of northern Manitoba. The arrival of these field pieces at The Forks changed the balance of power in the collision of destinies between the Nor'Westers and the Hudson's Bay Company, to the point that the fortunes of the province lay in the hands of those who controlled the cannon. Manitoba, and Canada, may have looked substantially different if the Nor'Westers had maintained control of the cannon stored in Fort Douglas and eventually won out over the Hudson's Bay Company in the early 19th century. The cannons, and those who controlled them, rose again to prominence during the Riel Rebellion almost sixty years later. Their ownership by Riel served to lengthen the conflict, compelled the Dominion government to dispatch a sizable and capable military field force, and doubtless played some role in forcing Ottawa to accept a diplomatic solution to the problem by creating the province of Manitoba. The creation of the Winnipeg Field Battery shortly thereafter signalled both a commitment on the part of the local and national leadership to secure sovereignty over the West against threats both internal (native and Métis uprisings) and external (American expansionism), as well as the maturing of the province into an integral part of the Confederation. In whatever capacity used, the employment and deployment of cannon in the Keystone Province was instrumental in making Manitoba what it is today.

Notes

1. It is necessary to differentiate between the emplacement of artillery pieces—that is to say, their *deployment*—and their actual use—that is to say, their *employment*. Cannon may produce a psychological and moral effect simply by their presence. They have a much different and substantially greater effect when fired at someone or even when fired as a salute. Consequently, *deployment* and *employment* are not synonymous and must be considered either together or separately.
2. Major General J. B. A. Bailey, *Field Artillery and Firepower* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2004), p. 160.
3. *Ibid*., p. 141.
4. *Standing Orders for the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery Volume I—Customs and Traditions*, pp. 7-1/5, 7-2/5, available at http://www.artillery.net/beta/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/RCA-SOs-Vol-I-sm.pdf last accessed 6 November 2012.
5. John M. Hyson, Joseph W. A. Whitehorn, John T. Greenwood, *A History of Dentistry in the US Army to World War II* (Washington: TMM Publications, 2008), p. *v*.
6. Bailey, *Field Artillery and Firepower*, p. 166.
7. E. E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870: Volume I—1670–1763* (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1958), p. *xx*.
8. *Ibid*., p. 184.
9. *Ibid*., p. 507.
10. Michael Payne, "The Healthiest Part in the Known World: Prince of Wales's Fort As Fur Trade Post and Community in the Eighteenth Century" in *The Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*, Series 3, Number 35 available at http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/3/princeofwalesfort.shtml last accessed 22 November 2012.
11. In artillery parlance, the "poundage" of a gun denotes the weight of the shot it fires, not necessarily the calibre of the barrel. Of course, as the weight of shot increased, so did the size of the projectile and therefore the calibre.
12. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, p. 535.
13. *Ibid*., p. 509.
14. Frank Henry Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba* (Winnipeg: S. J. Clarke Publishing Ltd, 1913), p. 66.
15. *Ibid*.
16. *Ibid*., p. 67.
17. Payne, "The Healthiest Part in the Known World."
18. Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 57.

19. "Henry's Journal" *Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*, Series 1, Number 37, read 9 May 1889 available at http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/1/henrysjournal3.shtml last accessed 22 November 2012.
20. Bailey, *Field Artillery and Firepower…*, p. 204.
21. Charles N. Bell, *The Selkirk Settlement and the Settlers* (Winnipeg: The Commercial, 1887), p. 8.
22. Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba*, p. 103.
23. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies,* p. 74.
24. *Ibid*., p. 74.
25. J. M. Bumsted, "Editorial Introduction" in *The Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk* (Winnipeg: The Manitoba Historical Record, 1987), p. *xlii.*
26. *Ibid*.
27. Thomas Selkirk, "The Memorial of Thomas Earl of Selkirk, ca. 1819" in *The Collected Writings of Lord Selkirk* (Winnipeg: The Manitoba Historical Record, 1987), p. 118.
28. Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba,* p. 121.
29. *Ibid*., p. 74.
30. John McLeod as quoted by Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba,* pp. 123–124.
31. G.F.G. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*: *Military Expeditions to Red River* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1989), 23.
32. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairie,* p. 78.
33. Bumsted, "Editorial Introduction" in *The Collected Writings*, p. *xli.*
34. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble…*, p. 24.
35. *Ibid*., p. 28.
36. *Ibid*.
37. *Ibid*., p. 29.
38. *Ibid*., p. 30.
39. Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies,* p. 82.
40. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 35.
41. *Ibid*., p. 36.
42. *Ibid*., p. 39.
43. Personal communication with Major (ret'd) Marc George, Director, Museum of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, Shilo, Manitoba.
44. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble,* p. 42.
45. Personal correspondence with Major (ret'd) Marc George, Director, Museum of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, Shilo, Manitoba.
46. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble,* p. 44.
47. Rupert's Land consisted of all of what is now western and northwestern Canada.
48. George F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), p. 42.
49. Kathleen Sinclair, "History and Hospitality" *Manitoba Pageant*, vol. 15, no. 1 (Winter 1970).
50. David Kilgour, *Uneasy Patriots* (Edmonton: Lone Pine Publishing, 1988), p. 150.
51. Sir Stafford Northcote, "The Ottawa Diary of Sir Stafford Northcote" in *Manitoba: The Birth of a Province*, p. 77.
52. Donald A. Smith, "Donald A. Smith's Report" in *Manitoba: The Birth of a Province*, p. 35.
53. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 59.
54. *Ibid*., p. 133.
55. Captain G. L. Huyshe, *The Red River Expedition* (Annapolis: The Naval and Military Press, orig. published 1871), pp. 194-195.
56. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, p. 258.
57. Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba,* p. 290.
58. The author grew up in Northwestern Ontario and served nine years as an Army Reserve Artillery Officer in the region. He can attest to the fact that even with modern technologies, moving artillery pieces in this part of the country remains an arduous task.
59. There is some debate as to whether or not this episode can really be considered a "Fenian" invasion on the lines of those that occurred in Ontario and Quebec. Frank Schofield relates that William O'Donaghue tried to cognitively link this incursion with the Red River Rebellion, even going so far as to refer to the name "Fenian Raid" as a misnomer. (Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba,* p. 307.)
60. Stanley, *Toil and Trouble*, pp. 208–210.
61. *Ibid*., p. 207.
62. Gilbert McMicken,"The Abortive Fenian Raid on Manitoba, Account by One Who Knew Its Secret History" in *Manitoba Historical Society Transactions*, 1, no. 3, available at http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/transactions/1/fenianraid.shtml last viewed 20 October 2012.
63. Schofield, *The Story of Manitoba,* pp. 309–310.
64. W. L. Marschamps, "13th (Winnipeg) Field Battery, Canadian Artillery" in *Massey's Magazine*, vol. 3, no. 3 (March 1897), p. 183.
65. "Militia General Orders (22)" in *The Canada Gazette*, dated 14 October 1871.
66. *Ibid.*
67. Marschamps, "13th (Winnipeg) Field Battery...", p. 183.
68. *Ibid*., p. 183.
69. *Ibid*., p. 96-97.
70. It is a matter of some pride within the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery that the first regular, professional military organizations of the Canadian Army were artillery units—A and B Battery of the Permanent Force Artillery, authorized on 21 October 1871 by Militia General Order Number 23. Coincidentally, both batteries still exist as part of the 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery in Shilo, Manitoba.
71. Colonel G. W. L. Nicholson, *The Gunners of Canada: The History of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery Volume 1, 1534–1919* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1967), p. 105.
72. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada…*, p. 352.
73. Charles Pelham Mulvaney, *The History of the North-West Rebellion of 1885 Including a History of the Indian Tribes of North-Western Canada.* (Toronto: A.H. Hovey & Co, 1885), p. 255.
74. At the time of the campaign, the Brigade Major was essentially the operations officer for the Brigade. His tasks were to put together the plans and written orders required to translate the commander's direction into action by subordinate battalions.
75. Frederick Middleton, *Suppression of the Rebellion in the North West Territories of Canada, 1885 by General Sir Fred Middleton* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), p. 57.
76. *Ibid*., p. 58.

Pressure to Act: The Shoal Lake Aqueduct and the Greater Winnipeg Water District

by David A. Ennis
Winnipeg, Manitoba

This is the first of two articles on the history of the Greater Winnipeg Water District and Shoal Lake as its water source. The second article will deal with the engineering and construction aspects of the aqueduct. Eds.

Introduction

In the early 20th century Winnipeg was touted as "the Chicago of the North." Between 1890 and 1910, the population of Winnipeg proper had grown from 23,000 to 132,000, and by 1913 the population of the area that became known as the Greater Winnipeg Water District (GWWD) stood at 215,000. (Canadian Public Works Association—hereafter CPWA 2000, p. ii) It was well known in Winnipeg business and civic circles that the area's continued development would be linked to the supply of a sufficient volume of safe pure water for domestic and industrial needs. Nevertheless, and despite the city's location on two rivers both with significant watersheds, providing that supply was a problem. It was only in 1913 that Winnipeg committed to a lasting solution (Artibise 1975, pp. 215–22). Collaborating with its neighbouring municipalities to form the Greater Winnipeg Water District (GWWD), the City decided to invest $13,500,000 to access Shoal Lake, a tributary of the Lake of the Woods watershed some 150 kilometres away and straddling the recently established Manitoba-Ontario border.

Despite Shoal Lake's being nearly 300 feet (91 metres) higher than Winnipeg, achieving that delivery was not all downhill from there. There were matters of administration, authorizations, design engineering, financing, materials supply, construction, and changed circumstances to be dealt with.

The Winnipeg aqueduct project was implemented more than 90 years ago at a time when Canada was at war and Manitoba was beset with legislative turmoil and social change. Yet, albeit with some enhancements and repair, it continues to provide Winnipeg's water supply effectively and efficiently. That success is a testimony to the administrative and engineering leadership of the. Water District and its successor the City of Winnipeg Water and Waste Department.

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Background

The conveyance of potable water in aqueducts, i.e., delivered primarily by gravity, has been a solution for water supply to cities for thousands of years. The word "aqueduct" has its origin in the Latin "aqua" for water and "ducere" to lead. The basic principles used in the design of the Winnipeg aqueduct were the same as those employed and improved over time by the early aqueduct builders, most notably the Romans. However, the Shoal Lake aqueduct's physical appearance differs greatly from the massive stone structures in the vicinity of Rome which for many people are synonymous with aqueducts. An aqueduct is a conduit designed to conduct water usually at a gentle gradient. The structures near Rome were simply a means of maintaining the necessary gradient for the operation of the conduit. The GWWD's aqueduct, with its challenges for designers regarding topography, head, and construction conditions, uses a covered open-channel flow (unpressurized) conduit, generally buried. When it crossed rivers inverted siphons were built into the system.

One of the more well-known North American examples of an aqueduct is the Catskill Aqueduct which is part of a system that brings water to the city of New York. It was constructed a few years before the Winnipeg Aqueduct and the politicians, administrators, and engineers involved with the GWWD benefited from its example.

American engineers had already developed extensive water channelization projects with the completion of the 363-mile-long Erie Canal in 1825, and with the rapid growth of their cities had developed expertise in water supply projects. That expertise had been recognized by Winnipeg politicians. Engineers from the United States had been consulted on the city's water supply from as early as 1897 when Dr. Rudolf Hering from New York provided a report advising on issues and options for Winnipeg's water supply. While using Lake of the Woods as a source due to its excellent quality was suggested at a meeting

Winnipeg Water and Waste Department, GWWD #111.

One of the first construction tasks in the building of the Winnipeg Aqueduct was the laying of railway track to facilitate access to the intake on Indian Bay.

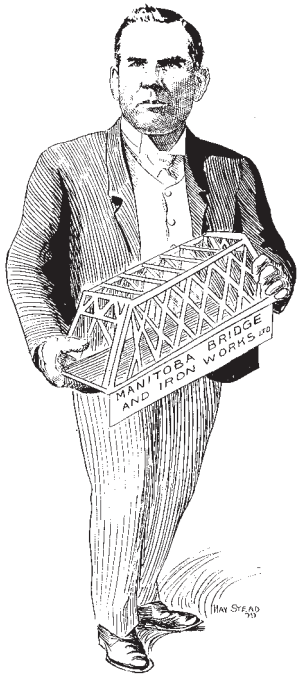
of the Manitoba Historical Society as early as 1884, it did not garner the attention of the civic leaders. Hering's 1897 report considered only the City's artesian well system and the option of a pipeline from the Winnipeg River.

Water supply had been an issue in Winnipeg civic politics for many years before the decision to use Shoal Lake. The factors influencing the public discourse on the matter included the quantity available, the security of supply, its quality, the proclivity for the city's business elite to favour private ownership of utilities, and latterly a health issue. Prior to 1882, water was taken from the City's rivers and delivered to homes and businesses in barrels carried on horse-drawn conveyances. The first supply and distribution utility was started under a private corporation—the Winnipeg Water Works Company. Its source of supply was the Assiniboine River just downstream from the present day Maryland Bridge. The Company was incorporated by an act of the Manitoba Legislature in 1880 with an exclusive franchise covering the City of Winnipeg. However, soon after it began delivering water, there were issues with the capacity of its infrastructure and the service being provided. After years of legislative manoeuvres, confrontation, and wrangling, the City bought out the corporation and its franchise in 1898 (Artibise 1975, pp. 210–212). In the lead-up to the purchase, City Engineer H. N. Ruttan, who had been hired in 1885, had investigated the use of artesian wells for the city's supply. After its purchase of the Water Works Company, the City developed an artesian well system, but only to a limited extent. As a result of that limitation, the supply operation from the Assiniboine was kept on standby for use in emergencies.

One such emergency occurred in 1904 when a serious fire broke out and the City was forced to pump Assiniboine River water into its mains. Shortly after that, there was a typhoid fever epidemic. When the infection was attributed to contaminated river water, there was a heightened civic interest in the importance of clean water; and ending the use of Assiniboine River water became a priority. The option chosen was expansion of the artesian well system.

Early Sources and Investigations

While expanding the artesian well system after the typhoid epidemic was an improvement, it was not to be the long-term solution. The certainty of supply and hardness of the water continued to be an issue for the business community. The primary influence was the need to demonstrate an assured supply in amounts sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the fire insurance providers. In the aftermath of the 1904 fire, the industry had imposed "very excessive fire insurance charges, due largely to the fact that the development of the Water Works system had not kept pace with the extraordinary growth of the City" (Ruttan 1909, p. 3).



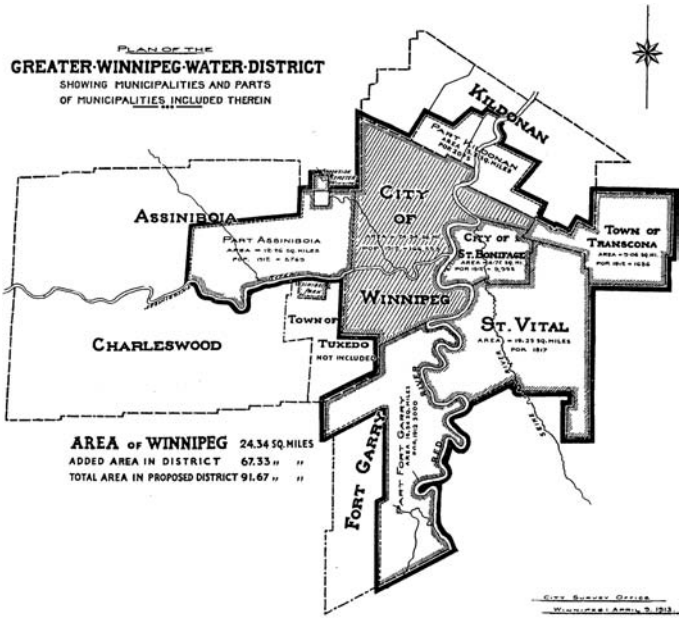
Manitobans As We See 'Em, 1908 and 1909.

Thomas Russ Deacon (1865–1955) was a Winnipeg city councillor when the Shoal Lake water supply was first discussed, later implementing the plan when he was elected Mayor in 1913. A water supply reservoir on the east side of the city was later named for him.

The next years saw expansion to the system of artesian wells to the northwest of the City. Proximity to those wells was the reason for the present location of the McPhillips reservoir, which was also the beginning of the City's distribution system. For that reason it was necessary for the Shoal Lake system to connect to that reservoir even though it was located across the City from the aqueduct's point of entry. By 1908, under the administration and guidance of City Engineer Ruttan, seven wells had been dug. They averaged 18 feet in diameter with depths ranging from 46 to 102 feet (Scott 1938, p. 1875). While the water was quite satisfactory for human consumption, its hardness made it undesirable for laundry. Its hardness was also a major problem for the owners of industrial boilers because the scale build-up caused high maintenance costs. Both were seen as disincentives for new industry to locate in the City. To put the hardness issue in perspective, the total solids in the well water was 1,014 parts per million, whereas the figure for Shoal Lake was 130 parts per million (Scott 1938, p. 1875). It is not that Winnipeg was unfamiliar with water softening. The City had built the first municipal water softening plant in North America in 1901, but as the City grew softening became no longer feasible (Scott 1938, p. 1875). Another underlying factor, probably heightened by the memory of the typhoid epidemic, was concern over the possibility that the drawdown of the water table by the well system could bring water levels below that of the rivers, exposing the system to the hazard of contamination.

The adequacy of the water supply was tackled on two fronts concurrently. In 1906, on the authority of an act of the Manitoba Legislature, the City established a Water Supply Commission to develop an adequate supply (Scott 1938, p. 1876). The other initiative was that, by 1908, a high-pressure pumping station and a fire-fighting distribution system were in operation to service the City's closely-built business section. The system produced water pressures almost four times greater than the domestic supply. The pumping component of the facility, which became known as the James Avenue pumping station, was located near and drew its water from the Red River. However, it too was not without issues. The limitations on its service area would have had an effect on commercial expansion, and the use of the river water as the source of supply was a detraction. Often, when a fire was over, it was found that merchandise was ruined beyond redemption because of deposited sediments from the water.

Two members of the City's 1906 Water Supply Commission were James H. Ashdown and Thomas Russ Deacon. Both men later served as mayors of Winnipeg and were also instrumental in the success of the Administration Board of the GWWD in accomplishing the Shoal Lake project. Deacon had lived in the Keewatin–Kenora area of Ontario working in the mining industry, and was aware of the water supply potential of the Lake of the Woods and Shoal Lake. He was a consistent proponent of that area as the source for Winnipeg (Shropshire 1994, p. 3). The 1906 Commission considered a number of sources: included were the Red River, the Winnipeg River, Lake Winnipeg, and Lake Manitoba. In 1907 the Commission received a report from a Board of Consulting Engineers; two were from the USA, including J. H. Fuertes (who later became the consulting engineer for the Shoal Lake aqueduct), and two from Canada. That report recommended developing the City's supply from the Winnipeg River. Apart from the higher cost of using Shoal Lake, there was also a concern that despite its purity, the water would still require treatment to overcome coloration from the effect of Falcon River that discharged into Indian Bay. The Commission recommended proceeding with the Winnipeg River as the City's source. However, perhaps fortunately for Manitoba, the City did not act for reasons of finance. Nineteen hundred and seven was a time of world-wide recession, and a substantial financial commitment had already been made



Winnipeg Water and Waste Department.

Map of the Greater Winnipeg Water District, 1913.

Winnipeg Water and Waste Department, GWWD #125.

Test sections of the Winnipeg Aqueduct were displayed at the Exhibition Grounds as the project got under way.

to build a City-owned hydro-electric generation facility at Pointe du Bois on the Winnipeg River.

The expansion of the artesian well system had continued, and once the Pointe du Bois development was finished and operating in 1912, the focus on providing an adequate visible supply of soft water resumed. (The water in a source such as a river or a lake is visible to the consumer. However, with the source of an artesian well not being "visible," confidence in a well's continuing reliability is not high.) Despite this lack of visibility of artesian systems, the Council, on the recommendation of Engineer Ruttan, decided to expand the City's supply from artesian sources still farther northwest of Winnipeg in an area known as Poplar Springs. The water from there was much softer than from its other wells in Winnipeg. To pay for the expansion, the Council had called for a vote on a money by-law for 13 September 1912. However, in a separate initiative, it had also asked the recently appointed, and first, Manitoba Public Utilities Commissioner, Judge H. A. Robson, to recommend a secure system of permanent supply. Judge Robson had engaged another American engineer, Professor Charles S. Slichter, to provide an opinion. Slichter was an international authority on water and had provided advice to a number of American cities ((Siamandas, p. 2). The professor considered Winnipeg's projected population growth, its available ground water supply, the earlier reports and the pricing that was used, and made his own analysis of Shoal Lake water. After considering the options, Professor Slichter, in a report dated 6 September 1912, recommended that the City use Shoal Lake as its source. He noted that "a perfect water supply is worth all its costs" and that "I recommend the water supply for Winnipeg be taken from Shoal Lake," basing this judgement "solely for the reason that it is the very best" (Slichter 1912, p. 1). Judge Robson endorsed Slichter's recommendation, and in his report of the same date added that,

> The advantage of the undertaking should not be confined to mere corporate boundaries. A scheme might be worked out whereby the environs of present Winnipeg might, on fair terms, secure with the city the inestimable benefits of abundance of the best water. The assurance of unfailing supply is indispensable to the growth of the city. (International Joint Commission 1914, p. 96)

That suggestion for a scheme became the germ of the idea for the formation of the GWWD. The money by-law on the Poplar Springs project was narrowly defeated a week later.

The Concept and Politics of the Water District

Thomas Deacon became the mayor of Winnipeg in 1913. A civil engineer and businessman, he was president of Manitoba Bridge & Iron Works. His strong support for Shoal Lake as a water source which began with his 1906 service on the Water Commission had not wavered. In his mayoral campaign, he made a pledge of "providing at once for the people of Winnipeg an ample and permanent supply of pure soft water which will forever remove the menace now hanging over Winnipeg of a water famine." (Shropshire 1994, p. 3)

The idea of the surrounding municipalities participating with the City of Winnipeg in a Shoal Lake water supply project caught on quickly. That they were able to come

together on the issue of water was probably facilitated by the fact that Winnipeg was already providing water to four of those municipalities, and St. Boniface to one. Judge Robson seems to have practiced in the area of municipal law and was later the co-author of text books on the subject. He used that knowledge, together with the concept of an inter-municipal corporation modelled on one that had started in England, to assist the two cities and the municipalities in coming to an arrangement. In January 1913, a series of meetings was held in which Mayor Deacon and the judge played prominent roles. By the end of the month, there was agreement on draft legislation to form a water district.

After the adoption of resolutions by the various municipalities endorsing the proposed legislation, "An Act to incorporate the 'Greater Winnipeg Water District,' being Chapter 22 of 3 George V," was assented to in the Manitoba Legislature on 15 February 1913 (Province of Manitoba, 1913). The areas included in the district were as follows: The City of Winnipeg, The City of St. Boniface, The Town of Transcona, the Rural Municipality of St. Vital, a part of the Rural Municipality of Fort Garry, a part of the Rural Municipality of Assiniboia, and a part of the Rural Municipality of Kildonan. At the time, Kildonan straddled the Red River, but it was changed to become East and West Kildonan in 1914. Even with only parts of some municipalities included in the District, Winnipeg comprised only 26% of its area, but had 87% of the population.

It is noteworthy that, while Winnipeg was guaranteed the Chairmanship, it did not have a majority position on the governing Board and could not dictate. Winnipeg had five members on the Board and the other entities had seven. That position was further diminished with the 1914 amendment that gave representation to both East and West Kildonan.

Some of the more significant features of the Act were as follows:

a) That the coming into force of the Act was conditional on approval by Winnipeg voters. The requirement was for a three-fifths majority of those eligible and participating in the vote;

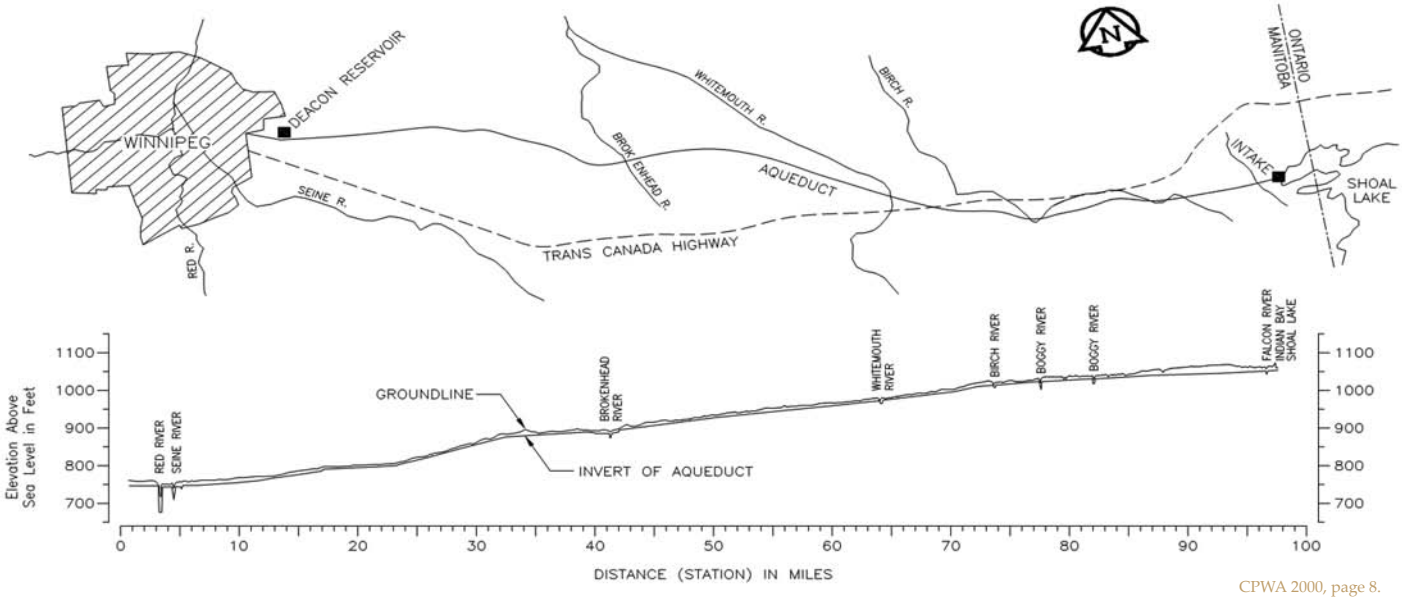
b) That the powers and functions of the corporation were to be exercised and discharged by an Administration Board. It was comprised of the mayor and the other members of the Board of Control of the City of Winnipeg, the mayor and one member of the Council of the City of St. Boniface, and the mayor or reeve (as the case may be) of the Town of Transcona and the Rural Municipalities of Assiniboia, Kildonan, Fort Garry, and St. Vital;

c) That, with few exceptions, the value of all land in the district, but not including buildings or other improvements, was the basis for the taxation to finance the corporation; and

d) That a special Board of Equalization, appointed by the Public Utilities Commissioner, be established to determine the assessment to be levied on the taxable land in each municipality, i.e., it was not on the assessments decided by the individual municipalities.

An important amendment in 1914 essentially provided that the progress of the project could not be delayed by any court action due to a dispute over damages or prices offered in expropriation. That effectively cleared the way for the corporation to quickly decide on its right-of-way for the works.

The three-fifths vote of approval by the eligible Winnipeg voters brought the legislation into force on 1 May 1913, four months after Thomas Deacon became the Mayor. Those residents qualified to vote on money by-laws approved the formation of the GWWD by a margin of 2226 to 369. The population of Winnipeg in 1912 was 166,500, which might seem a low turnout on such an important



CPWA 2000, page 8.

Plan and profile of Greater Winnipeg Water District Aqueduct.

issue. However, when one considers that, unlike today, to qualify as a voter one had to own property worth at least $500, the turnout seems not to have indicated voter apathy (Artibise 1975, p. 39).

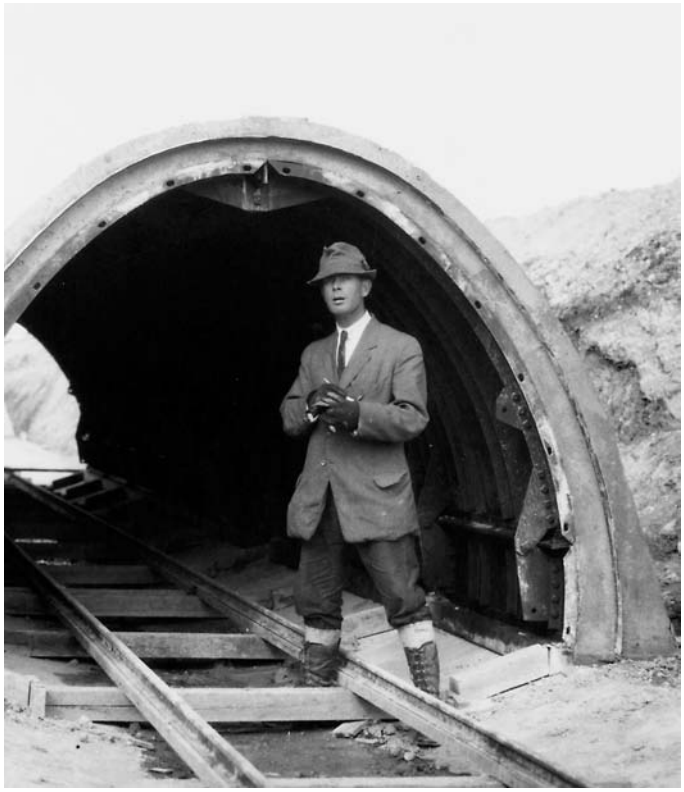
In the interim, the Winnipeg City Council had engaged another board of four consulting engineers in April 1913, all from the US (and once again included James Fuertes), and instructed them on 20 May 1913 to "submit a report on the best means of supplying the Greater Winnipeg Water District with water from Shoal Lake, together with an estimate of cost and general plan of work" (Greater Winnipeg Water District 1918, p 7). Then, with the GWWD official, the first meeting of the Administration Board took place on 30 July 1913. The most significant decision taken was to begin the process of application to the International Joint Commission to allow the District to take water from Shoal Lake (GWWD minutes, July 13, 1913).

The Board of Consulting Engineer's report was delivered on 20 August 1913 and, on 6 September 1913, it was quickly adopted by the Administration Board of the GWWD, which at the same time, passed a by-law to create a debt of $13,500,000. (GWWD minutes, 6 September 1913) Once again, the GWWD Act required that the debt be approved by the Winnipeg voters through a money by-law. That vote occurred on 1 October 1913, with 97% in favour (GWWD 1918, p.7). To put that decision in perspective, and using housing prices as a metric, the author estimates that it would be the equivalent of at least a $400,000,000 decision for a 2011 voter.

The Administration Board began its operations with the hiring of S. H. Reynolds, a civil engineer from Vancouver, as the Chief and only Commissioner, and W. G. Chace as its Chief Engineer. Mr. Reynolds had been the Assistant City Engineer in Winnipeg under H. N. Ruttan from 1902 until 1907. Mr. Chace, from Ontario, had been previously engaged by the City of Winnipeg as a senior engineer on the construction of the recently completed Pointe du Bois hydro-generation project.

One of the most consistent issues before the Administration Board was the matter of cash flow to finance the work. Consideration of the project's credit requirements had not been an issue. But with the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, just as construction expenditures in the range of $7,600,000 were being committed, arranging credit became much more difficult. In that regard it is noteworthy that, in its early years, the Administration Board appointed J. H. Ashdown, who had steered Winnipeg out of its indebtedness following the 1907 recession, as its honorary treasurer.

As it moved toward the awarding of contracts for the construction of what in today's terms would be considered a megaproject, the Administration Board understandably had policy issues to resolve. What is impressive about the GWWD Board is that it appears to have conducted its affairs effectively, and with very little controversy despite the tensions that could easily have evolved between neighbouring civic entities.



Winnipeg Water and Waste Department, GWWD #264.

Chief Engineer inspects the work, 1914. The GWWD Administration Board began its operations with the hiring of William Gregory Chace (1875–1937) as its Chief Engineer. Chace, from Ontario, had been previously engaged by the City of Winnipeg as a senior engineer on the construction of the recently completed Pointe du Bois hydroelectric generation project.

Approvals

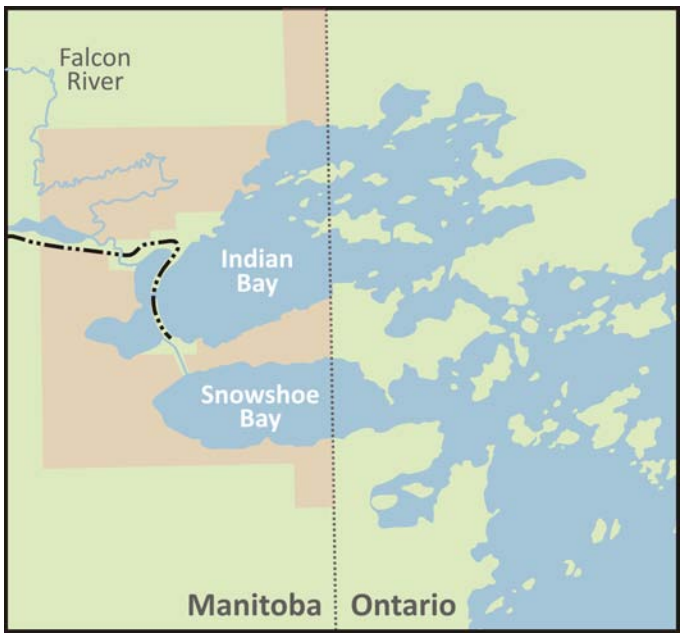
Indian Bay is the area of Shoal Lake where the aqueduct inlet is located. The Falcon River discharges into Indian Bay immediately south of where the water for the aqueduct is withdrawn. The Falcon River is the outlet of Falcon Lake, which is some 10 kilometres to the northwest and also drains much of the muskeg area in between.

Among the earlier matters that the Administration Board had to deal with was obtaining permission to take its water from Shoal Lake. As the lake is connected with, and is part of the Lake of the Woods watershed, a trans-boundary water system, approval was required from the International Joint Commission (IJC) which administered the *1909 Boundary Waters Treaty* between the United States and Canada.

On the trans-provincial aspect there was the matter that under the terms of Manitoba's entry into the Canadian Confederation, the province did not, in 1913, own the rights to the natural resources in its territory. However, Ontario did have ownership so permission to take water was also required from both those governments. The consent of the Government of Canada was given in June 1913, soon after the GWWD's act came into effect (Water and Waste Department nd, Box 1-I, Doc 7). Ontario's consent was

provided by way of an Order in Council on 2 October 1913. The Ontario Order was subject to terms and stipulations. One stipulation stated that the GWWD would be required either to remedy or pay damages should the removal of the water appreciably reduce the amount of hydro-electric power that the Town of Kenora could generate with its facilities at the outlet of Lake of the Woods (Water and Waste Department nd, Box 1-I, Doc 19).

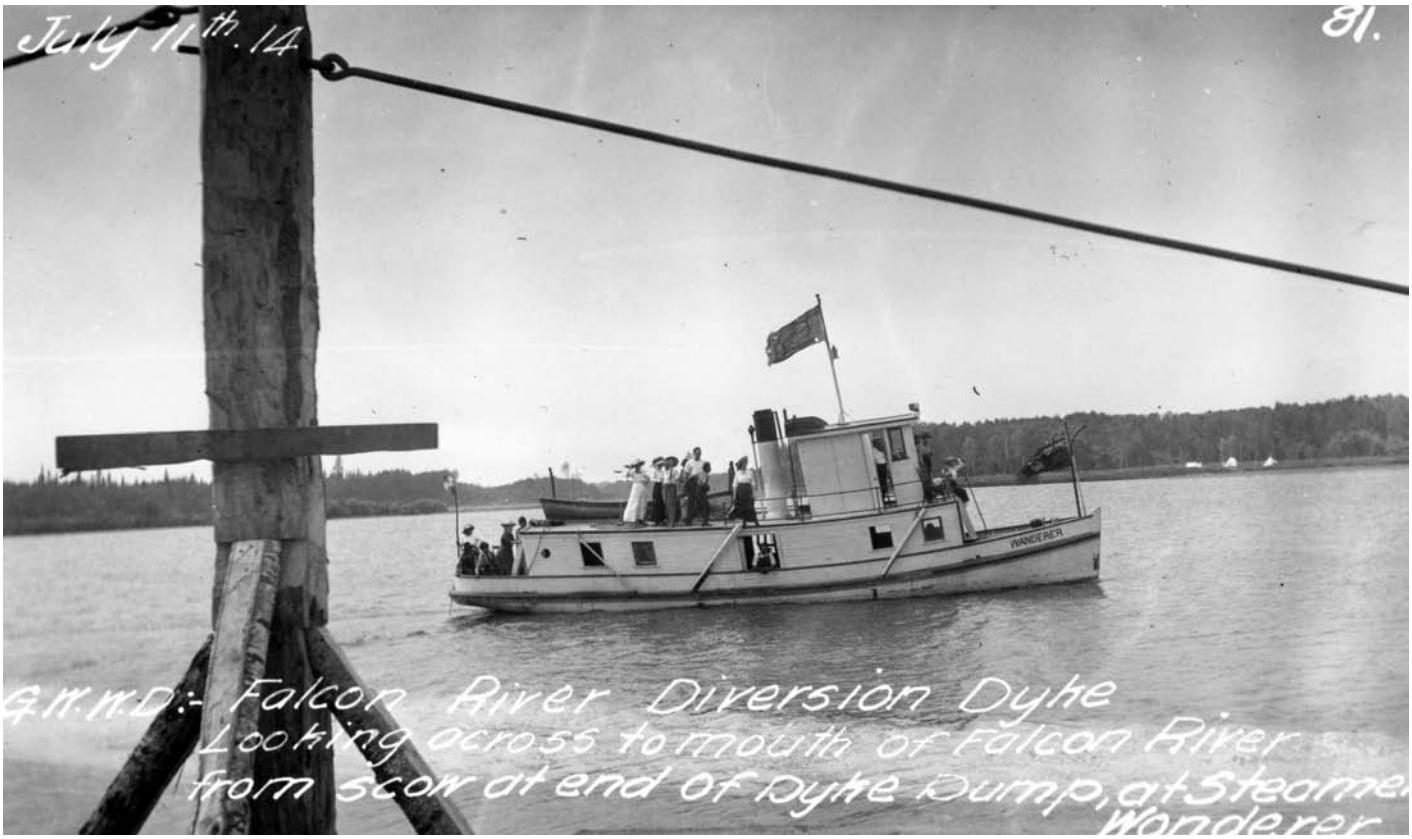
An application to the IJC was subject to the approval of the Government of Canada and could be transmitted to the Commission only by that government. Conveniently, the cabinet minister at the time responsible for such transmission, Robert Rogers, the Minister of Public Works, was from Winnipeg. His letter of transmittal to the IJC was dated 25 August 1913, and the Commission began its hearing on 13 January 1914 (IJC 1914, pp. 5, 11). The GWWD's application requested permission to draw up to 85,000,000 imperial gallons per day (386,400,000 litres per day). Not unexpectedly, given the stipulation in the Ontario Order in Council, the Town of Kenora was represented by legal counsel. Seven persons gave testimony on the expected effect on the water level. Five of them, including James H. Fuertes, were engineers. There was agreement among the witnesses that if a year's supply of water at 85,000,000 gallons per day (386,400,000 litres per day) were to be removed from the Lake of the Woods-Shoal Lake system in a single day, the water level would be lowered by less than 1.5 inches (38 millimetres) (IJC 1914, pp. 47, 63). With that figure established, there was little basis to conclude that the power generation opportunity for the Town of Kenora would be affected. The Commission endorsed the application, sending its formal opinion recommending approval to the two governments on 15 January 1914. Later communication from the IJC put the GWWD on notice that it would not consider any application to increase the amount of water it could take to any amount more than 100,000,000 gallons per day (454,600,000 litres per day) (Cherney 2009, p. 3, Scott nd, p. 25, Chace 1920b, pp. 2–3). The maximum average daily draw since then, 66,000,000 gallons per day (300,000,000 litres per day) occurred in 1988 (Shoal Lake Watershed Working Group).



Indian Bay and Aqueduct Inlet area, with the shaded area to the left of the Ontario-Manitoba border denoting the portion of Shoal Lake Indian Reserve No. 40 in Manitoba.

The GWWD had the provincial act to rely upon for most of its property acquisition, but that was not the case for aboriginal reserve lands. The intake and the initial sections of the aqueduct were located on reserve land belonging to Shoal Lake Band 40. The reserve was regulated under *The Indian Act* of the Dominion Government. With virtually all of Indian Bay, Snowshoe Bay, and the adjacent shore lines being part of Band 40's reserve, it was necessary for the GWWD to acquire rights to some of that land. *The Indian Act* contained a provision whereby if a municipal authority had provincial statutory authority "for taking or using lands or any interest in lands without the consent of the owner," it could do so for reserve lands with the approval of the Governor in Council (Dominion Cabinet). The GWWD had such statutory authority from the Manitoba Government. Due to the water coloration in Indian Bay from the Falcon River, the GWWD constructed a dike across the west end of the bay to isolate Falcon River waters, then dug a channel to drain the water into Snowshoe Bay in order to divert the water away from the aqueduct inlet. With the residents of Shoal Lake Band 40 living on the peninsula severed by the channel their community became land-locked. That circumstance has been a matter of contention in recent years. Significantly, the City of Winnipeg has made provision in its approved and forecast capital budget for the construction of a bridge to re-establish land access for Band 40. While this accommodation has been happening, Shoal Lake Band 39, whose reserve adjoins Band 40 in the vicinity of the aqueduct inlet, has been claiming payment from the City of Winnipeg for use of water to which it claims ownership.

The Winnipeg Aqueduct was completed on time and quite close to budget by December of 1918. That was after four years of involvement in the First World War with all its effects, and three months after the City's population had been severely affected by the Spanish Flu epidemic. The engineers, administrators, and contractors on the Winnipeg Aqueduct executed a unique project that is remarkable for its scope and its lasting ability to serve the needs of the City of Winnipeg. In so doing they were confronted with and overcame unique physical and environmental conditions using creative design, testing and construction processes. Thomas Deacon's "menace of a water famine" had been subdued. When one considers the project in the context of the English translation of the Latin motto on the City of Winnipeg's Coat of Arms, "One With the Strength of Many", its significance becomes apparent. ☙



Winnipeg Water and Waste Department, GWWD #81.

Marine excursion, 1914. The steamboat *Wanderer* with a complement of passengers, including several women, passes a dike under construction near the mouth of the Falcon River on Indian Bay.

Notes

The minute books of the meetings of the Administration Board of the Greater Winnipeg Water District between 1913 and 1918 are stored at the Winnipeg Water and Waste Department's Resource Centre, 1199 Pacific Avenue, Winnipeg. Records of the Greater Winnipeg Water District are also at the Resource Centre. As part of those records there are 1,018 photographs taken at the time of the aqueduct construction at the Resource Centre. The identification number for the digitized collection is 000115291.

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Jack Houston's Editorials in the *OBU Bulletin*, 1919–1921

Introduced by Peter Campbell[1] *with editorials compiled by* C. Stuart Houston[2]
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John D. Houston belonged to a much-maligned generation of Canadian socialists. Banished to the fringes of Canadian political culture when considered at all, even the best known among them are now most likely to be remembered for doctrinaire intransigence and thoughts on race and gender that stand condemned before the judges of a more enlightened age. Yesterday's men and women, they were blinkered anachronisms, lost in a world of hair-splitting theoretical debates. Characterized as oblivious to the national context and its leading issues, they were but passing blips on the radar screen of Canadian political life.

Be that as it may, Canadian socialist John Houston was a man known from coast to coast in this country, his editorials read by thousands of Canadian working-class men and women who trusted him to give them the "straight goods." The straight goods included unstinting attacks on the existing trade union movement dominated by the American Federation of Labor and its craft orientation. Canadian Marxists like Houston were convinced they had a deeper understanding than the "professional surface skimmers" of the mainstream labour movement, and it was their life's purpose to reveal the truth to a misled Canadian working class. John Houston was part of a generation with its own vocabulary, its own rough egalitarianism, and its own blunt analysis of the world's problems and how to fix them.

C. S. Houston

John D. "Jack" Houston (1856–1921) came to Winnipeg in 1905. During the First World War, he made munitions at Montreal. In August 1919, he was the founding editor of the *One Big Union Bulletin* until being forced to step down in poor health prior to his death at St. Boniface. He was interred in Elmwood Cemetery.

Having moved to Winnipeg in 1905, Houston was already well known and respected enough by 1908 to run as a Socialist Party of Canada candidate in the federal election of that year. Although of Anglo-Celtic background, and thereby fitting the stereotype of SPC members, Houston enjoyed widespread support from Winnipeg's "ethnic" communities. Campaign meetings addressed by Houston included speakers of Yiddish, Russian, Polish, Ruthenian, and German. Jewish support came not just from individuals making campaign donations, but also from the Workmen's Circle, which endorsed Houston's candidacy by telling the working class of Winnipeg that "a vote for J. D. Houston will be a vote for themselves." On election day Houston finished third behind the Liberal and Conservative candidates, yet polled an impressive 2,000 votes. Houston's strength was in the north end of Winnipeg, indicating strong support from the "ethnic" communities and from skilled machinists of Anglo-Celtic origin who worked at the Canadian Pacific Railway's Weston yards and shops.

After 1908 not a great deal is known about Houston, except that he worked as an organizer for the Socialist Party of Canada. As the First World War approached he left Winnipeg for Toronto and then Montreal, where he spent the First World War years. Houston made a name for himself on the Montreal left as a keen debater and someone quite willing to incorporate new ways of thinking into his more firmly held Marxist principles. The respect in which Houston was held was revealed in the summer of 1919 when he was asked to return to Winnipeg to take over the editorship of the *One Big Union Bulletin*. In the wake of the Winnipeg General Strike, with prominent strike leaders such as R. B. Russell on trial and then incarcerated, Houston became the leading

voice in the country for the One Big Union and the cause of industrial unionism.

While editorship of the *OBU Bulletin* alone establishes Houston's importance, he needs to be recognized for an equally significant contribution. Beginning on 24 April 1920 Houston published a series of articles entitled "The Stage Setting of the O. B. U." in the *Bulletin*. Frank Woodward, who succeeded Houston as editor of the *Bulletin*, called it "the first attempt of its kind to write the history of Canada from the viewpoint of the class-conscious worker." It may never be possible to definitively state that John Houston was Canada's first labour historian, but he was certainly among the first to write an account of the rise of Canadian labour from the period of initial contact with Aboriginal Peoples to his own day.

Houston's labour history of Canada evinces many of the major strengths and weaknesses of the Marxist analysis of his generation. His approach is teleological, presenting historical evolution as leading inexorably to the formation of the One Big Union, the demise of craft unionism, and the relegating of the American Federation of Labor to the dustbin of history. To a 21st century reader Houston's determinism is off-putting, if not offensive, the relic of a long-gone world view to be condemned and forgotten. That sentiment is compounded when Houston applies a teleological approach to Aboriginal Peoples, accepting the widespread belief of his time that it is the fate of Aboriginal Peoples "to perish from the face of the earth."

Before rushing to condemn, it is well to remember that in Houston's day not just "white" people, but many Aboriginal people themselves, believed that they belonged to a "dying race." In an age in which Canada's Aboriginal People were treated as mere impediments to the spread of the British Commonwealth's civilizing mission to the world, Houston had no illusions about what had happened in Canada, satirically noting: "The Indians being savages and barbarians, had never learned the virtues of civilization, among which was the paramount virtue of getting the best of one's neighbor through lying, cheating and stealing." Academic critics of Socialist Party members have signally failed to recognize and understand their satire, taking their comments on "race" at face value, and failing to appreciate the incisive critiques of racism that flowed from their pens. Houston also comments on slavery in Canada, beating by almost a century most Canadians of our own day who still do not realize that the peculiar institution existed in this country.

We can also choose to be critical of Houston's brief look at the Knights of Labor, in which he makes the exaggerated claim that the organization's membership ran into "a good many millions." More importantly, it might be argued, is his regard for the organization's efforts to unite men and women, black and white, skilled and unskilled. This effort, Houston writes, "filled the perspective," a powerfully evocative turn of phrase that I do not feel competent to accurately interpret. It is, perhaps, Houston's version of "dreaming of what might be," but in a sense an even more powerful evocation of the age-old longing for freedom and equality.

Yet as keen a commentator on working-class organization as Houston was, his working-class history of Canada in some ways features an even more insightful analysis of the rise of the Canadian capitalist class. Houston bases his analysis of Canadian business on what he calls "bush culture." The Canadian self-made man started out on the farm, then moved to the country town, where he created a "pecuniary-politico enterprise" in which real estate speculation served as the driving force of local patriotism and civic pride. To Houston, this enterprise "is a sort of offensive and defensive alliance in which each is a strategist for his own particular pocket and all stand together against the enemy, the stranger."

Winnipeg in 1919 was a small city, or "overgrown town" in Houston's schema, a city characterized by the same offensive and defensive alliance whose values had emerged from the bush culture. During the Winnipeg General Strike, Houston writes: "The bush culture was appealed to and the full draught of its reactionary principles was fully honored. The old alliance between the government, the law, the business man, the church and the press were all fully availed of." It was during the strike that bush culture was most fully realized, brought on by a set of values that allowed Canadian capitalists to get "something for nothing from the wealth created by the labor of the foreign immigrant."

Houston puts paid to the claim now widespread in Canadian academic circles that the Winnipeg General Strike had nothing to do with the One Big Union, noting that "the causes which produced the Winnipeg strike were inseparably linked up with the origin of the O. B. U." Houston writes: "Many of the most enthusiastic supporters of the O. B. U. up to the development of the enmity to the workers as shown in the strike, refused to budge out of the old internationals." Houston had a keen appreciation of the crucial roll the strike played in transforming the dream of one big union into a flesh and blood festival of possibility in the streets of Winnipeg. It was the strike, Houston reminds us, that made many initial opponents of the One Big Union change their minds and take the plunge.

John Houston's articles in the *One Big Union Bulletin* cannot be dismissed as the amateur ramblings of a misguided maverick, because it is our own past and its meanings that we are dismissing. We get so bound up in the posturing of political rights and lefts that we forget that the Canadians of John Houston's generation, their politics notwithstanding, experienced the same weather, technology, big ideas and events of the day. When John Houston writes that "the Canadian people know more about railroading than they know of anything else," I can only add that my God-fearing, politically conservative grandparents might have agreed. They even shared a moral economy with Houston, and in their Scottish Protestant antipathy to waste and corruption would have nodded in agreement that the "C. P. R. made us a nation; it bankrupted us forever."

Yes, as you read John Houston's articles you may be put off by his description of the League of Nations as a "misshapen abortion," and his famous dismissal of labour leaders who cooperate with the government as "crooks." You may feel the need to suppress a chuckle when you read him describing the One Big Union "steadily and consistently" forging ahead on its "historic class mission." Needless to say, Houston's prediction that the One Big Union would go on to "engulf" the craft unions did not come to pass. But if you keep an open mind, you may learn to appreciate the wonderful wit and satire of a Marxist generation that unerringly skewered the lies and hypocrisy of capitalist apologists. As Houston so incisively observes: "When you have no money it is very gratifying to know that the cost of living is coming down." Enough said.

It may or may not be true that when John Houston was buried on 14 March 1921, in a snowstorm, the hundreds of mourners marched in the largest parade ever held in Winnipeg for a labour stalwart. We do know that mourners included "many women workers," and no doubt Winnipeg's "ethnic" working class was also well represented. John Houston fit the white, male, Anglo-Celtic stereotype of the Canadian Marxists of his generation, but his message reached much beyond this core constituency to a wider world. If we care to take a listen, it still has the power to reach into our own. ☙

The following editorials by Jack Houston have been selected from the OBU Bulletin.

Saturday, 11 October 1919

THE TRINITY

It sometimes looks as if the working class culture, so far as propaganda is concerned, was being choked by big words. On the other hand, the scientists tell us that no one understands a question until he has learned the terms or language peculiar to that study, that is to say, that while one is getting the ideas he is also getting the terminology. Be that as it may there is such a thing as popularizing a science or making an easy introduction to it. This process is like stepping down a high voltage current to render it safe for light duty purposes. The terms Surplus Value, the Materialistic Conception of History and The Class Struggle in themselves, contained but small hints of the special meanings applied to them by the intellectuals of the working class movement. However, the terminology in which these principles of working class study were clothed was a stimulus to the studious, while the lazy and the careless, who would have only confused any question, were repelled from any consideration of the matters at issue. The once esoteric learning of the intellectuals is now, through a thousand channels, coming to be soundly apprehended by the rank and file of the workers.

The Class Struggle produces class consciousness. Loyalty is an inherited instinct, part of the native endowment, or human inheritance, which is the heritage of every human being. This loyalty must have some subject on which it may rest. In the savage group it was the consanguine family; during barbarism it rested on the gens, the tribe or the confederation of tribes. Since the advent of civilization the territorial division known as the state or nation has been its foundation. In the new culture, it goes out and rests on the class of workers alone, and finally when classes are abolished, the inherited loyalty will cover the whole human race. Loyalty involves its necessary component or opposite hatred or dislike of all outside its own class. At the present time no one can be called class conscious who had any vestige of loyalty to the nation or state. Such a one is a scissor-bill.

When Marx wrote on Surplus Value the prevailing handcraft notions of economics, made it possible that the new theory has spread so rapidly over the world and has brought the workers so sharply against its stern rule in so rude a manner that few illusions from the old handcraft culture have any chance of retaining their validity among the actual workers in the plants. The workers do the work and must be secured in their livelihood or they cannot perform their tasks. The owners take the product of labor because they are owners. The worker will be on the pay roll when the boss can make a profit but at any other time his only right is to starve to death. When he has any part of the pay left he has rights as a professor of wealth but, the moment his pay is all spent, he is a vagrant and a hobo with laws made and provided for his prompt and rigorous suppression. Should the workers in any particular number cease work and thus upset the social order, as is inevitable when capital (owners) is not receiving the profits that might be in sight for the time being, they must be imputed to be rebels against the social order and criminals both in fact and in law. The code as written may not so class them but the law as construed must so treat these recalcitrants. The worker who thinks that he possesses any rights, which come as a hold over from the codes of the days of the handicraft laws, is also a scissor-bill.

The Materialistic Conception of History was presented to us from Marx and Engles [Engels] in a somewhat confused and inchoate form. The miracle of their presentation was, that, with the sources of information and the state of the social sciences so backward, their generalizations and their applications of the principle were so sound. Little wonder, however, that so many people found it impossible to make an interpretation of what was meant and that so much fog and confusion was the result. At first a socialist doctrine, it has come to pass that the bulk of the development along its lines has been made not by socialists, but by scientists seeking knowledge for itself. After Marx, Morgan made the first substantial contribution in his great work, Ancient Societies. Then came Lester F. Ward, followed by the whole school of archaeologists, ethnologists, psychologists and

sociologists, all of whose contributions of any value have been made in this present century. The American Journal of Sociology, from time to time, contains the sum of the new discoveries. Europe has followed but tardily; Freud, the Austrian Alienist, has been a notable exception to the self-sufficiency of that effete continent, which was only beginning to discover the American school, when the war broke out and threw that continent back for decades. The proof that one understands the Materialist Conception of History is his ability to make the application of the principle to the numerous changes in the social world as they occur. The purpose of the theory is to enable its students to understand human behavior insofar as it can be called conduct. The beginning of wisdom in this regard is to be able to tell what is native endowment or heredity, and what is cultural, or the use and wont, or habituation. If one has not learned to make the discrimination, he also is a scissor-bill.

ANARCHISTS AND ANARCHISTS

The philosophic anarchists have well defined ideals and a constructive philosophy of social life and while we may differ from these people, they at least are entitled to the respect which goes to all who hold steadfast to their opinions and ideals.

The word anarchist has come to carry an exceedingly ugly and sinister meaning, simply because it is applied, generally, to all those who refuse to submit to social control and who refuse to comply with the laws by which society enforces its conclusions.

The Citizens' committee, always an illegal and law-breaking organization, is purely an anarchistic creation in the worse meaning of the term. It is there purely as an engine to incite to mob violence, and whenever the mob spirit is made to flame up to capacity, there are no limits to its activities. Battle, murder, and sudden death; evil speaking, lying and slandering; envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, are its fruits.

The press tells us, with apparent gusto, of the Sarnia and Windsor brand of this sinister bunch of moral degenerates at their hideous pastime, the Rev. Wm. Ivens being the subject of their regard. We apologize to the confessed anarchists for mentioning them in the same column with these Ontario human perverts.

Saturday, 1 November 1919

NEW KINDS OF UNIONS

Man's native endowment is a bundle of wants and certain capacities. The wants are stable, practicably unchangeable; the capacities by means of which he satisfies his wants or needs are subject to reflection and consideration; are, therefore, in constant flux and change and are dynamic.

As man's technology improved production increased until a surplus was both a possibility and a fact. Then the egotistic of the "I" feelings came uppermost. Force and fraud were enthroned and the unsocial units of society became ruling classes; the worthy and useful units became slaves. The state became an institution, through which by force and fraud, the workers were ruled and governed and compelled to labor that their masters might enjoy, in dignified ease. The state being a class state and therefore, the political state, all political struggles and all class struggles have been for control of the state, or have been in resistance to the state.

Not so very long ago Prof. Veblen spoke of the possibility and the probability of a union of skilled technologists in the near future. In this issue mention is made of a federation of intellectuals now being attempted in France. Prof. Giddings of Columbia was interviewed a short time on the subject of middle class unions. Arthur Meighen is worried over occupational political action and over all the world hovers the horrible spectre of Bolshevism.

Dr. Veblen appears to have a few sane ideas on the union of the intellectual technicians. The union would be all right because it would be a job trust in which there were but a limited number of eligibles. It would be able to make the boss come across because there would be no one to replace them on strike. In time the specialized skill and efficiency could be acquired by those who are slightly less skilled, but to forestall this [the] union would make common cause with ordinary labor and the hold-up of the bosses would be effectual. Veblen thinks the results would be an overturning state.

Giddings, who is the Moses of the Sociologists, says that the American people are individualistic and that they could not agree, and says that no proletarian effort to establish class rule could succeed. Giddings also appears to believe in the state as some kind of a magical entity endowed with purpose and capable of forming designs.

The state as an institution which exists as a going concern. When it loses its character as an instrument to serve the particular interests of a class, it will no more be the state. In the meantime, classes with peculiar interest are going to form democratic parties and combinations to get control of the state so as to use it to serve their own ends. The recent elections have seen the farmers take such action, with such an object in view.

The Industrial Revolution has brought into play new forces and new parties and new fields for the display of political activities. The representatives in the legislature now stand for industrial interests rather than for the geographical constituencies that elected them. One man is a C.P.R. follower, another protects the German nickel interests, another takes the banks under his wing, while the grain speculators have a man Friday to watch over their special interests.

Saturday, 29 May 1920

OH! CANADA OH! CANADA

Oh! Canada! Why, oh, why! Are you cursed with a free press: a press free to open its columns to editorial writers, who without taking the trouble to make inquiry into facts are, on some other writer's misrepresentations, at one minute's notice ready to tackle any subject on earth, in the heaven above or in the waters under the earth.

On May 21st the Free Press treats of the Soviet Labor Code. Now, some time ago the Bulletin had set out to publish the CODE in full, but our poor little four pages hadn't the room, so, knowing that many of the workers of Winnipeg were reading the Labor Code in full in other radical publications, we passed up the CODE.

Here is one provision of the Code of which the Free Press says nothing: "All citizens able to work have the right to employment at their vocations." In case no work can be found for him he is entitled to an unemployed benefit which must be equal to his regular wages.

What would Barrett or Tom Deacon think of a law drawn on that plan for Winnipeg? The Manitoba Employers Association would throw ten thousand cat fits before they would stand for any such Code.

Now, if the Soviet pays him the Soviet expects him to work and if there is no work at his trade they find him another job at a lower grade, but make up his wages to what he drew before, from the unemployment fund.

Then every man must have a month's holidays at full wages.

Wages are fixed by the trades unions and approved by the Commissioner of Labor. If the bosses don't agree, the government itself, elevated by the peasants and workers, fixes the scale. No boss ridden, government hand picked Robertson there.

The Free Press says a worker can't quit his job. Yes, he can! But his reasons for quitting must be passed on by his shop committee. If the shop committee says No! He may appeal to the union. If the union says No! And he quits, he loses a weeks worth of wages and applies to the Bureau of Labor Distributions for another job. If he does not do that, why, he is treated as a gentleman and a bourgeois, that is, he has no vote and damned little to eat, but takes it out respect[a]bility.

Saturday, 10 April 1920

WHEN THE CURTAIN LIFTS

The curtain was rung down on the Winnipeg strike trials on Tuesday April 6th, so far as the action of the trial courts were concerned. There will be, we understand, an application to the Judicial Committee of the House of Lords in Great Britain, commonly known as Supreme Court of the Realms in the case of R. B. Russell.

The proceeding at the session of the court, held for the purpose of imposing sentence on the six convicted men was probably one unparalleled in a British Court of Justice. When asked if they had anything to say before the sentence should be pronounced on them, Johns, Armstrong and Bray spoke at some length. Their remarks, which we hope to publish in full in this and later issues, showed that the prisoners, themselves, were to say the least, unrepentant. All appeared to be making the best of the situation in which they found themselves and to be facing a year of "incommunicado" with courage. Ivens, Armstrong, Pritchard, Johns and Queen get a year each, while Bray takes the count for six months.

Much flood water will run under the arches of the bridges while the term of their sentence runs. With the Kaleidoscopic processes of society revealing radical changes in the social relations every day or two, who may dare to prophesy the kind of a world these men will step into on their release. Even the judge appeared to sense the changes that are about to come as indicated by his remarks. Judge Metcalfe evidently believes that enforcing the law, that is the law, had the defects of its qualities and the qualities of its defects, else why speak about these men or such means as these being elected to make the laws which a judge is bound to enforce.

Direct action, the sympathetic strike, or an organization built up with capacities to use these weapons, having been declared illegal, following the kinds of least resistance, it is inevitable that labor will use every force at its disposal to win seats in the coming Provincial elections. On this field too, the workers are faced by a tremendous handicap. The soul of democracy, representation by population is non-existent in the city of Winnipeg.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," and, since the days of Mackenzie and Papineau, Canadians have been asleep. This city, which should have, along with Brandon, one half of the members in the Manitoba Legislature, has been though force and fraud, deprived of one half of its legal and logistical representatives. The crime "stinks to high heaven" as the chaste and forcible language of the late Sir John A. McDonald would have put it.

But for all that. Let labor gird up its loins and make ready for the fray. The best we can get from this coming struggle will be the closing up of the ranks of labor, the forcing out into the open of every traitor and every skulker, and the discipline and experience to be had from organization and the winning of victories from an enemy that fights every foot of the ground and resorts to every wile and infamy that can be suggested by the devil, the father of all lies.

The entire collection of Houston editorials is available on the MHS website:

www.mhs.mb.ca/rd/houston

The True Story Of The Song "Red River Valley"

by James J. Nystrom
Bothell, Washington

The folk songs of traditional music have evolved from the blending of different cultural traditions. Familiar songs sometimes spring from surprising origins. One of the most notable is the popular folk song "Red River Valley". What appears to be a simple song of lament sung by cowboy singers around campfires is, in reality, the end of a musical mix that has its foundation in the melodies of traditional folk songs sung in the mists of a Gaelic past and whose lyrics were written in a personal expression of the cultural conflict occurring during the nineteenth-century settlement of the American continent by Europeans and the related displacement of the indigenous natives.

"Red River Valley" was first recorded as "Cowboy Love Song" in 1925 by Carl T. Sprague, one of the first cowboy singers from Texas. The biggest hit of the cowboy version was the 1927 version by Hugh Cross and Riley Puckett. In both recordings of the song, the lyrical associations are about the Red River Valley that marks the border between Arkansas and Texas.

A song named "Bright Mohawk Valley" with the same tune was published as sheet music on Tin Pan Alley in 1896 with James J. Kerrigan as the writer, but the song was thought to have been adapted for a New York audience. The earliest known written manuscript of the lyrics to "Red River Valley" were found in Iowa bearing the notation of the year 1879.

Although it is not widely known, there are two significant Red River valleys on the American Continent: The Red River Valley of the South and the Red River Valley of the North. And it is to this Red River Valley of the North that the origins of "Red River Valley" lead. The famed Canadian folklorist, Edith Fowke, gave mostly anecdotal evidence that the song was known in at least five Canadian provinces prior to 1896 and speculated that the song was composed at the time of the Wolseley Expedition of 1870 in Manitoba. She claimed that the song was well known on the Canadian prairies and held the form of a story about a Métis girl lamenting the departure of her Anglo lover, a soldier who came west to suppress the Red River Rebellion. The text for Fowke's version of the song was published in "Western Folklore" in 1964 and was discovered in the papers of a former Canadian Mounted Police officer, Col. Gilbert Sanders. Fowke has written, "This is probably the best known folk song on the Canadian prairies. Later research indicates that it was known in at least five Canadian Provinces before 1896 and was probably composed during the Red River Rebellion of 1870." Here are the lyrics discovered by Edith Fowke:

James Nystrom has written for The Seattle Times, Poetry Northwest *and* The University of Washington Daily. *His non-fiction book* The Saga of the Outlaw Harry Tracy *was published in 2012. His first novel* Summer of '69 *is set to be released later this year. He is currently working on a second novel* Call of Thunder *based on a First Nations's legend about Chief Seattle (Si'ahl).*

The Red River Valley

From this valley they say you are going,
I shall miss your bright eyes and sweet smile,
For alas you take with the sunshine
That has brightened my pathway awhile.

Chorus:

Come and sit by my side if you love me,
Do not hasten to bid me adieu.
But remember the Red River Valley
And the girl who has loved you so true.

For this long, long time I have waited
For the words that you never would say,
But now my last hope has vanished
When they tell me you're going away.

When you go to your home by the ocean
May you never forget the sweet hours
That we spent in the Red River Valley
Or the vows we exchanged mid the bowers.

Will you think of the valley you're leaving?
Oh, how lonely and dreary 'twill be!
Will you think of the fond heart you're breaking
And be true to your promise to me.

The dark maiden's prayer for her lover
To the spirit that rules o'er the world
His pathway with sunshine may cover
Leave his grief to the Red River girl.

There could never be such a longing
In the heart of a white maiden's breast
As dwells in the heart you are breaking
With love for the boy who came west.

Archives of Manitoba, Hime #29, N12577.

A winsome young woman, photographed at the Red River Settlement in 1858 by H. L. Hime (identified in some copies as "Jane l'Adamar" but "Susan—a Swampey Cree" in others) is evocative of the lover pining for her departed soldier from the Wolseley Expedition in the song *Red River Valley*.

The Red River Valley of the North has a long and storied past in the history of the settlement of North America. The river is one of the few north-flowing streams on the American continent and it originates at the confluence of the Bois de Sioux and Otter Tail rivers in the southern border of North Dakota and Minnesota and it flows northward over 900 kilometres as the border between the two states into Manitoba before finally emptying into Lake Winnipeg whose waters eventually flow into Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean.

The watershed of the area was part of Rupert's Land (named after Prince Rupert of the Rhine, a nephew of Charles I and the first Governor of the HBC), the Hudson's Bay Company land concession in north central North America granted in 1670. It was first settled by French-Canadian fur trappers who came to the area to trap beaver for pelts. These trappers married First Nations women and established the first true "Métis" culture (part native and part French-Canadian) in North America. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, HBC traders established fur posts inland from Hudson Bay to compete with the North West Company that operated out of Montreal. The establishment at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers of a colony of displaced Scottish highlanders by Lord Selkirk, a shareholder in the HBC, was intended to gain control of this crucial river junction from the rival Nor'Westers. However, within a few decades Red River had become a predominantly Métis settlement of both French and English speakers.

By the 1860s, as Ontarian immigrants began to arrive in the settlement, pressures grew for annexation of the colony by Canada. Land disputes and cultural conflicts between the settlement's Métis inhabitants and the growing Anglo elite were exacerbated by Canada's 1869 annexation of Rupert's Land. Louis Riel's Provisional Government negotiated the entry of Assiniboia into Confederation, and in 1870 the Manitoba Act created the Province of Manitoba. To underscore its new jurisdiction in the region, the Canadian government sent the Wolseley Expedition to Red River.

It was during this period of cultural clashing that Edith Fowke has postulated that the song "Red River Valley" was first composed. Part of her anecdotal proof as to the origin of the song hinged on the use of the word "adieu" in the lyrics, a word not normally associated with cowboys of the southwestern plains.

There has been speculation, drawn from the descendants of the settlers in the area, that the song was sung by a Métis woman who was the lover of one of the men in the Wolseley expedition at a gathering to commemorate the military victory of the Hudson's Bay Company over Louis Riel. She was lamenting in song the departure of her soldier/lover from the Red River Valley after the victory.

If this speculation were true, then the song would be ironic in both melody and lyrics. The tune of Red River Valley was reminiscent of several Gaelic songs in notes and musical construction. Gaelic songs were composed of notes that could be played on the bagpipe, the hornpipe or the violin, the traditional instruments. The typical form was the ballad which told a story in strophic or repeated musical strains. Two traditional folk songs with similar structure and notes were the "Connemara Cradle Song" (which also has direct similarities with the song, "Down in the Valley") and "The Drums of Dumbarton". These songs have ancient origins. "Connemara Cradle Song" was a traditional Irish lullaby about a fisherman's safe return from the sea. "The Drums of Dumbarton" was included in the "Orpheus Caledonius" collection of traditional Scottish songs published by William Thomson in 1733. In a further irony, a copy of "Orpheus Caledonius" was given to Robert Burns (the acknowledged "Bard of Scotland") by the sister of Lord Selkirk. Burns included "The Drums of Dumbarton" in his collection of traditional Scottish songs which introduced his most famous lyrical poem, "Love is like a Red, Red Rose", the words of which Bob Dylan has been quoted as saying were the ones that most influenced him at the start of his musical career. The Gaelic-speaking settlers of Red River Valley had brought along the instruments and songs of their parent country. By singing the song in a stylistic form commonly used by the Scottish

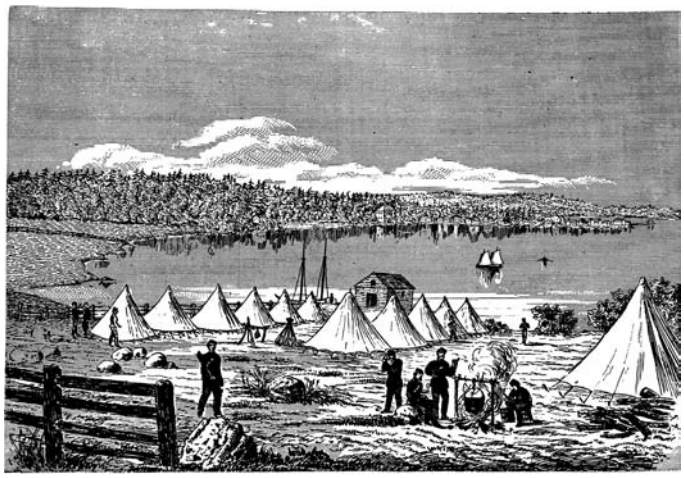
settlers rather than the form normally used by the French-Canadian Métis, the singer was both complimentary and critical in her presentation. The lyrics from the Fowke version, if taken in the context of its performance, are even more provocative. The invitation to "Come and sit by my side" was an open acknowledgement of what was then a scandalous affair. "Do not hasten to bid me adieu" asks for recognition of the French culture which the Scots settlers were trying to eradicate or at least ignore. "Be true to your promise to me" tears the veil from the often broken promise of marriage made by soldiers to the Métis women in order to receive sexual favours. There is a direct reference to the racial prejudice that existed in the Scots settler community in the two stanzas that refer the "white maiden" and the "dark maiden", and to the difference in the "longing" of the different groups of women.

It was no wonder that the song, so mocking in both tune and lyrics, as well as so entertaining in the pleasantness of its melody, would be remembered and played again and again at the many musical gatherings of the two communities which eventually merged over time. The Red River Settlement continued to grow as it became the city of Winnipeg. Some of its people dispersed into other areas of Canada and the United States and they took the "Red River Valley" with them. As is the case with most ballads of the time, they became localized with the changing of the lyrics to fit the new situation. One such localization was the Red River of the South rendition popularized as a cowboy song. It was not the only version. "In The Bright Mohawk Valley", "Bright Laurel Valley", "Bright Sherman Valley," "We Shall Walk Through The Streets Of The City" and "Bright Little Valley" are all localized versions of "Red River Valley".

One of the final ironies of "Red River Valley" lay in the eventual merging of the two former rival traditions, French and Scottish, when descendants of the Scottish settlers also intermarried with Aboriginal peoples and began producing a Scots-Métis culture. Descendants of the Manitoba (Red River Settlement) Métis people (which included both Scots-Métis and French-Canadian Métis) were affirmed as a distinct nation by the Supreme Court of Canada in 2003. It is estimated that 50% of all Western Canadians have some Métis blood in their ancestry. "Red River Valley" is a song of the Métis struggle to survive and a celebration of their recognition as a distinct culture.

Archives of Manitoba, Red River Settlement #13, N16656.

Red River Jig. When this woodcut was published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1860, it was noted that "Mr. Cameron explains that in his day the dancers were more sedate than they appear here."



Archives of Manitoba, Red River Expedition 1870 #4, N5355.

A woodcut published in the *Canadian Illustrated News* in 1869 "from a sketch by Rev. Mr. W.", shows how the Wolseley Expedition's camp at Sault Ste. Marie might have appeared.

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Hollywood Belatedly Recognizes Manitoba: *Northern Pursuit* (1943) as a relic of Second World War Screen Propaganda

by James M. Skinner
Victoria, British Columbia

The Keystone Province has not fared well as a location of choice for American movie-makers. Other parts of the nation have done much better. Jasper and Banff national parks in Alberta featured more often in outdoor adventures over the decades, as did the Yukon, while Marilyn Monroe gave an added boost to the appeal of a segment of southwestern Ontario when she tottered about in high heels and an array of tight skirts and blouses in *Niagara*. *Saskatchewan*, a western filmed in its namesake province, starred heartthrob Alan Ladd as a cowboy working with the RCMP. Indeed, it took a 1941 British thriller, *49th Parallel*, to establish the very existence, at least in non-travelogues, of Winnipeg. It was cast as a stopping off place for a group of fugitive German POWs *en route* from "the frozen North" to what was then neutral USA. However, Hollywood made amends of a sort in 1943 when Warner Brothers produced *Northern Pursuit*, a ninety-four minute, action movie with propaganda elements, set entirely in Manitoba, mostly the north and centre. The same studio's *Casablanca* had been an enormous popular and critical success and had whetted the public's appetite for more war pictures in which the enemy, be they Japanese, German or Italian, could be vilified and overcome, with a commensurate boost to morale on the home front.

Geography is not *Northern Pursuit*'s strong suit. It begins with a map of the entire north of Canada where Hudson Bay is prominently displayed, but no ports or landfalls are indicated. Somewhere in the vicinity of Churchill—we must assume—a German U-boat breaks through thick ice to deposit a quintet of Nazi airmen on shore, each attired in a fur parka and carrying nothing except a rifle, back-pack and a pair of skis. Their leader is Major Hugo von Keller (Helmut Dantine), an ace Luftwaffe bomber pilot who, as we soon discover, is a quintessential representative of the Master Race, at once calculating, humourless and ruthless. We are not yet privy to their assignment but it involves trekking southwards to meet up with a local band of First Nation Canadians who will guide them to their final destination. The scenic landscape they traverse is magnificent. Mountains soar to ten thousand feet or more and trees over one hundred feet tall dot the landscape. This would come as no surprise to those privy to Warner Brothers production notes that indicate all exterior photography was done in and around Sun Valley, Idaho, whose topography is markedly different from Manitoba's. Once the party encounters a mythical Bear Mountain, two of the Indian guides refuse to proceed over its pass, citing a distinct avalanche danger. Von Keller now reveals his true colours by casually ordering them shot in the back for insubordination. But their premonition of disaster proves only too true when the entire company, with the exception of the Major, is buried alive by a massive cascade of rock and snow from one of those lofty peaks. Left on his own, he struggles through the snow before collapsing.

Two Mounties, on routine patrol from the town of Bear Lake, save him from death by exposure. The one, Corporal Steve Wagner (Errol Flynn) reveals that he is of German parentage and his apparent lack of commitment to the war effort is a signal to the audience that he could be a potential traitor. He seems impressed when, momentarily left alone with the Nazi colonel, he listens intently to a "… list of the achievements of the Third Reich …", the conquests of Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, France and the Low Countries. By the time Flynn arrives at the Mounties' headquarters in Bear Lake with his prisoner in tow, the geniality between captive and escort arouses considerable hostility from his superiors. The town itself is quite impressive and includes a general store, barbershop, hotel and a sizable RCMP detachment. The question of the corporal's loyalty further deepens when he asks to be discharged from the force. Meanwhile, von Keller is imprisoned nearby in yet another invention of the scriptwriters—the Canadian Department of National Defense Internment Camp (readers will note the Americanized spelling of "Defence" that would not have been used in 1941). With amazing ease, he quickly executes a breakout of selected prisoners that seems to involve nothing more than the disarming of a single guard by yet another native-born turncoat posing as a soldier. Back in

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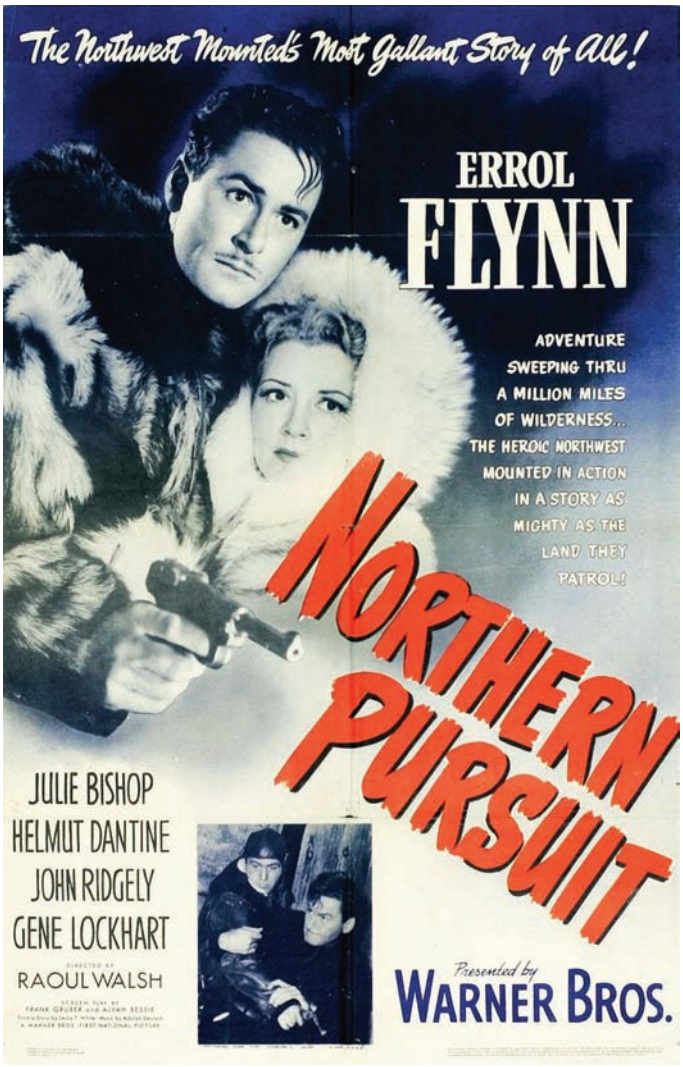

www.cinemarx.ro

"Breathless adventure." An advertising poster for the 1943 Hollywood movie *Northern Pursuit*, set in a fictionalized Manitoba, featured heartthrob Errol Flynn in the role of a Mountie of German ancestry who served in the mythical RCMP detachment at Bear Lake. Flynn succeeded in thwarting a Nazi sabotage plot.

Bear Lake, Wagner is accused of being an accomplice to the escape plan and is sentenced to be court-martialled in Winnipeg. At this point, the one authentic shot in the picture appears—an aerial view of the city, possibly from atop the Legislative Building, and presumably abstracted from a pre-war travelogue. Out on bail and returning to his room in the sumptuous Royal George Hotel on Portage Avenue, Steve is approached by his benefactor, a portly American citizen and Nazi sympathizer by the name of Ernest Willis. The plan is for the two of them to make a train journey to just south of The Pas (pronounced "Paz" throughout) and there meet up with the escapees. Yet another Indian band will lead them to their final destination, which, like Wagner's apparent indifference to the war effort, remains a mystery. However, the goal is revealed as the journey concludes at a padlocked mine door. Long before the war, von Keller explains, airplane parts and bombs had been smuggled into Manitoba under the guise of heavy equipment and stored in the mineshaft somewhere north of Flin Flon. These will now be assembled into a plane whose mission is to destroy, according to von Keller, "… one of the most vital waterways connecting the United States and Canada, a main artery of all transatlantic war supplies. Eight bombs, placed with precision, will destroy the canal and locks and stop shipping for months. I will drop those bombs with precision." In the interim, the native band leader who had opined "No freedom for Indians until the Germans come!" realizes the awful consequence of his treachery and attempts to escape only to be shot dead after a spectacular ski pursuit through yet another set of valleys and mountains.

Gradually the audience comes to understand that Steve has been playing double agent and that his allegiance is very much to the country of his birth. Somehow, he must prevent the plane from ever reaching its destination. Von Keller suspects as much and forces him, on pain of death, to participate in what would seem a mind-boggling undertaking for a half dozen individuals—that of assembling the plane from the contents of a stack of crates. Nevertheless, things proceed smoothly and when the Nazi crew is ready to board, orders are given to kill the now redundant Wagner. However, he dispatches his would-be murderer, dons his clothes and boards the plane unnoticed. Once airborne, a fight ensues. Steve succeeds in killing or disabling the entire crew including the Major who, badly injured and immobilized in the cockpit, watches in terror as the aircraft goes into a death spiral. Our hero is able to don a fortuitously located parachute at the last second and floats to earth moments after the fiery crash occurs. A postlude in Bear Lake sees Steve marry his sweetheart, the daughter of yet another screen caricature, a tight-fisted Scots store owner, Angus McBain, who faints after realizing he had rashly invited the wedding guests to eat and drink as much as they desired at his expense. The final sequence is a wink and a nudge to the contemporary audience with the now heroic Mountie assuring his bride that she is the only woman he has ever loved. Looking straight at the camera he gives a knowing grin. "What am I saying?"

It is ironic that immediately before filming began, Errol Flynn had been acquitted of the charge of rape for having sex with a minor, one of a number of similar incidents that would dog his career.

As wartime movie propaganda, *Northern Pursuit* was as inaccurate and far-fetched as most of its stablemates. The events portrayed in the film occur over a period of two months and several close-ups of newspaper headlines reveal these to be August and September when constant blizzards and the presence of snow on the ground to a depth of six inches or so would seem highly improbable. The few Aboriginal characters in the narrative, with their expressed hostility to the government, conform to the long-held Hollywood stereotype of 'Injuns' as ungrateful and untrustworthy, ever ready to be subverted by an alien force.

sensesofcinema.com

"As big as the great Northwest!" *Northern Pursuit* featured Errol Flynn with a Nazi plotter played by Austrian-born actor Helmut Dantine.

The Nazis' trek from Hudson Bay to the Flin Flon–The Pas area is, geographically speaking; convoluted and illogical, assuming their journey took them within a few miles of the real Bear Lake. That a German-owned mine in Manitoba would remain locked and undisturbed four years after the outbreak of war stretches credulity. Equally absurd is the concept that half a dozen men could assemble a ready-to-fly airplane in a matter of weeks. By way of a footnote, the plane that emerges from the mine is a Lockheed Hudson whose fabrication plant was located near Warner Brothers studios in California. The ultimate target remains vague although it is probably meant to be somewhere in the southern Great Lakes region or, perhaps, the St. Lawrence. Of course, little if any of this would perplex an audience that, for the most part, was totally unfamiliar with Manitoba, its climate, its geography and much else.

Still, the film is noteworthy for illuminating the reluctance of the industry to malign the image of the Third Reich's population too severely. While Hollywood portrayed Japan and its people as a barbaric nation deserving complete annihilation, the Germans seen here, and elsewhere in American propaganda pictures of this time, were more cultured and recognizable as worthy foes. While Major von Keller displays a callous brutality towards all who stand in his way, his subordinates, in contrast, chat and go about their tasks as unobtrusively as would their opposite numbers on the Allied side. Flynn's appearance, as the offspring of a German couple, reinforces the concept that the invaders on Manitoba soil were not essentially different from their pursuers. Nor should it be forgotten that there was a sizable element in the population of the province, as elsewhere on the continent, whose ancestry was German and whose culture, religion and social networking were conventional and accepted as such. Ruefully, one must conclude that *Northern Pursuit* amounts to little more than a feud to the death between a loyal, Manitoba-born Canadian and a scheming Nazi, with the outcome never in doubt. ∞

Manitoba's Concrete Block Buildings

by Gordon Goldsborough
Winnipeg, Manitoba

The MHS is compiling an inventory of historic sites around Manitoba as an encouragement to tourism and management. Some sites in that inventory are featured in issues of Manitoba History. *Eds.*

For a few years in the early 20th century, numerous buildings around southern Manitoba were constructed of a unique, locally-made material: concrete blocks. Using a machine bought from a mail-order catalogue, wet concrete (a mixture of cement, gravel, and water) was poured into a mould where it would set until hard. The ease with which the blocks could be made at the construction site, with limited investment of resources—unlike bricks, which typically required a kiln for high-temperature firing—was probably their primary attraction.

Much larger in size than bricks, these distinctive blocks measured up to 30 to 32 inches long, 9 to 10 inches tall, and 3 inches or more thick, and weighed over 50 pounds each. They were hollow and typically flat on the interior face but variously patterned on the exterior face. Often, multiple patterns would be incorporated into a single building.

Today, there are several "hot spots" of concrete block buildings around Manitoba, probably because those areas had advocates or businessmen who promoted their use. Some of these "block boosters" included Frank Thomson at Austin, David Wright at Emerson, L. C. McIntosh in the Rural Municipality of Winchester, and William J. McKinney in the Rural Municipality of Morton. An especially high concentration can be found at Arden and the surrounding Rural Municipality of Lansdowne. There, starting in early 1904, blocks were made by the Arden Cement Block and Building Company. Partners in the enterprise included hardware merchant and tinsmith John A. Gilhuly, merchant and municipal official Maurice E. Boughton, carpenters George and William Stockdale, and stonemasons Robert Lamb and John Samuel McGorman.

G. Goldsborough

Concrete blocks used to build a private residence in Austin have at least two different patterns on their exterior surfaces.

Archives of Manitoba, University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Site #15.

Concrete block making is demonstrated in this photo from around 1917, at the Manitoba Agricultural College (now the University of Manitoba).

Though manufactured easily, the blocks provided limited insulation value. Residents of concrete block buildings have told me they find the structures cool in winter and warm in summer. Perhaps it was this disadvantage that made the blocks lose favour as quickly as they gained it. Whatever the reason, use of the blocks seems to have mostly ended around 1910. Consequently, if you find a concrete block building surviving today, it is a relatively safe bet that it was constructed between 1904 and 1910. A few examples of concrete block buildings are shown on the following pages.

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G. Goldsborough

The Bergthaler Church Waisenamt (48 Main Street, Altona) was the local home for a mutual aid association introduced by Mennonites who settled in southern Manitoba in the 1870s. Based on a centuries-old tradition of Mennonites in Prussia and Russia to administer estates and aid widows and orphans, the institution collapsed during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The building has accommodated various functions since then and is now a private residence.

G. Goldsborough

Booth Concrete Granary (RM of North Norfolk). This unique building, near the village of Sidney, was constructed by Frank Thomson for the Booth family. It is situated on the side of a hill so the farmer could transfer the harvested crops into the granary from the uphill side and, when it was time to deliver grain to a local elevator, it was a simple matter of parking a wagon on the downhill side and letting gravity do the work. The downhill side of the building had two openings, one for the main floor and one for an upper floor, so the farmer could store grain on both levels.

G. Goldsborough

Kilkenny General Store (Broomhill, RM of Albert). This two-storey building was built for William Kilkenny and his brother John. In its heyday, the Kilkenny store was the centre of the community. A hand-operated gasoline pump sat at the south end, in front of an entrance to the store and post office, with an implement agency and garage at the north end. Rooms on the upper storey were used as residential space. The business was operated by a succession of Kilkennys until it closed in September 1964. The building's east and south walls are made from patterned concrete blocks. The roof is gone and the interior floors have failed in several places but, otherwise, the concrete structure is largely intact. Pressed metal wall and ceiling panels from the interior have been salvaged by a grandson of the last owner and are available for purchase.

G. Goldsborough

Matchettville School No. 1342 (RM of South Norfolk). According to local legend, the district was originally known as Bachelorville due to the scarcity of women in the early days of settlement, and was renamed Matchettville when the bachelors married. A more likely possibility is that it was named for members of the Matchett family who homesteaded here. The Matchettville School District was established in May 1905 and, the next year, a concrete-block school building was erected by Frank Thomson. The school operated until 1951 when, due to declining enrollment, it closed and remaining students were bused to school in Treherne. The building was sold to a local farmer and used as a granary. Its south wall was damaged extensively when an agricultural implement collided with it in 2003.

G. Goldsborough

The Emerson Baptist Church (Emerson) was designed by Winnipeg architect Hugh McCowan. It was built in 1905 by local contractor David Wright, who also built a manse for the pastor, as well as several private residences around town, most of which survive today. Local lore has it that Wright stopped making concrete block buildings when his mould broke.

G. Goldsborough

Lansdowne Municipal Office (Arden). This impressive building was constructed in 1904 of blocks made by the Arden Cement Block and Building Company, established that year by municipal official Maurice Boughton. It has the distinction of being one of the few municipal offices in Manitoba that is still used for its original purpose.

G. Goldsborough

Nelson House (RM of North Norfolk). This small two-storey house northwest of Austin was probably built by local farmer Frank Thomson who was responsible for many of the concrete-block buildings in the area. Purchased in the 1940s by returned war veteran Joe Nelson, it served as the Nelson family home for many years but was abandoned when, in 2011, a suspected arson fire destroyed all but its strong, concrete walls.

Other Concrete-Block Buildings in Manitoba

- Ayr School (RM of Lansdowne), 1908
- Casselman House (Park Street, Emerson), 1905
- Ferguson Building (275 Stephen Street, Morden), 1910
- A. E. Gardiner Building / Seton Centre (116 Main Street, Carberry), ?
- Mercantile Building (Lyleton, RM of Edward), ?
- McKinney House (RM of Morton), 1904
- Northcote School (Municipality of Killarney-Turtle Mountain), 1906
- Otter School (RM of Brenda), 1908
- Ritzer House (RM of North Norfolk), 1906
- Tenby School (RM of Lansdowne), 1904
- Union Bank Building (Waskada), 1906

To learn more about concrete-block buildings around Manitoba, visit the MHS website:

www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/bricks

Historic Sites of Manitoba

The MHS website features an interactive map of over 4,000 historic sites. Magnify a particular part of the province and see markers denoting local museums, historic buildings, monuments, cemeteries, and others. Select a specific marker to see more information about that site.

www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/sites

The Doukhobor Settlers of the Swan River Valley

by Ella Thomson
Winnipeg, Manitoba

The following essay was the winner of the 2012 Dr. Edward C. Shaw Award in the Young Historians Competition sponsored by the Manitoba Historical Society. At that time, Ella Thomson was a student at Balmoral Hall.

The fascinating story of the Doukhobor pioneers, who settled in the Swan River Valley area, is mainly absent from the pages of Manitoba history. Most Manitobans are not aware of the role the Doukhobor people played in the early settlement of the Swan River Valley, and their contributions towards the success of the settlers in that area. People might not also be aware of the critical role the Doukhobor women played in the colonies. The women enjoyed freedoms and rights well before their counterparts in the rest of Canada. The Doukhobors need to be recognized for their contributions in early Manitoba immigration and settlement, as well as for setting the example towards the early women's rights movements in Manitoba.

The Doukhobors were a group of people, native to Russia, with a distinct set of religious beliefs. They were pacifists who refused to enlist in the Russian army. They believed that God had a presence in every human being and they held their own worship services with their families and friends. On a social level, the Doukhobors believed in communalism (functioning as a community, be it through working or living together) and they spoke their own language. They were a group of people with beliefs that were different than those of mainstream Russian Orthodox society. Like many other groups throughout history who had different beliefs and customs, the Doukhobors were repeatedly persecuted in their homeland. They were prevented from openly practising their religion and were attacked and threatened by the ruling Czars.

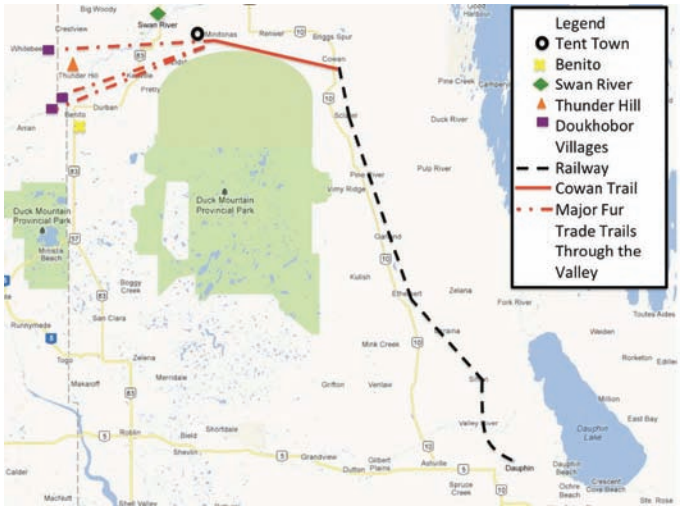
The conditions of the Doukhobors did not improve until Lukeria Kalmakova, a female Doukhobor leader, came to power between 1836–1886. "Lukeria began what was to be the most peaceful and prosperous leadership in Doukhobor history."[1] George Woodcock in his definitive history on the Doukhobors stated: "Lukeria Kalmakova took seriously the equality of women."[2] However, upon her death, when Peter Veregin took over leadership, the Doukhobors once again experienced hardships.

Almost immediately upon his appointment, Veregin was captured by the Russian forces, who believed that his leadership was fragmenting the Doukhobor community. He spent the next sixteen years in exile. Without a leader amongst them, the Doukhobors knew that they could no longer call Russia home. "Constant persecution made escape from Russia their only option. The need to find a new home became evident by the mid-1890s."[3]

Veregin's exile proved to be beneficial to the Doukhobors. During that time, he became acquainted with the writings of the famous philosopher and author Leo Tolstoy. Tolstoy shared similar beliefs with the Doukhobors

R. McInnes, WP1026

Postcard of Doukhobor settlers at Winnipeg, circa 1906.



Map of Manitoba and the North West Territories, Spring 1899, showing points mentioned in the text.

and upon learning of their hardships, made it his mission to find them a new home where they could freely practise their religion and communal lifestyle. With Tolstoy's support, the search for a Doukhobor homeland got underway.

Tolstoy's representatives considered several options for a new homeland. The Canadian Prairies were eventually considered the best choice due to the similarity of climate and landscape to that of Russia. At the same time, Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, wanted to settle the West. He was willing to allow the Doukhobors to freely practise their religion and communal lifestyle. Perhaps the most important factor considered by Tolstoy's representatives was the Mennonites' successful experience on the prairies. The Mennonites arrived in Manitoba in 1874 and were granted the right to live in community villages rather than on individual homesteads. Through negotiations with the Canadian government, land was put aside for the Doukhobors in what was then called the North-Western Territory. The Doukhobors would be allowed to live communally, refrain from military service and freely practise their own religion.

In 1899 more than seven thousand Doukhobors emigrated from Russia and settled in the North-Western Territories of Canada.[4] Of this group, 2,400 settled on 69,000 acres of land, in an area that was known as the Swan River Colony (sometimes referred to as the North Colony or the Thunder Hill Colony). The Doukhobors were welcomed into Manitoba with open arms by the government officials, and were safely housed in immigration halls. They appreciated the aid that the Canadians gave them.

The group of Doukhobors who were to settle in the Swan River Colony went by train as far as Cowan, Manitoba, and then used wagons or walked on the new Cowan Trail, over the Duck Mountains, in the spring of 1899. Once they crossed the Duck Mountains, the Doukhobors, like all other settlers, stopped in "Tent Town" (now Minitonas) to check in at the land office and receive instructions as to the location of their land. The non-Doukhobor settlers in Tent Town were surprised and anxious with the arrival of the 2,400 unusual people in their small community. They were worried about the impact that these strangers would have on their small and mostly English-speaking community. However, by 1902, most non-Doukhobor settlers of the area could see the value of having the Doukhobors as neighbours.

All the land assigned to the Doukhobors was located just west of the Manitoba border inside the North-Western Territories. This area became Saskatchewan after 1905. All thirteen villages in the Swan River Valley were in the vicinity of Thunder hill. That was an excellent location as it was west of, and very close to the villages of Swan River and Benito in Manitoba. This location put the Doukhobors within the economic sphere of those two villages. The geographic closeness of the Doukhobors to Manitoban communities allowed them to have a large impact on settlements in this province.

While living in Russia, the Doukhobors had acquired the skills required to operate a farm successfully. They knew how to make harnesses from raw leather and iron. Their blacksmiths knew how to forge implements including spades and shovels. The colony's skilled workers also included carpenters, weavers, tailors and masons. The women were also known for being skilled seamstresses with experience doing needlework. These skills enabled them to build a good life for themselves and were also of great benefit to the residents of the Swan River Valley. Within three years they were able to clear and plant 5,540 acres of land, a miraculous feat.[5] The Doukhobors were determined and able to build a good life for themselves in their new country.

During the first two years of life in the colony, the Doukhobors received much needed financial support from several humanitarian organizations and from the Canadian government. This financial support, allowed them to successfully establish the colony, and helped them accumulate the resources to take on projects, such as constructing badly needed infrastructure including the flourmill and the brick factory. To supplement that income, most of the Doukhobor men, approximately 1000 of them, found work grading the railway bed in preparation for the laying of the track.[6] By 1905 the experience they gained while working with the railway engineers gave them the expertise to take on a large contract building 17 miles of grade for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway.[6] They were very skilled and very hard working. In 1906 a *Manitoba Morning Free Press* reporter visited the men on the job near St. Lazare, Manitoba and reported that, " to say the Doukhobors are good road builders is putting it mildly. They are simply experts."[6] The high quality of their work not only benefitted their immediate community, but also helped other regions of the Prairies. The railway was essential for the development of Canada as a country. The Doukhobors contributed to the prairie component of this massive project and deserve to be recognized for their efforts.

R. McInnes, SK0092

Postcard of Doukhobor women pulling a plow, circa 1908.

It was not until 1902 that the Doukhobor leader, Peter Veregin, arrived in the Swan River Colony. He immediately took on the management of the colony's business affairs and gave the community a legal system. It was then that the Doukhobors began taking on larger projects. Being resourceful and realizing that the clay in the Swan River area was suitable, they proceeded to build a brick factory in 1903.[7] It was a large operation that required 25 people to run. The availability of the bricks enhanced life for the Swan River residents. It helped them design and develop stronger and sturdier buildings. Some of these buildings are still standing to this day.

Another major project that benefitted all the settlers of the area was the flourmill built in 1904.[8] Wheat was a major crop in the Swan River Valley. Without the availability of a flourmill nearby, the wheat was processed elsewhere. Being successful farmers, the Doukhobors recognized the importance of having an accessible mill. They proceeded to build an efficient mill powered by a steam tractor in the village of Voznesenie, the colony's headquarters, two miles west of what is now the town of Benito. The two-storey mill was able to meet the needs of the colony and the other local farmers. The Doukhobors believed in shared communal living and because of that they permitted all farmers in the region access to the mill. This allowed the farmers to progress forward and become more successful. This would not have been possible without the dedication shown by the Doukhobor community.

With the financial leadership of Peter Veregin, the colony was able to purchase farming machinery. This industrialized their farming strategy by 1905 and allowed them to clear and plough the land more efficiently, and to thrash larger fields of grain. This efficient farm machinery came to benefit their neighbours as well, seeing as the Doukhobors leased out their equipment, farming skills and time. This helped their neighbours to succeed as well and fostered a better relationship between the settlers. Many accounts describe the efficient help that the Doukhobors offered their neighbours.

Among the accounts is a letter written by A. J. Cotton and published in the book *The Wheat King*. Cotton was a member of the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame and a community leader who settled in the Valley in 1899. In a letter to a friend, Cotton writes: " I had three Doukhobors hired all summer. They were fine fellows. They gave entire satisfaction and always do their work for the interest of the farmer."[9] Cotton was not alone in his high opinion of the Doukhobors. In his book *Between The Hills*, F. A. Twilley, a well known Swan River valley historian, further emphasizes the fundamental role the Doukhobors played in the Valley. He wrote: "The advent of the Doukhobors to the district was a god sent."[10] Charlie Banks, who arrived in the Swan River Valley in June, 1898 lived on a homestead a few miles from many of the Doukhobor villages. In later years, Banks wrote to his friend of his experiences in the Swan River Valley. He wrote: " few who are living know about this sect as I do. They were very good to me and I had hundreds of friends in the colony including Peter Veregin." His letter goes on to explain what he thought of the over-publicized photograph of Doukhobor women ploughing. He says, " as you can see the women are dressed in their Sunday best. I can assure you they never moved the plough an inch that day. It was perhaps done to enable sympathy towards the sect."[11] Whatever the reason, Banks believed it was done for public relations.

The photo, which the women so innocently posed for in the fall of 1899, became a cultural icon used extensively by journalists in newspapers across Canada for many years. Generally, an article was written either to gain public support for the Doukhobors or to demonstrate the idea that their unusual actions and beliefs made them unsuitable as Canadian citizens. In the early years, Canadians were divided in their opinion of the new immigrants and the press reflected this division.

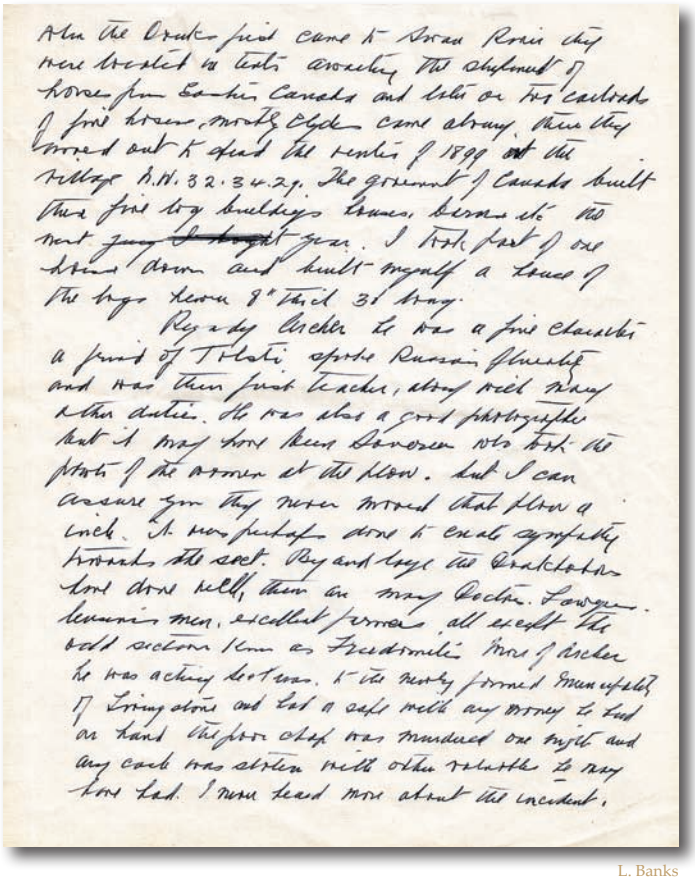
When the Doukhobors arrived in Canada in 1899, feminist beliefs and women's freedoms and rights were almost unheard of. Men ruled the Western world, and women were the homemakers. At that, women did not have a vote, and men held the vast majority of jobs. Women were not considered to play important or fundamental roles in their communities. The Doukhobors believed otherwise. They believed that God resided equally in each

individual (both men and women) and therefore believed that everyone was equal. Their religious beliefs shaped the Doukhobor culture, and ensured that women were treated as equals to their male counterparts. Beginning with the brilliant leadership of Kalmakova back in Russia, the Doukhobor women were brought up with the belief that women are expected to take on leadership roles. Once settled in the area that was to be their colony, the women took it upon themselves to clear the land and build their first homes. When the Doukhobors settled in the Swan River Colony, they needed to make a living immediately. All the able Doukhobor men sought work outside the colony. The land was not cleared at the time of their arrival and while the men were away at work, the women took charge to clear and plough the land. In the first couple of years very few horses were available, so "24 women hitched themselves to the plow and pulled", with an elderly Doukhobor man holding and guiding the plough.[12]

This is the image that most people think of when reading about the Doukhobors. One of descendants of these women, Laura Veregin (no relation to leader Peter Veregin), tells of the pride the women felt at their ability to pull the plough and clear the land.[13] So much so that they posed for the press not knowing that the photograph would be used to demean and shame them. The men did not force the women to plough the land. The women did it willingly and for the good of the community. They were proud that they were capable of such hard and productive work, and of their contributions to the community. Perhaps what makes their contributions even more meaningful is the fact that the men respected them in their endeavours. The Doukhobor men recognized that had it not been for the involvement of the women in the community, and had the women not cleared and ploughed the land, their farming communities would not have succeeded. The Doukhobor men were among the first in Canada to understand the need, and to accept the equality between men and women. The largest Doukhobor organization in existence—The Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ—believed communal living to be especially beneficial to the women as it gave them freedom and equality in their communities. The husbands were not in control of the family finances and if the women were left on their own (due to death or divorce), their well-being was looked after by the community. In 1910 Jean Blewett, a feminist writer for *Collier's Weekly* magazine, visited a Doukhobor village and reported, "The Doukhobor woman is eligible to membership to the council which is a parliament of the people for the people."[14] It was Peter Veregin who assigned to women a place on the council. He said "Our women work as hard for the community as we, are equally interested in its welfare and prosperity. Why should they not have a voice in the council?"[14] In her book *A Reconstructed World: A Feminist Biography of Gertrude Richardson*, Barbara Roberts paraphrased the words of Gertrude Richardson in the *Midland Free Press*. Gertrude Richardson, was an early settler of the Swan River Valley, and in 1911 wrote an article for the *Midland Free Press* in which she admired the gender equality she saw amongst the Doukhobors. She was the co-founder of one of the earliest suffrage groups in Manitoba and she was influential in the women's peace movements in both Canada and England.[15]

The Doukhobors had a major impact on life in the Swan River Valley and across the prairies. Their contributions accelerated the growth and development of the entire area. However, because the Doukhobors had different religious beliefs and their communities were run differently from most Canadian communities, many of them were faced with unbeatable challenges in their new homeland.

The beginning of the demise of the Doukhobor colonies began with the appointment of Frank Oliver as the new Minister of the Interior in 1905.[16] In his role as the previous Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton was known for his dedication to settling the Canadian West at any cost. However, Frank Oliver did not share the same beliefs in regards to how the settlement of the West should be accomplished. He did not believe that it was just to give special privileges to the Doukhobors, and did not approve of their customs, traditions or way of life. As a result he



L. Banks

Charles W. Banks, who arrived in the Swan River Valley in June 1898, would recall in a letter many years later that the Doukhobors "were very good to me and I had hundreds of friends in the colony including Peter Veregin." Banks viewed the widely circulated photographs of Doukhobor women pulling plows as publicity stunts.

declared that Sifton's arrangement with the Doukhobors no longer applied and that the Dominion Act, which applied to all individual settlers, be followed by the Doukhobors as well. In order to save their hard-earned farms, Peter Veregin recommended to his followers to become British citizens. Veregin's recommendation was not well received by all of the Doukhobors in the colony.

When Veregin realized that most of his followers wished to continue to live the communal life, he took money from the various villages and bought land in British Columbia in 1907. By doing so, the Doukhobors who wished could move to BC and pursue their lifestyle on privately owned land. Some of the Doukhobors were more than willing to end communal living. Supported by the government, they were able to own their own land, plant their own crops and reap their own profit. Largely, the Doukhobors who chose to become independent farmers or pursue a different path, were happy with their decision. The Doukhobor colony was dissolved in 1917–1918, and Laura Veregin, one of the present leaders of the Benito Doukhobor society says there are currently only fifty descendants living in the Swan River Valley. Most Doukhobors moved to British Columbia to continue to live communally on the land purchased by Peter Veregin. Here they formed the Christian Community of the Universal Brotherhood.

Regardless of the fact that the Swan River Doukhobor Colony did not survive, the contributions the Doukhobors made to the prairies should not be ignored. The Doukhobors changed the face of the Valley and must be recognized for their efforts. They need to be recognized as important players in the early settlement of the Prairies. The women must be recognized for the example they set towards achieving gender equality. The Doukhobors helped to build the infrastructure of the Swan River Valley. In Canada, it is all too often that we view the French and English as the only two founding groups of our country. However, we cannot and must not forget the contributions, both large and small, of others groups that settled within our borders. The Doukhobors need to be recognized as important contributors to early Manitoba immigration and settlement as well as the role they played in the women's rights movement.

Thanks ... The Editors thank the following people who assisted in the preparation of this issue of *Manitoba History*: Neil Christoffersen (Austin), Gerald Friesen (Winnipeg), Marc George (Royal Canadian Artillery Museum), Christy Henry (S. J. McKee Archives), Ed Ledohowski (Winnipeg), Rob McInnes (Winnipeg), Tom Mitchell (Brandon), Arnold Permut (Winnipeg), Clive Prothero-Brooks (Royal Canadian Artillery Museum), Pat Sparling (Treherne), Craig Spencer (Treherne), Chelsea Synychych (Winnipeg), and Tracey Winthrop-Meyers (Arden).

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1. Maude, Almyer. *A Peculiar People, The Doukhobors*. London: Archibald Constable & Co. Ltd., 1905, p. 150.
2. Woodcock, George, and Ivan Avakumovic. *The Doukhobors*. Toronto/New York: Oxford University Press., 1968, p. 69.
3. Adelman, Jeremy. "Early Doukhobor Experience on the Canadian Prairies." *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 25(4), p. 1 (1990-1991).
4. Adelman, *ibid*.
5. Blow, E. H. "Visit to the Doukhobors." *Manitoba Free Press*, 26 September 1902, p. 1.
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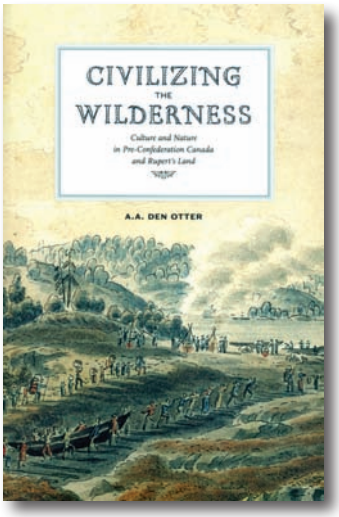
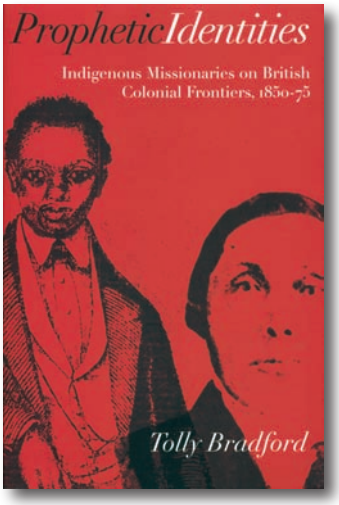
16. "Forging our Legacy: Canadian Citizenship and Immigration, 1900–1977." Citizenship and Immigration Canada, www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/legacy/chap-6a.asp

Reviews

A. A. den Otter, *Civilizing the Wilderness: Culture and Nature in Pre-Confederation Canada and Rupert's Land* **Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2012, 438 pages.**
ISBN: 978-0-88864-546-3, $49.95 (paperback)

Tolly Bradford, *Prophetic Identities: Indigenous Missionaries on British Colonial Frontiers, 1850-75* **Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012, 236 pages.**
ISBN 978-0-77482-279-4, $32.95 (paperback)





These books address a central aspect of Western Europe's expansion into the rest of the world: the cultural and intellectual as well as physical restructuring of colonized regions. The authors classify this restructuring process, applied to both colonized lands and colonized people, as "civilizing" or "modernizing." Reflecting recent historiographical trends, both authors recognize the agency of indigenous populations in engaging with the civilizing or modernizing imperative. The interpretations have shifted from a one-way imposition of culture, values, and economic systems by an imperial power, to a more nuanced one, in which indigenous people are active participants in determining how, and to what extent, their cultures and homelands were reconceptualised.

The overall project to develop North America within the framework of the liberal order relied on newcomer society imposing familiar forms, or "civilization," on the unfamiliar places, or "wilderness," which it encountered. Human populations as well as places had to conform to this model, so indigenous groups could be assimilated and "civilized," or displaced and replaced by already-civilized immigrants. Both of the books under consideration deal with aspects of this process, although they approach it from different perspectives.

A. A. den Otter describes his book as a collection of essays connected by a common theme, intended as a second volume to his earlier book *Civilizing the West: The Galts and the Development of Western Canada* (Edmonton, University of Alberta Press, 1982). The introduction, "Civilizing the Wilderness," and the conclusion, "The Wilderness Civilized," suggest the arc of the current work. Broadly, den Otter seems to contend that the 19th-century resettling of the Canadian Prairies reflected a particular *mentalité*; one that saw the cultural restructuring, or reimagining, of the region to be inextricably linked to its economic and physical transformation. Den Otter examines the overall transformation of his study region—as it applied to place, as well as to populations.

Although his methodology is different, Tolly Bradford offers complementary insights into the processes of colonization in his study of two 19th-century indigenous missionaries: one in South Africa, and one in the Canadian Prairies. Bradford's preface states that the intent of his study is to demonstrate that his subjects, Henry Budd (also featured in den Otter's book) and Tiyo Soga, "articulated new ways of thinking about indigeneity: that is, they fashioned new definitions of their own 'nativeness,' given their status as Christian missionaries with ties to a global British Empire" (p. xi). Their historical importance rises from their advocacy of civilizing or modernizing the indigenous populations that produced them—they acted as local agents of the global Anglo-imperial project.

Similar questions are examined by both authors, and in places they even apply the same terminology—such as the "civilizing mission"—but their explanatory approaches differ. Den Otter emphasizes the overall Anglo-North American project of "civilizing" places and people to explain colonization, and offers a series of historical vignettes to support his contentions. On the other hand, Bradford approaches the civilizing mission from the perspective of a pair of very specific biographical case histories, to extend from the experiences of two indigenous missionaries into some conclusions about the larger processes of cultural hybridity and colonization.

To examine the civilizing process, den Otter presents a number of case study essays, which form the chapters of the book. The first chapter discusses the Anglo-North American *mentalité* surrounding concepts of wilderness and the challenges it presented (pp. 1–30). The next section is comprised of three chapters dealing with missionary activity and cultural transformation in Rupert's Land, the Hudson's Bay Company trade territory extending across the Prairies. Within this, den Otter examines the range of

attitudes exhibited by British-born Methodist missionaries in the region, using William Mason and Robert Rundle as examples. He then reviews the careers and expressed ideology of two Aboriginal missionaries active in Rupert's Land. One was a Methodist, the Upper Canadian-born Ojibwe Henry Steinhauer (Sowengisik), and the other an Anglican, the Rupert's Land-born Cree Henry Budd (Sakacewescam), one of Bradford's protagonists. Then den Otter reflects on the attitudes and approach of David Anderson, the first Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land (pp. 31–134).

The next three-chapter section deals principally with mid-19th century power relations in the region. It discusses the Sayer trial to illustrate the negotiation between the rising influence of the Métis population and the economic power of the Hudson's Bay Company. The "civilizing mission" of George Simpson, the Governor of the HBC, is presented, followed by reflections on the findings of the 1857 Parliamentary Select Committee, as the British government balanced the competing interests of the Aborigines Protection Society and the HBC (pp. 135–227).

The book ends with a look at Peter Jones, a pro-assimilation Upper Canadian Ojibwe Methodist missionary, who saw the selective adoption of newcomer culture and economy as a way for First Nations to survive and maintain distinct identities. A final historiographical chapter discusses approaches over the years in respect of the Red River Métis, before suggesting the important role of the Métis in "civilizing the wilderness" (pp. 229–301).

The essays in this book deal with topics previously addressed by scholars, so tend toward a more interpretive approach. Den Otter's stated intent was to "explore, more fully than the current secondary literature does, the drive to civilize not only the Natives but also the wilderness in which they lived" (p. xxi). In other words, he has constructed essays that frame narratives of Prairie resettlement within the larger project of "civilizing the wilderness" that he considers central to understanding North American history.

It is probably significant that den Otter locates his examples in the mid-19th century, the era in which liberal ideology was naturalized in the Anglo-North American world. In his introduction, he alludes explicitly to liberalism as an "all-embracing, comprehensive way of life that powered the civilizing-the-wilderness imperative." In this model, the liberal order is defined by a belief in liberty, equality, and property.[1] Consistent with the values of newcomer society, the liberal order was understood to create opportunity for progress and improvement, which could be expressed also as "civilizing" of both places and people.

Bradford, working from his two case histories, alludes less explicitly to the liberal order, but in his Introduction notes that the "civilizing mission" of his protagonists was based on two imperatives: first, an evangelistic approach to Christianity focused on the messages of individual sin and individual conversion; second, a firm belief in the value of modernity or civilization, directly linked to the individualism emphasized in evangelism. Bradford notes three central traits or values that typify modernity, individualism, rationalism, and progress.[2] In some respects Bradford's "modernity" seems consistent with den Otter's liberal ideology. The "civilizing mission" in both interpretations involves the transformation of culture, and, thus, culturally-defined perceptions of place, and how it should be occupied and used.

Bradford reports an instance of Tiyo Soga referring to the "certain ruin" of traditionalists to demonstrate how his protagonist saw cultural transformation (or modernization) as the mechanism that would ensure the ongoing survival of the Xhosa people (p. 1). His structural position as a member of an aristocratic Xhosa family that was an early adopter of Christianity, combined with his Scottish education and his Scottish wife, provided him with the legitimacy required to mediate between Xhosa and British colonial interests. A belief in cultural transformation, and a background that gave his opinions authority, made Soga an influential figure in South African development (Bradford, pp. 35–51.)

Perhaps because Henry Budd was not involved in political activities in the same way as Soga, Bradford does not emphasize Budd's structural position in fur trade society. In spite of being identified as an "Aboriginal orphan," Budd's maternal grandfather was Matthew Cocking, a Chief Factor of the HBC at York Factory, and he married a mixed-blood daughter of John Work, another HBC Chief Factor. These connections to men at the top of the HBC hierarchy would provide Budd with a place among the elite of the "middle ground" of Rupert's Land society (pp. 16–27). They would grant him a level of authority with both HBC employees and First Nations, making him a natural mediator between groups. In Budd's case, this was sometimes compromised by the attitudes of newcomer missionary supervisors, who saw him primarily as the 'other'—a missionary of Aboriginal origin.

An important difference between the social environments of South Africa and Rupert's Land in the 19th century was the role of race in defining social divisions. Bradford contends that as the British Empire devolved power to its settler colonies, it led to the practice of racial exclusion in Africa, and racial inclusion in Canada (p. 106). This point could be argued—in South Africa, the concept of race was certainly central to group definition, particularly as it applied to indigenous and newcomer populations. In the smaller populations and more fluid conditions of HBC-era Rupert's Land, race was blurred by the nature of fur trade society, so that identity relied on other factors, such as status and relationship to the HBC hierarchy. However, when HBC hegemony was superseded by Canadian hegemony in the Prairies, Aboriginal, Metis, and mixed-blood populations clearly were viewed as the other by Anglo-Canadian newcomers, and racially-organized exclusion became more apparent.

The transformation of populations and places as part of colonization, and the 19th-century expansion of world

systems into new places, is central to understanding the development of countries such as Canada. These books provide a complementary pair, in that den Otter is attempting to establish larger patterns within the "civilizing" imperative, as applied to both culture and place. On the other hand, Bradford's more closely defined study examines two representatives of those at the centre of the process—indigenous people that chose to act as agents of the Anglo-imperial world in "modernizing" the populations around them.

Both authors recognize that indigenous populations were active agents in the process of civilizing or modernizing their homelands. However, perhaps due to their respective macro and micro-focus, agency assumes a different look in the two books. Den Otter gives the impression that a binary distinction existed between civilization and wilderness. Because of this, once they were "converted," indigenous missionaries saw their identities as less "native" and more "Christian" or "British"—distinct from their unconverted countrymen. Bradford, dealing only with two subjects, is able to introduce more nuances concerning identity. This lets him incorporate concepts such as hybridity and his notion of "modern indigeneity"—introducing the idea that there was a more complex blending of cultural values, rather than simple replacement of one culture by another.

Both authors allude in places to the ideas of improvement and progress that were central to civilizing or modernizing. Further developing this motif of progress may have helped to explain more fully how the liberal order, and linked Anglo-imperial values, were naturalized among both immigrant and indigenous populations. Although Bradford, in particular, identifies factors in the background of his subjects that made them potential agents of modernity, why did they choose to devote their lives to this cause? Was it altruism, or was it some other more complex combination of factors? In his discussion of the Métis historiography and the role of that group in civilizing the Prairies, den Otter notes the willing adoption of liberal values as an economic choice. Being an early adopter of dominant or hegemonic cultural values probably would provide some non-economic advantages—status and power—to the individual, as they became mediators between traditional and introduced cultures.

The studies of A. A. den Otter and Tolly Bradford, looking at the process through opposite ends of the telescope, provide a complementary view of aspects of colonization. They also raise the question of power relations within the transformation of culture and place—how it was manifested, how the balance of power changed, and how it influenced the decisions of indigenous and immigrant populations as they engaged with the civilizing or modernizing of "settler" nations such as Canada.

Jamie Morton
Alberni Valley Museum
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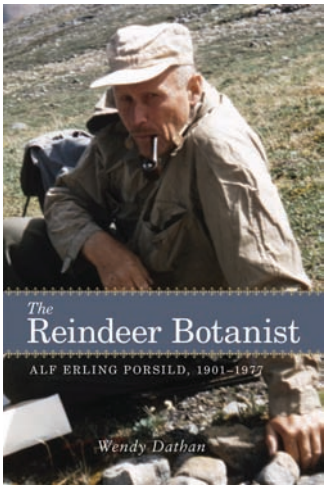
Notes

1. Den Otter, *Civilizing the Wilderness*, xxii. For his model of liberalism, den Otter relies largely on Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 81, no. 4 (December 2000), 617-645.
2. Tolly Bradford, *Prophetic Identities*, 7-8. For his definition of modernism, Bradford relies principally on Alberto Martinelli, *Global Modernization: Rethinking the Project of Modernity*, London, Sage, 2005.

Wendy Dathan, *The Reindeer Botanist: Alf Erling Porsild, 1901-1977*

Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2012, 726 pages.
ISBN 978-1-55238-586-9, $44.95 (paperback)



As a federal civil servant, the Danish-Canadian, Alf Porsild, preferred to travel underground publicity-wise, as most Canadian politicians prefer and more recently insist. He did not court controversy, but it came his way on occasion, and, being an obsessive scientist, he resented all such intrusion on his work. Nevertheless, he understood the meaning of duty and met controversy head-on, even if it was a waste of his valuable time. The full extent of Porsild's activities are set out in painstaking detail here by Wendy Dathan, hence a book which is probably twice as long as it need be, owing to an excessive inclusion of long block quotations. Nevertheless, those who are interested in Porsild will have all they could possibly wish for. The author did not know Porsild, but worked at the important Herbarium at McGill, where she became interested in his work. For purposes of the biography, she was granted full access to the relevant papers.

There are four main elements to the biography: Porsild's early years in Greenland; his contributions to the controversial northern Reindeer Project after 1926; his general contribution to Canada's National Herbarium in Ottawa; and his wartime service as Vice-Consul to Greenland. When in 1926, M. O. Malte, Chief Botanist of the National Herbarium, was seeking help for a proposed Reindeer Project for the Mackenzie Delta area, he turned to Morten P. Porsild, the Director of the Greenland Arctic Research Station at Godhaven, Disco Island. He had been in charge there since 1906, and it is where his son Alf

was born and raised. Rich in flora and fauna, Disco Bay was the area of western Greenland from which sprang (as Manitoba historian Tryggvi Oleson, controversially argued) the mixed-blood Thule Inuit people. Because of Alf Porsild's knowledge of Arctic natural history and his unique upbringing amongst the Greenland Inuit, Malte saw him as the ideal person for the Reindeer job and hired him.

Porsild was a superb field man. His efforts, along with those of his brothers in introducing reindeer (the domesticated version of caribou) into the high Arctic as a potential source of future income for Inuit peoples, are traced up to 1936. The work combined his expert knowledge of plants and reindeer feeding requirements with much coordination of persons and animals from as far away as the west coast of Alaska and Lapland. In 1936, the essential job was completed, and he was then hired as the Director of the Herbarium of the National Museum. In the previous ten years, he had squeezed in much survey work all over the Arctic, including Keewatin in 1930, the lands of the so-called Caribou Eskimo. He had become one of the best informed persons about our northern landscapes.

Porsild's work at the Herbarium was interrupted by the war effort after 1940, when the fall of Denmark posed serious issues for the western allies. Chapters 29 through 35 detail Porsild's years as a Vice-Consul to Greenland, where the presence of a cryolite mine (a rare commodity vital in aluminium production) was an important wartime concern, Germany having previously drawn upon the mine. Between 1940 and 1943, Porsild did not neglect his scientific work, but was glad to be relieved of his political duties in Greenland. The next twenty-five years were creative ones at the Herbarium, as Porsild worked to capitalize on his vast field experience and preserve a permanent record in Ottawa for the research community. His publishing record made him a well-known and respected member of the scientific community.

There are many asides and interesting episodes in the life of this unusual scientist, which cannot be detailed here but which are fully explored by the author and will repay the reader who tackles this large book, made more engaging by the many rare photos included. A. E. Porsild has been given his deserved place in the sun.

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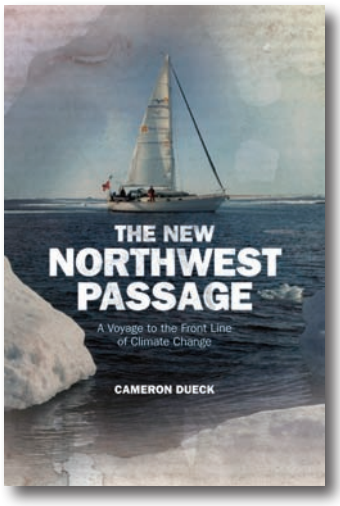
Parksville, BC

Cameron Dueck, *The New Northwest Passage: A Voyage to the Front Line of Climate Change* **Winnipeg: Great Plains Publications, 2012, 256 pages. ISBN 978-1-926531-36-6, $24.95 (paperback)**



Cameron Dueck was captured by an extraordinary dream, and Manitobans will be particularly interested to read about someone who grew up on a turkey farm near Riverton sailing through the Northwest Passage and writing a book about his experience. The author combines his passion for journalism with history and adventure, as he seeks to understand firsthand the allure of the Arctic and how climate change is affecting it and the people and animals that have achieved an effective adaptation to its environmental extreme. Restlessness born from the disquiet that he was not seizing life's opportunities set Dueck on this journey—but even more than this, it was his well-stated desire to "leverage" his success and secure position in life by taking a real risk: "I felt that all our security was a waste if we didn't leverage it and push ourselves out of our comfort zones" (p. 32). This aspiration, along with a desire to see the effects of climate change through the eyes of people who are experiencing it, resulted in his traverse of the Northwest Passage.

From June to September 2009, Dueck and a crew varying between two and three people made the transit from Victoria to Halifax, a distance of 8,000 nautical miles or 15,000 kilometres. Their home for the nineteen-week journey was *Silent Sound*, a refitted forty-foot cutter rig sailing boat built in 1979 by Amor Marine of Richmond, BC. The difficulties of negotiating an Arctic waterway in a small craft are well-explained, and there is no shortage of sailing drama and interpersonal clashes. The story also comes alive through Dueck's relating of his encounters with local residents on several stops at communities along the route (Dutch Harbour, Tin City, Wales, and Barrow, Alaska; Herschel Island, Yukon; Tuktoyaktuk, Sachs Harbour, and Ulukhaktok, Northwest Territories; Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, and Pond Inlet, Nunavut; Nain, Labrador). Descriptions of the small communities and the people with whom he engaged are lively and empathetic. At each stop, the crew learned about issues facing the local inhabitants, and Dueck skilfully distils these many themes into an accurate description of Arctic society.

In Alaska he learns about the tensions between oil and gas development and people's need to follow traditional hunting practices for their physical and cultural survival. On Herschel Island researchers tell him of vegetation species encroaching from the south, causing the disappearance of the lichen crucial for caribou subsistence. At Sachs Harbour he sees how weather changes, in the form of shifting global

C. Dueck

Silent Sound at one of its ports of call.

wind patterns and the increasing frequency of thunder and lightning storms, concern hunters. At Ulukhaktok the multigenerational scars wrought by the legacy of residential schools still results in a grandmother's wish for her granddaughter to "make the best of both worlds" (p. 161). At Cambridge Bay he sees the pathos of young children playing outside in the early morning hours because their parents are drinking.

And throughout the book is the theme of climate warming. In many communities residents talk about atypical animal sightings—sea otters and porcupines around Wales; red fox at Herschel Island; grizzlies on Banks Island; the interbreeding of polar and grizzly bears in the Western Canadian Arctic; a brown eagle at Pond Inlet. Salmon berries ripen earlier each year in Wales, where in 2009 the sea ice broke up in May rather than June. Likewise, in the winter of 2009 there was no airstrip off Little Diomede Island in Bering Strait, because the sea ice was too thin. Scientists studying the permafrost on Herschel Island tell Dueck that permafrost temperature has risen by 2°C over the last one hundred years and that the thawing permafrost allows the release of methane, which contributes to climate warming. It is a poignant irony throughout to realize that without climate change causing a great reduction in sea ice, this particular voyage in a small sailing craft likely would not have been possible.

Dueck notes many other themes common to most of the communities, such as sovereignty in the Canadian Arctic; the inadequacy of opportunities and jobs, especially for young people; the distance between young people and their traditional culture; difficulties of hunting and travelling on sea ice of unpredictable thickness; health status and longevity; the effects of booze and drugs; the impact of resource development providing jobs on traditional hunting culture; and the potential for increased shipping through the Northwest Passage. With each of these, Dueck hones his journalistic skills to understand how the people living these challenges genuinely think and feel. Throughout the book, the reader senses that the Arctic is fragile yet enduring, as are its people. While communities deal with grave dilemmas, people are meeting challenges and looking to a future for their children.

Sketches of historical European voyages into the Arctic are interwoven with the geography through which *Silent Sound* passes, and the Franklin expedition of 1845 makes an early appearance in the book's second paragraph. The two small maps showing *Silent Sound's* route are well drawn and easily comprehensible, and the sailing glossary is very handy for 'landlubbers.' The text contains a few misstatements that require rectification. The language spoken by the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic is Inuktitut, not "Inuktituk," as the word is commonly mispronounced; and the singular of Inuit is "Inuk." From his stop in Sachs Harbour, Nunavut, the author re-tells a story about two Inuit hunters, one of whom was a shaman, being attacked by Quechan Indians whose arrows passed through the shaman without harming him. As the Quechan live in Arizona and California, I assume that this contact was with one of the indigenous groups of the Western Subarctic rather than the Quechan, perhaps the Gwich'in. With regard to the timing of the migration of Thule people, ancestors of the modern Inuit, it is now thought that this cultural group spread from Alaska into the Canadian Arctic in the 13th century AD,[1] although the date of AD 1000 has long been attributed to this occurrence. Dueck also misstates that the 129 men of the final Franklin expedition "succumbed to cannibalism" (p. 16), while physical evidence indicates that, though many took this resort to preserving life, not all of them did. There are also several typographical errors ("Torngate" rather than "Torngat") but these inaccuracies do not detract largely from the quality of the work.

The book is a good read. People with little or no experience of the Arctic and its peoples will appreciate the author's explicative prose. For those to whom the Arctic is a familiar and well-loved place Dueck's descriptions ring true, particularly those of community life and weather. Images and a blog of the expedition can be found at www.openpassageexpedition.com.

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Parks Canada, Winnipeg

Robin Jarvis Brownlie and Valerie J. Korinek (eds.), *Finding a Way to the Heart: Feminist Writings on Aboriginal and Women's History in Canada*

Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2012, 280 pages.
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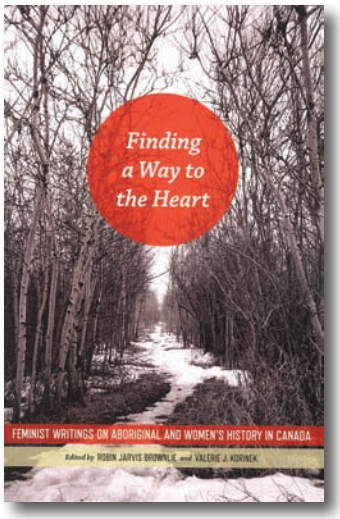

Our understanding of the fur trade, the role of women within Aboriginal communities, European-Aboriginal relations and, in fact, the very foundation of Canada was fundamentally altered with the 1980 publication of *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870*. Sylvia Van Kirk's work explored the histories of the fur trade from the intimate perspective of marital relationships or long-term partnerships. Van Kirk successfully demonstrated that the lives of Aboriginal women mattered and were critical to the success of the Aboriginal-European trade system. As editors Brownlie and Korinek argue, by "inserting women into the story of the trade….[she] showed how the whole enterprise was founded on women's economic and social labour"(p. 12). In turn, Van Kirk conclusively revealed the limitations of previous fur-trade histories as male dominated domains.

The significance of both the book and Sylvia Van Kirk's career is explored in *Finding a Way to the Heart: Feminist Writings on Aboriginal and Women's History in Canada*. This volume of articles honours the historiographic transformation that followed the landmark publication of *Many Tender Ties* and the many new historical fields that have followed. However, the book also makes several other significant contributions. In the course of their discussion about her ground-breaking historical analysis, several of the contributors also discuss Van Kirk's experiences within the academy itself. It will come as no surprise to many that her insistence that Aboriginal women were significant historical actors was met with resistance by a historic field dominated by men. Furthermore, this resistance extended to a male dominated academy undergoing a rapid transformation that included women as colleagues and historical subjects. In so doing, this collection contributes to the stories of women's inclusion within the academy itself in much the same way Van Kirk did with Aboriginal women and the fur trade. As a result, this book is revealing on multiple levels.

The book is structured as an edited volume. It contains twelve chapters, and its contributors include friends and colleagues, former students, fellow researchers and scholars in Native-Newcomer relations, Canadian Western and Women's histories. It is at once both a love letter honouring this influential female scholar, and the story of a group of scholars who first asked new historical questions to uncover the multifaceted roles of women. Essentially divided into two sections, the first highlights the personal side of Sylvia's career with chapters by scholar and friend Jennifer S.H. Brown, colleague Franca Iacovetta, and former student Valerie Korinek. Each of these writers highlights Van Kirk's warmth and scholarly generosity, as well as her patience and hard work on innumerable university committees. As a peer with similar contributions to the field, Jennifer Brown's recollections of their early friendship and shared conviction about the historic significance of the personal lives of Europeans and Aboriginals Peoples in the fur trade is of particular interest.

The second part of *Finding a Way to the Heart* explores the various historic influences of Van Kirk's work. Elizabeth Jameson highlights the significance of her historical analysis on Native American histories spanning several centuries in the western United States, and its influence on colonial and post-colonial studies. Through the lens of her own work on an ethnically diverse, transnational Douglas-Connolly family, Adele Perry explores the influence of *Many Tender Ties* and its continuing resonance. In so doing, Perry addresses important critiques of Van Kirk's historical methodology.

The remainder of the second part of the book contains articles linked by a common focus on women, intimate relationships, and kinship ties, as they relate to broader stories of trade, colonial and post-colonial trading networks, and the intricacies of Aboriginal communities. Angela Wanhalla explores interracial conjugal relations between the Maori people and traders in colonial New Zealand. Here she delves into comparative questions about the resulting mixed-race children and the Métis in Canada. Robert Innes picks up on the theme of family and kinship to explore the cultural complexities of Aboriginal prairie groups, demonstrating the importance of kinship in the formation of bands. Patricia McCormack explores the fur trade in similar ways to Van Kirk and highlights its regional variations, conclusively pointing out how the northern fur trade far outlasted the southern. Mirroring the concerns of Van Kirk to include Aboriginal perspectives within her work, Jarvis Brownlie explores the colonial discourse on race, including both British colonizers and Aboriginal voices. Victoria Freeman offers a counter discourse to Van Kirk's work by focusing on the more coercive and destructive nature of conjugal relationships between Aboriginal women and Europeans in a transnational study

that includes Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. Kathryn McPherson picks up the story about race and gender relations in the fur trade where Van Kirk leaves off, focusing on the early years of agricultural settlement on the prairie west. In a landscape recast, where white women are the symbol of respectable civilization, many European men abandoned their Aboriginal wives and families. Finally, Katrina Srigley finishes the volume with an exploration of colonial legacy on Aboriginal identity from her own perspective as an Anishinaabe woman. These contributors, all of them noted scholars in their fields, make *Finding a Way to the Heart* a deeply rich text, which extends far beyond a celebration of one woman's academic accomplishments.

This book will be of interest to scholars and non-scholars alike. While deeply rooted in historical methodology, its writers have created a highly accessible series of articles, honouring Van Kirk's insistence that histories must be written for everyone and not just specialists. Its discussion on the emergence of women in the academy also carries a poignancy that will extend its significance beyond Aboriginal histories. Readers will find Sylvia Van Kirk's early experiences in the academy similar to the stories of other female academics who struggled to make a space for themselves as women, and for their female subjects. Therefore, this work not only justifiably honours Sylvia Van Kirk and her contributions; it celebrates the growing inclusivity of the academy, both in its subject matter and for the people who create these histories.

As a young scholar, I stand on the shoulders of women such as Sylvia Van Kirk, Jennifer Brown, and my own mentors in Latin American women's history, and this book is a tender reminder to its readers that we all do. *Finding a Way to the Heart* celebrates the many achievements of women in the academy and the contributions of Aboriginal women. It challenges us to continue including new historical questions and new identities in our own work and in the academy in general.

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John C. Lehr, *Community and Frontier: A Ukrainian Settlement in the Canadian Parkland*

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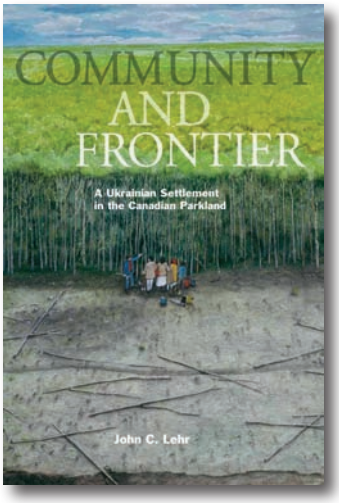


The Stuartburn colony, southeast of Winnipeg along the United States border, was established in 1896 as one of several Ukrainian bloc settlements in Manitoba and is the focus of geographer John Lehr's study, *Community and Frontier*. An initial group of twenty-eight families (ninety-four individuals) arrived under the guidance of Cyril Genik, as part of Dr. Josef Oleskow's promotion of emigration of Ukrainians to the Canadian northwest. Over a period of eighteen years, the settlement expanded to include 1500 homesteads covering more than fifteen townships. The key factor for this rapid expansion was a chain migration of peasant farmers from southern Galicia and Bukovina within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These villagers were attracted by the offer of 160-acre homesteads and were inordinately influenced by a small number of primary decision makers. The interplay of family, village, district, and provincial influences combined with ethnic factors such as language, religion, dialect, material culture, and personal relationships to form a cohesive new community in an obscure corner of the British Empire.

Lehr stresses that the nature of this migration to Stuartburn would have serious long-term economic implications. The high value placed on family and social ties, the perceived need to secure timber supplies and a diverse natural resource base from nearby Mennonite settlers, an erroneous evaluation of soil quality, ignorance of alternative opportunities, and social considerations, led many of those arriving to accept inferior land if only for the opportunity to homestead in close proximity to their kinsmen. The short-term benefits of such a strategy resulted in long-term economic burdens. Concerns for agricultural viability being subsumed by social needs made for a difficult transition from subsistence farming to a market economy. From the outset, seasonal work as farm labourers was required for survival, and, as early as 1912, offspring were moving out of the district, either in search of jobs outside of agriculture or, through a secondary chain migration, to more promising farming opportunities in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Over the long term, the settlement was locked into a pioneer stage of development characterized by subsistence mixed farming, with cattle, grain, and dairy the main exports. Important supplementary income came through sawn lumber and the harvesting of cordwood, hay, Seneca root, wiregrass, and even frogs. It was a classic colonial economy, a "staples trap," characterized by the

export of a limited array of staples and raw goods. As Lehr states, the Stuartburn environment was "poor country for a rich settler but rich country for a poor settler."

A variety of archival and documentary sources including oral histories were utilized to track the social and economic development of Stuartburn. Through the records of government administrators, school boards, missionary societies, Rural Municipalities and Counties, as well as homestead files, and the business papers of hydro electrical, telephone, and railroad companies, Lehr paints in rich detail the complexion of this unique settlement. Within fifteen years, a largely natural parkland landscape was transformed into a community with a distinctive cultural signature, yet which suffered from limited electrical, communication, transportation, and health care infrastructure. The picture which emerges is not always pretty or heroic, but rather at times one of suffering, struggle, abomination, and deprivation touching such topics as deviance and criminality, mass murder, internecine religious factionalism, bootlegging, cross border-smuggling, substance abuse, and alcoholism.

Also surveyed for relevant materials were a range of English- and Ukrainian-language newspapers, although a more comprehensive analysis of Ukrainian-language sources and periodicals would have been beneficial. While the importance of the US-based *Svoboda* Ukrainian-language newspaper as the first outlet for settlers to publish their impressions is noted, the source was not actually tapped to its full potential. Between 1898 and 1905 dozens of reports appeared therein about the community, only one of which is cited. Other valuable sources such as Ivan Panchuk's *Persha Ukrainska tserkva v Kanadi* (The First Ukrainian Church in Canada) and Rev. Nestor Dmytriw's *Kanadiiska Rus* (Canadian Ruthenia) are also absent. Also missing from the narrative are Dmytriw's pioneering visitation of 1897-1898, his consecration of the cemetery at the site of the future St. Michael's Orthodox church at Gardenton, and the establishment of the Holy Ghost Greek Catholic parish at Stuartburn (both of which lay claim along with several others as the "first" congregations in Canada).

While the discourses and colonial relationships which tied Stuartburn to the broader Imperial network are explored, there is an emphasis on economic and cultural aspects to the neglect of others. Two fundamental civic obligations, namely, participation in electoral democracy and service in the country's military, are not dealt with at all. The discussion of Ukrainian**s** participating in political processes is restricted to several anecdotal asides with no systematic examination of parties, elections, or electoral issues. Ukrainians settling in Manitoba entered into a political culture, which was at times hostile and manipulative. The 1899 provincial election saw a resurgent Conservative party narrowly defeat the reigning Liberals campaigning, in part, on warnings of the dangers of impending "Galician government." In spite of (or perhaps because of) such hostility, during the 1920 election the Ukrainian community in Stuartburn was successful in lifting teacher Dmytro Yakimischak as a "farmer" or "people's candidate" to victory over the incumbent Liberal and opposition Conservative in the riding of Emerson. The only legislator of Ukrainian ancestry to precede Yakimischak into the Legislative Assembly was Taras Ferley, an Independent Liberal elected from Gimli in 1915. For the majority of the next six decades Emerson would be represented by a member of the Ukrainian Canadian community.

Equally beneficial would have been an exposition of the settlement's experiences during Canada's two World Wars. While there is brief mention of social, economic and educational ramifications during these conflicts, there is no elaboration on the termination of the bilingual school system in 1916, or discussion of the national government's restrictions against, and in some cases internment of, immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. More notably, there is no reference to the scores of Ukrainians from Stuartburn who served in Canada's armed forces during both wars, or of those who made the ultimate sacrifice to their country. The Beny-sur-Mer Canadian War Cemetery, near the City of Caen in Normandy, holds the remains of two 26-year-old Stuartburn soldiers, Trooper William Feschuk and Rifleman Mike Wintoniw from Vita (Szewczenko) and Zhoda respectively, who were killed on the first day of the storied D-Day invasion of Nazi-occupied France on 6 June 1944.

In spite of any shortcomings, *Community and Frontier* is a stimulating template for future in-depth studies. It begs the question of how those who migrated out of Stuartburn fared in Alberta's Peace River country, where they formed significant communities at Spirit River and Rycroft. Were they able to achieve the progress and development which were stymied in southeastern Manitoba? Professor Lehr has produced a unique contribution to the scholarship of the western Canadian landscape and an insightful examination of the rich history of Ukrainian settlement in Manitoba.

Peter Melnycky
Alberta Heritage, Edmonton

Future History

In the next issue of *Manitoba History* ...

- Beer brewing in Winnipeg from Hudson Bay to Patrick Shea
- Mennonite midwives in the late 19th century
- Murder on the Canada-US border
- Historic Manitoba bridges
- book reviews & more

Cool Things in the Collection:

Women's Institute fonds at the S. J. McKee Archives

by Marianne E. Reid
Librarian, John E. Robbins Library, Brandon University

Throughout the 20th century, the Women's Institute (WI)—an organization of Canadian provenance—was ubiquitous and dynamic in Manitoba, throughout Canada, and around the world. The WI is a rural organization with a few locals in urban areas. Since its beginning in 1897, the WI's motto has been "For Home and Country", with a guiding principle "a nation could not rise above the level of its homes." The organization has guided women on how to care for their families, homes, and communities; it has been a catalyst for social activism, political change, and social improvements. Its motto, guiding principles, and activities are marked indicators of a maternal feminist organization.[1]

The S. J. McKee Archives at Brandon University has eleven fonds of Women's Institute textual records. These well-preserved primary sources rich in local history are close to three metres in extent with inclusive dates of 1914 to 2004. This span of ten decades can give researchers insights into life in southwestern Manitoba as it changed, into the adaptations taken by the WI as women's perceptions of their role in society evolved, and into how the waves of feminism found expression among rural women.

S. J. McKee Archives, Brandon Women's Institute 1-2006, Box 1, album.

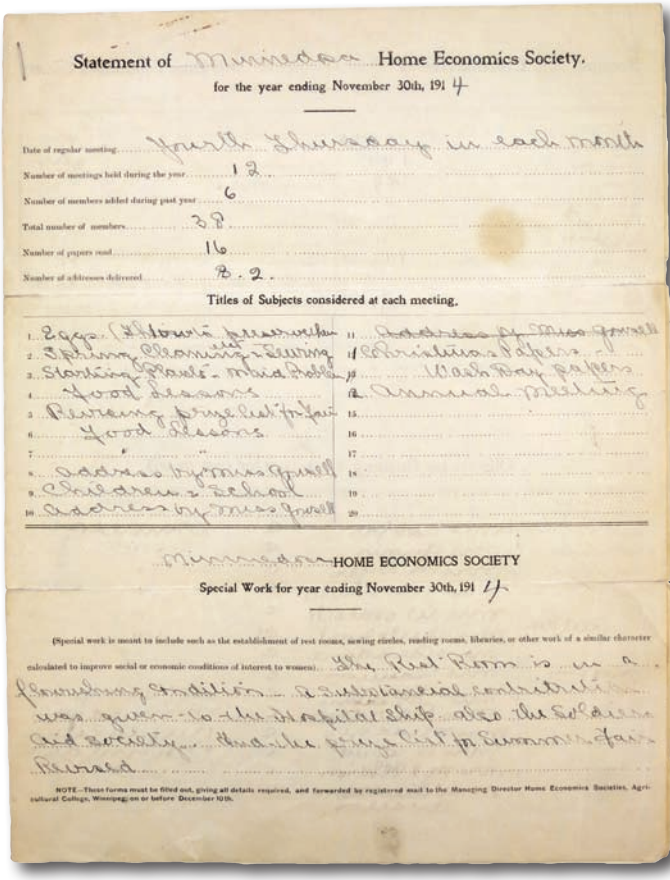
Collective quilting. The promotion of mutually beneficial group activities such as quilting has long been a tenet of the Womens's Institutes, as shown in this undated photo of some unidentified members of the Brandon WI.

Nine of the eleven fonds are for WI locals: Binscarth (1928–1988, predominantly 1928–1967), Brandon (1963–1992), Clanwilliam (1947–1977), Cordova (1961–1978), Crocus (1946–1984), Douglas (1950–2004), Minnedosa (1914–1981), Rathwell (1939–1966), and Strathclair (1942–1981). Most of the fonds contain minute books, annual reports, financial records, correspondence, members' lists, miscellaneous newspaper and magazine clippings, and scrapbooks. The minutes and financial records are very detailed. Two of the fonds are for WI administrative bodies: Southwest A Region (1956–1989)[2] and Manitoba Women's Institute collection (circa 1935 to 1980s).[3] Along with other documents, these contain lengthy runs of WI newsletters, of programs for conventions, and of WI handbooks in various editions.

The Minnedosa WI fonds illustrates many of the strengths of this fine collection. It begins in 1914 and ends in 1981, albeit with a broken run. The Minnedosa Home Economics Society formed on 11 November 1910 and was one of 17 charter locals in Manitoba. The name changed in 1919 to Minnedosa Women's Institute when the delegates to the Manitoba provincial convention of the Home Economics Society voted to change their name to Women's Institute.

The Manitoba government took a leading role in the activities of the WI, including the requirement of an annual report from each local. These annual report forms usefully contain a section on Special Work, which provides an indication of the wide range of concerns of the locals. For example, Minnedosa's 1914 Special Work statement is: "The Rest Room is in a flourishing condition. A substantial contribution was given to the Hospital Ship. Also the Soldiers Aid Society. And the prize list for Summer Fairs

For several decades, the WI sponsored 4-H (Home Economics) courses in their communities. Marianne Reid took several of these courses, and later attended the Faculty of Home Economics at Mount Allison University. She earned her MLS degree at Dalhousie University and is currently employed as a Librarian at Brandon University.



Statement of Minnedosa Home Economics Society.
for the year ending November 30th, 1914

Date of regular meeting: Fourth Thursday in each month
Number of meetings held during the year: 12
Number of members added during past year: 6
Total number of members: 38
Number of papers read: 16
Number of addresses delivered: B. 2.

Titles of Subjects considered at each meeting.

1. Eggs [illegible]
2. Spring Cleaning & Sewing
3. Starching [illegible]
4. Food Lessons
5. Revising prize list for fair
6. Food Lessons
7.
8. Address by Miss Gowell
9. Children & School
10. Address by Miss Gowell
11. ~~Address by Miss Gowell~~ Christmas Papers
12. Wash Day papers
13. Annual Meeting
14.
15.
16.
17.
18.
19.
20.

Minnedosa HOME ECONOMICS SOCIETY
Special Work for year ending November 30th, 1914

(Special work is meant to include such as the establishment of rest rooms, sewing circles, reading rooms, libraries, or other work of a similar character calculated to improve social or economic conditions of interest to women). The Rest Room is in a flourishing condition. A substantial contribution was given to the Hospital Ship also the Soldiers Aid Society. Another prize list for Summer Fair Revised.

NOTE—These forms must be filled out, giving all details required, and forwarded by registered mail to the Managing Director Home Economics Societies, Agricultural College, Winnipeg, on or before December 10th.

S. J. McKee Archives, Minnedosa Women's Institute Fonds.

The domestic priorities of women's groups in the early 20th century can be deduced from documents such as this 1914 statement by the Minnedosa Home Economics Society listing its activities in the past year: cleaning and sewing, preserving and preparing food, providing prizes for the local fair, and tending to the education of local children. It maintained a Rest Room, said to be in "flourishing condition," for the benefit of rural women and children in town for shopping and socializing. In this early time of the First World War, contributions had been made to the equipping of a hospital ship and the Soldiers Aid Society.

revised". For 1915, the statement is: "Assisted in organizing Boys and Girls Club. Formed a Hospital Aid. Interested in Red Cross work. Undertook management of Ladies and Children's Departments affair."

Because the Minnedosa fonds begins in 1914, it provides insight into the activities of the WI related to the Great War. For example, a minute from the 24 February 1916 minutes reads: "… that the President offer the use of the Rest Room in the evenings to the Soldier Boys as a place to read, play games, and enjoy themselves and to be under the supervision of the Red Cross." Later, a minute from 27 April [1917?]: "12 ladies promised a dozen eggs each to be sent to French Red Cross", raises the interesting question of how the eggs got to France!

In an era when there was no system of rural libraries sponsored by the province, the WI locals helped to fill a vital cultural role in Manitoba. The initiative for lending libraries housed in the local Rest Room was launched in the 1930s. References to these can be found throughout the minutes of WI locals in the 1930s and 1940s. This is an example from the Binscarth minutes for 10 October 1931: "Mrs. Drew then gave a splendid report on the activities of the library, after discussion it was moved by Mrs. Lucas, Seconded by Mrs. Cooke that we purchase the 40 books from the Russell Institute at a cost of $3.50 for the Institute's own library, which it is hoped will commence with the New Year."

S.

Women's Institute scrapbooks preserve rare g
in such forms as photographs of early pioneers
membership lists.

During the Second World War and after, the horizon of the WI returned to international matters. WI locals prepared packages for the enlisted men overseas, and raised "thousands of dollars for the Children's War Service Fund, for air raid victims through the Queen Elizabeth Fund and for the Red Cross."[4] The 14 January 1948 minutes of the Crocus WI provides an example of this activity: "Food parcels for Britain was then mentioned and all members agreed we should send more parcels to the people of Britain."

In the 1960s, topics that were formerly not spoken about, or addressed, were being discussed at the WI. In Binscarth in October 1962, the local took up the question of putting a sanitary napkin dispenser in the local high school and succeeded in doing so.

S. J. McKee Archives, Crocus Women's Institute Fonds 5-2002, Scrapbook.

Some Women's Institutes organized tours, such as this one to the nursery and arboretum of horticulturist Frank Skinner near Dropmore, in July 1951.

J. McKee Archives, Minnedosa Women's Institute fonds, scrapbook.

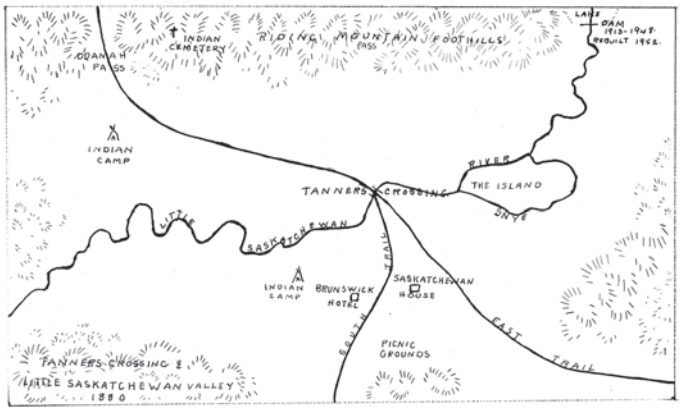
glimpses into rural life through the 20th century, s, recipes, event programs, reminiscences, and

Other changes were also taking place affecting the WI. The Brandon WI fonds that begins in 1963 reflects the migration of farm families to urban areas. The first sentence on an insert attached to the fly leaf of the 1963–1969 minute book reads: "Brandon Women's Institute was formed in 1963 by a number of ladies who had moved to Brandon, who had belonged to WI in country … they missed the WI." In the 1970s, the effect of rural depopulation is noted directly in the Crocus WI scrapbook covering the period 1946 to 1974: "The closing of our rural school and the sale of the school building in 1964 removed one sphere of our interest, and a place to hold our larger meetings. … Our local children are now divided between Erickson and Minnedosa schools."

By the 1980s, several of the WI locals had disbanded due to rural depopulation and to the movement of the younger women into the labour force. This is reflected in the S. J. McKee Archives fonds wherein only two of the fonds have records beyond 1989. However, the Manitoba Women's Institute still exists; more information may be found at its website.[5]

S. J. McKee Archives, Minnedosa Women's Institute Fonds.

Women's Institutes such as the one at Minnedosa, organized in November 1910, received formal Certificates of Organization from the Manitoba Department of Agriculture and Immigration in 1922.



S. J. McKee Archives, Minnedosa WI Fond 2-2002, Village History Scrapbook 1878-1956.

Local histories, which often preserve information found nowhere else, can be found among the records of the Women's Institutes, such as this map from the 1950s showing the region around Tanner's Crossing, that later became the town of Minnedosa.

One of the legacies of the WI is the abundance of local histories, thanks to the triennial national Lady Tweedsmuir Competition for local histories. Three notable examples are found in the Minnedosa WI fonds. The Minnedosa entry, "Our Village History", was entered in the 1949 Tweedsmuir Competition and placed first in the Manitoba provincial competition and won honourable mention at the national level. Several other fonds also have scrapbooks and local histories; however, none is as elaborate as the three in the Minnedosa fonds.

Researchers may access detailed finding aids online for the WI fonds held at S. J. McKee Archives website using the keyword phrase "Women's Institute."[6] Each finding aid includes a general introduction to the WI's history in Canada, its beginning in Manitoba, and an account of the origins, activities and lifecycle of the local. Researchers may also wish to consult the Archives of Manitoba, which has several fonds of WI papers, some dating from as early as 1910.

Notes

I acknowledge Tom Mitchell for his useful suggestions for revisions to the original draft.

1. Maternal feminism is defined or viewed as "the idea that women are natural caregivers and 'mothers of the nation' who should participate in public life because of their perceived propensity for decisions that will result in good care of society" (Wikipedia).
2. This fonds holds material from various Women's Institutes in the Southwest A Region.
3. This fonds has textual records from the Manitoba Women's Institutes office and a miscellany of textual records from various branches.
4. "The Women's Institutes of Manitoba". Winnipeg: Manitoba Department of Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources, Historic Resources Branch. 1983. p. 6
5. http://mbwi.org/
6. http://bartok.brandonu.ca/mainarchives.aspx