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THE FUR TRADE IN EASTERN CANADA UNTIL 1870

by
NORMAN ANICK

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Volume I



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SECTION I
The Moose River-Ottawa River Region

The Early History

Introduction

Jacques Cartier, in the journal of his first voyage, is the first European to describe a trade for furs in Canada, but on his subsequent voyages, he makes no further references to such a trade. After the French crown abandoned its plans to conquer the Kingdom of the Saguenay and withdrew from Canada, Frenchmen still frequented the Gulf of St. Lawrence, at first to fish and later to fish and trade. The fur trade was conducted at Tadoussac, at the mouth of the Saguenay River, with the Montagnais Indians who acted as middlemen, purchasing their furs in the Great Lakes region. The French would not venture above Trois-Rivières because of the hostility of the region's inhabitants, the Laurentian Iroquois, whom Cartier and Jean-François de La Rocque de Roberval had aliented.

By 1603 the Montagnais-Algonquin-Huron alliance had succeeded in opening the St. Lawrence below Montreal Island and for the first time the Hurons began to appear on the river. The Iroquois still controlled the river below Montreal. In 1608, Samuel de Champlain selected the "point of Quebec" as the site of his wintering quarters. In the succeeding years, Champlain aided the Hurons and Algonkins in their struggles with the Iroquois on Lake Champlain and in the vicinity of Lake Ontario and thereby earned the enmity of the Iroquois. Besides Quebec, the principal trading sites in the 1620s were Tadoussac and Trois-Rivières. A third but less important location was Miscou on the Baie des Chaleurs.

In the 1630s, the Iroquois raids along the St. Lawrence River became increasingly frequent. A settlement was founded in 1642 by the Compagnie de Saint-Sulpice on the strategically located Island of Montreal. During Montreal's first two decades, the Iroquois lurked in ambush outside its walls and upstream along the Ottawa River, waylaying the Huron brigades bringing their furs to the settlements on the St. Lawrence. The Iroquois, in the latter part of the 1640s, destroyed Huronia, and eliminated the Hurons as middlemen in the fur trade. After the campaign of Alexandre de Prouville de Tracy against the Mohawks in 1666, the St. Lawrence River was for the first time completely open to the French, and the Jesuits and soon after fur traders and coureurs de bois penetrated into the Great Lakes and beyond. René-Robert Cavelier de la Salle succeeded in reaching the fur hunters of the Mississippi River. To the north, the coureurs de bois settled among the Ottawa Indians along Lake Huron, who had inherited the role as middlemen in the trade upon the destruction of the Hurons. Claude Greysolon de la Tourette, representing his brother Daniel Greysolon de Dulhut, who had the support of Governor Joseph-Antoine Le Febvre de La Barre, established posts beyond the middlemen Indians at Lake Nipigon in 1684 and Kaministikwia in 1685. The two posts remained in operation until the early 1690s. The Ottawa Indians sold only a relatively small part of their furs to the traders among them, bringing most of them to Montreal where annual fairs were held.

The advent of the second Iroquois war forced the abandonment of the settlements to the west and northwest of Montreal. Immediately after the conclusion of hostilities between England and France in 1713, the French established posts on Lake Superior at Michipicoten. Zacharie Robutel de La Noue, in preparation for an exploration of the route to La Mer de l'Ouest, erected forts in 1717 at Kaministikwia and Rainy Lake to serve as supply depots. Soon after, a post

was founded either on Nipigon River or on Lake Nipigon. In the 1730s, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Vérendrye extended the settlements into the Prairies. This expansion eliminated the middleman Indians in the fur trade, and the fairs at Montreal came to an end.

In the 1720s and 1730s, the French posts, Fort Frontenac and Fort Niagara, experienced competition from the English at Oswego. During this period, the officers commanding the interior posts served as their lessees and paid the government a low rent, making it possible for them to maintain an attractive trading tariff. But subsequently, the posts were farmed out to the highest bidder, and the lessees, in their turn, raised the tariff so sharply that both forts Frontenac and Niagara by the mid-1740s were being undersold by Oswego. Consequently, in 1749 a small fort, called Fort Rouillé, was established on the site of present-day Toronto. It was intended to intercept the Indians going to Oswego and to undersell the English post.

The English settled at the mouth of Moose River in 1673, and six years later the French established themselves on Lake Témiscamingue. On his march to Hudson Bay in 1686, Pierre de Troyes constructed a fort on Lake Abitibi. Troyes surprised and captured Moose Fort in June of that year. The English retook it in 1693, but lost it soon afterward. It was recaptured by the English in 1696, but was ceded to France the following year by the Treaty of Ryswick.

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 restored all of Hudson Bay to the British, but they did not reside on Moose River until 1720. Meanwhile, Abitibi post was in continuous existence throughout the French period. The post at Lake Témiscamingue was closed in the 1690s, but was reopened in 1720.

The Hudson's Bay Company appointed governors and councils to govern its factories on the bay. The officer in charge

was the governor, with his second in command and the surgeon as councillors. Each council was independent of the others, and answerable only to the Governor and Committee in London (London Committee).

New France

Jacque Cartier is the first European who has left an account of a trade for furs in Canada. On 6 July 1534, while sailing off Paspébiac Point in the Baie des Chaleurs, he noticed that some Indians on shore were waving their furs in the air. The following day, a brisk trade was conducted at the cove of Port-Daniel, where Cartier anchored his ships. The Indians "bartered all they had to such an extent that all went back naked without anything on them."¹ Another trade was conducted the following day, most likely at Tracadigash Point.² It is evident that the inhabitants of this region either had previously come into contact with Europeans or had learned the value they placed on furs from other Indians.

On his second voyage in 1535, Cartier visited two Indian villages, Stadacona, near Quebec City, and Hochelaga, on the Island of Montreal. Between Quebec and Montreal there was extensive cultivation, and the land surrounding the village of Hochelaga was covered with "the corn of the country which resembles Brazil Millet."³ The houses in the village and the wooden palisade which surrounded it were similar to those erected by the Hurons in Samuel de Champlain's time.⁴ Cartier does not seem to have traded for furs at Hochelaga. He was given a "great heap of musk-rats" as a present on his approach to the Island of Montreal, but apparently this was only a food offering.⁵

The colonization of the St. Lawrence was delayed by a war in the latter part of the 1530s between France and Spain. At the beginning of 1541, Francis I selected Jean-François de La Rocque de Roberval as the leader of an expedition

numbering 5 ships, 400 sailors and 300 soldiers which was to conquer the Kingdom of the Saguenay. Cartier commanded at sea while Roberval had charge on land.⁶ At Cap Rouge River, nine miles above Quebec, a fort was constructed⁷ which was named Charlesbourg Royal.

In the narration of Roberval's voyage, published by Richard Hakluyt in his collected works, the fort is described as being

very beautiful to beholde, and of great force, situated upon a high mountaine, wherein there were two courtes of buildings, a great Towre, and another of fortie or fiftie foote long: wherein there were divers Chambers, a Hall, a Kitchine, houses of office, Sellers high and lowe, and neere unto it were an Oven and Milles, and a stoove to warme, men in, and a well before the house. And the buylding was situated upon the great River of Canada, called France prime by Monsier Roberval. There was also at the foote of the Mountaine another lodging, part whereof was a great Towre of two stories high, two courtes of good building, where at the first all our victuals, and whatsoever was brought with us was sent to be kept: and neere unto that Towre there is another small river. In these two places above and beneath, all the meaner sort was lodged.⁸

In the course of the summer, Cartier voyaged to Montreal Island, intending to gather more information about the fabled kingdom of the Saguenay. He surveyed the region in the vicinity of the island as far as the Long Sault, and then returned to Charlesbourg Royal.⁹

The following year, Roberval sailed from France with three ships, and passed the winter at the fort, which he re-named Fort of France-Roy.¹⁰ In June 1543, he was at

Montreal Island, but it is unlikely that he proceeded beyond the Lachine Rapids.¹¹

There is no indication whether Cartier and Roberval traded for furs. They were seeking gold and diamonds, and in the 1541-42 and 1542-43 narratives furs are not mentioned.

The settlement in Canada was abandoned in 1543. France and Spain were again at war, and the "precious stones" which Cartier and Roberval had brought back to France proved to be worthless.¹² France's attention in the New World subsequently turned toward Florida and the West Indies.

After 1543, Frenchmen still frequented the Gulf of St. Lawrence, at first to fish and later to fish and trade for furs. Samuel de Champlain writes that by 1610, Frenchmen had been coming to Tadoussac for 60 years.¹³ They did not venture further inland, no doubt in large measure because of the hostility toward Europeans created by Cartier's and Roberval's kidnappings and their high-handed treatment of the Laurentian Iroquois.¹⁴ The Montagnais, a branch of the Algonkian family, acted as middlemen in this trade, which flowed from the Ottawa River and beyond to the Saguenay River and down to Tadoussac. This round-about route was used because the St. Lawrence River route was controlled by the Iroquois. The Montagnais and their allies, having acquired iron weapons in their trade, in the latter part of the 16th century succeeded in conquering these sedentary Indians. But in the last decade of the 16th and first decade of the 17th century, the Montagnais-Huron control of the river was still being challenged by the Iroquois dwelling on Lake Ontario and northern New York state. The Saguenay River was the only secure route, and the French merchants conducted their trade at Tadoussac every spring.

The Frenchmen who frequented Tadoussac remain anonymous until 1599. In that year, François Gravé Du Pont of Saint-Malo outfitted a vessel which he placed under the command of

Pierre Chauvin de Tonnetuit of Normandy, and it sailed in the company of other vessels to Tadoussac.¹⁵ Gravé Du Pont then petitioned the king for the exclusive right of trading with the Indians, promising to colonize and defend the country with 500 men. His petition was granted. A few ships were outfitted and sailed from Honfleur to Tadoussac. Chauvin desired to make a settlement for the winter at Tadoussac, but Gravé Du Pont objected, recommending that it should be built further upstream at Trois-Rivières. Chauvin, however, refused to go beyond Tadoussac.¹⁶ On a previous voyage, he "had gone as far as Three Rivers to seek out the Indians and barter with them."¹⁷

At Tadoussac, Chauvin constructed a "summer house" which Champlain saw in 1603. Champlain says that it was "twenty-five feet long by eighteen wide and eight feet high, covered with boards with a fireplace in the middle, the shape of a guard-room, surrounded by wattles and a small ditch dug in the sand."¹⁸ At least 16 men passed the winter there. The trade was not rewarding and a second voyage by Chauvin was equally unproductive.¹⁹

Before he could undertake a third voyage, Chauvin died. A monopoly was then given to Aymar de Chaste, the governor of Dieppe, and his partners, some merchants of Rouen. Gravé Du Pont was selected to lead the expedition and Samuel de Champlain was charged with the exploration of the St. Lawrence River up to the Lachine Rapids.²⁰

On this his first voyage to Canada, Champlain cast anchor on 27 May 1603 at Tadoussac harbour, which he says is small, not being able to accommodate more than ten or twelve ships and "is like a cove at the mouth of the Saguenay River." Champlain immediately went to St. Matthew's Point (Pointe aux Alouettes) on the west side of the harbour, "running a league out into the sea" where 80 to 100 Indians were encamped celebrating a victory over the Iroquois. The

following day, they moved their encampment to Tadoussac harbour, where Champlain's ship was anchored, and a trade was conducted.²¹ On 11 June, Champlain ascended 12 or 15 leagues up the Saguenay River. One week later, he set off for the Lachine Rapids, arriving there at the beginning of July. After walking around the rapids and questioning the Indians about the river above, he returned to Tadoussac, where his ship was still at anchor, and from there sailed to Gaspé.²² From Isle Percée, he went back to Tadoussac. He found another band of Montagnais encamped there, having returned after defeating the Iroquois on Lake Champlain. Champlain passed 13 days at Tadoussac, and then sailed for France.²³

The two victories in 1603 by the Montagnais and Algonkins over the Iroquois opened the St. Lawrence River to their allies, the Hurons. Lake Ontario remained under Iroquois control, and the Hurons were obliged to take the French River-Lake Nipissing-Mattawa River-Ottawa River route from Lake Huron into the St. Lawrence River. The Hurons, before the coming of the Europeans, had bartered their corn and vegetables with their neighbours to the north for bear-skins and bones of seafish which were transformed into tools. Every summer, the Indians between the Saint-Maurice and Ottawa rivers met to trade at a designated place on the Ottawa River.²⁴ The Hurons now turned their attention to purchasing furs from their neighbours as far east as the Attikamegues on the Saint-Maurice River. The Hurons' principal trade was to the west of Huronia with the Ottawas on the western shores and islands of Lake Huron, the Winnebagos of Green Bay and the Potawatomis of Lake Michigan. Besides their own corn, the Hurons traded the tobacco and hemp, which they used to make fishnets, obtained from the Petun and Neutral Indians.²⁵

In 1604, de Chaste died. Pierre Du Gua de Monts, a Huguenot of Saintonge, received a commission to trade in Canada, and he dispatched one vessel under Gravé Du Pont to Tadoussac, while he went himself to Cape Breton with Champlain, who served as the official geographer.²⁶ De Monts established himself on Ile Sainte-Croix (Dochet Island). Having experienced a "dreadful winter," he removed his settlement the following year to Port-Royal, 25 leagues away.²⁷ There his men experienced a less severe winter in 1605-06, though they still suffered from scurvy. The settlement was maintained in 1606-07 and was abandoned in August 1607.²⁸

De Monts obtained from the crown in 1608 a monopoly for one year, and appointed Champlain as his lieutenant, giving him command of one of the two vessels which he equipped. The other was commanded by Gravé Du Pont.²⁹ On his arrival at Tadoussac, Gravé Du Pont found the crew of a Basque vessel engaging in trade. He attempted to enforce de Monts' exclusive trading rights, but the Basques, led by their captain, Darache, overpowered his crew and took away their weapons. Champlain entered Tadoussac harbour after the incident, and was able to soothe relations between Gravé Du Pont and Darache, making the latter promise that "he would undertake nothing against Pontgravé [Gravé Du Pont], nor against the king's interest nor that of the Sieur de Monts."³⁰

At the end of June, Champlain left for the "narrowing" of the St. Lawrence River, where he arrived on 3 July. He selected the "point of Quebec" as the site for his wintering quarters.³¹ The fort

contained three main buildings of two stories. Each one was three fathoms long and two and a half wide. The storehouse was six long and three wide, with a fine cellar six feet high.

All the way round our buildings I had a gallery made, outside the second story, which was a very convenient thing. There were also ditches fifteen feet wide and six deep, and outside these I made several salients which enclosed a part of the buildings, and there we put our cannon. In front of the building there is an open space four fathoms wide and six or seven long, which abuts upon the river's bank. Round about the buildings are very good gardens, and an open place on the north side of a hundred, or a hundred and twenty, yards long and fifty or sixty wide.³²

No trade was conducted at Quebec in 1608.

In June 1609, Champlain left for Tadoussac, where Gravé Du Pont had just arrived from France. In their discussions, they decided that Champlain with 20 men should conduct explorations into the interior, while Gravé Du Pont should prosecute the trade at Tadoussac.³³ On the island of St. Eloi, Champlain encountered some Algonkins and "Ochateguins" (Hurons), who were intent upon conducting a campaign against the Iroquois, and Champlain, to earn their good will, agreed to accompany them. The Iroquois met the Hurons and Algonkins in battle on Lake Champlain, but fled upon the discharge of two arquebuses.³⁴ Thus the French for the first time had taken an active role in the wars of the Indians.

Champlain returned to France at the end of the summer. De Monts and his partners, after being assured by the Hurons that they would help in exploring the St. Lawrence River in return for aid against the Iroquois, resolved to retain Quebec,³⁵ and Champlain sailed in the spring of 1610 to conduct the explorations. On April 26, he reached Tadoussac, where ships were already anchored. The Montagnais he encountered promised that they would help him explore "the

Three Rivers" as far as Hudson Bay the following year if he accompanied them to war, while the Hurons stated they would show him "the great Lake" (Lake Huron). Champlain agreed to meet a Montagnais war party at Trois-Rivières, and he brought with him four pinnaces of merchandise to trade with the Hurons, who were waiting at the mouth of the Richelieu River. He proceeded with the Montagnais from Trois-Rivières to the Richelieu, and there his arquebuses were again decisive in carrying the contest against the Iroquois. After the battle, Champlain visited Tadoussac. He found that many merchants trading there had suffered heavy losses, for too many ships had been outfitted.³⁶

Champlain was in France for the winter of 1610-11, leaving Sieur de Parc to command at Quebec. He returned to Canada in the spring of 1611, intending to explore up "the Three Rivers." The Indians, however, declined to guide him there this year. Instead, he went to the Lachine Rapids, the Indians having promised him that they would show him the region beyond the Island of Montreal. While he awaited their arrival, he cleared some land at Place Royale, one league from Mount Royal.³⁷ Though he does not make any further references in his narratives to this site, he probably constructed storehouses there. He failed to persuade any of those who came to trade with him to guide him inland.

De Monts' company of Rouen merchants was dissolved in 1611, and the ensuing year, Champlain succeeded in forming a company of merchants from Rouen, Le Havre, and Saint-Malo called the Company of the Associates, headed by de Monts.³⁸ The La Rochelle merchants declined to take part. The crown granted the new company a commission to outfit four vessels for Canada, but the La Rochelle merchants succeeded in persuading the parlement of Rouen to prevent its publication. Champlain was required to pass the entire year of 1612 in making representations before the parlement removed its opposition.³⁹

With this matter settled, Champlain left for Canada in the spring of 1613, going directly to the Lachine Rapids, where he traded with the Algonkins. At the end of May, he set off from Sainte-Hélène Island with four Frenchmen and an Indian up the Ottawa River into the land of the Algonkins. He went as far as Lower Allumette Lake (also called Petoby Lake) and on Allumette Island, the principal residence of the Algonkins, he visited and traded with Chief Tessouat or Besouat.⁴⁰ The island was strategically located on the Mattawa River-Ottawa River route, and passing middlemen Indians were usually required to pay a toll. Good relations with a chief who had virtual control over the Ottawa River trade was indispensable.

Two years later, Champlain agreed to take part in an expedition against the Iroquois harassing the Hurons and Algonkins along the Mattawa-Lake Nipissing-French River route. Because of a misunderstanding, the war party started off without him, but it was accompanied by Father Joseph, one of the four Récollet friars who had come out this year, and 12 Frenchmen. Champlain followed them up the Ottawa River to the Mattawa River, and passed through Lake Nipissing and down the French River into Lake Huron. In August, a war party of about 500 warriors assembled at the principal Huron village on Lake Couchiching. Accompanied by Champlain, the party travelled through Lake Simcoe, Sturgeon Lake, Rice Lake and down the Trent River to the Bay of Quinte, crossed Lake Ontario and attacked an Iroquois fort located probably near the present Syracuse, New York. The Iroquois held fast, and Champlain, who was wounded in the engagement, and his allies were obliged to retreat. Champlain passed the winter among the Hurons, and in January visited some villages of the Petuns south of Nottawasaga Bay and Ottawas in the Bruce Peninsula.⁴¹

In 1618, Champlain conducted a trade at Tadoussac and Trois-Rivières,⁴² but not at the Lachine Rapids. This

indicates that the latter place was already considered unsafe as a rendezvous site. According to Sulte in his "Histoire de la Ville des Trois Rivières et de ses environs," the storehouses at Sault-Saint-Louis (Lachine Rapids) were abandoned in 1618 and their stores were transferred to Trois-Rivières.⁴³ Champlain, in his narratives, does not mention any personal visit to the rapids in the 1620s. A trade, however, was conducted there in 1621, when a party of Iroquois was repulsed there by some Frenchmen and their Indian allies.⁴⁴ Another band of Iroquois approached the Récollet convent on the Saint-Charles River, "where there was a little fort," and surprised and killed some Hurons in its vicinity.⁴⁵

Henri de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, the viceroy of New France, was imprisoned in 1616 and confusion followed in New France until 1620, when the prince, who had been released the year before, transferred his position to Henri II, Duc de Montmorency.⁴⁶ On his return to New France in 1620, Champlain found traders from La Rochelle trading illegally with the Indians at Tadoussac and selling them guns, which hitherto had not been done.

After the appearance of the Iroquois on the St. Lawrence River in 1621, Champlain represented to Montmorency that the failure of the Company of Associates to fulfil its obligations made it impossible to adequately defend the colony. Montmorency dissolved the company and gave an eleven-year monopoly to a new company, called the Company de Caën, headed by Guillaume de Caën and his nephew Emery de Caën.⁴⁷ The members of the old company within a year entered into the new association. Notwithstanding this monopoly, in 1622 a Rochellais ship, commanded by a man whom the Indians said was always masked and armed, traded in the neighbourhood of Bic.⁴⁸

Besides Quebec, the principal trading sites in the 1620s were Tadoussac and Trois-Rivières, the former being the more important. A third location was Miscou, on the Baie des Chaleurs. Champlain writes:

This spot is destitute of trees, there being only brushwood, grass, and wild peas. A good deal of trade, however, is done here with the natives. In exchanging for goods they give moose hides and sometimes beaver skins. Some Frenchmen wintered here in former days; but they were not too comfortable because of the excessive cold and the heavy snow. The place is nevertheless very good for fishing.⁴⁹

Tadoussac was frequented each spring by vessels outfitted in France. It was deserted in winter, and there were probably only makeshift summer houses. The English general, David Kirke, who anchored his fleet at Tadoussac in 1628, burned all but one of the French pinnaces in the harbour,⁵⁰ but Champlain makes no reference to his destroying any buildings.

Father Charles Lalemant, the superior of the Jesuit Missions in Canada, wrote to his brother in 1626 about the trade at Tadoussac.

Before the time of the association of those Gentlemen to whom the King gave this trade for a certain time in consideration of certain conditions mentioned in the Articles, the Savages were visited by many people, to such an extent that an Old Man told me he had seen as many as twenty ships in the port of Tadoussac. But now since this business has been granted to the association, which to-day has a monopoly over all others, we see here not more than two ships which belong to it, and that only once a year, about the be-

ginning of the month of June. These two ships bring all the merchandise which these Gentlemen use in trading with the Savages; that is to say, the cloaks, blankets, nightcaps, hats, shirts, sheets, hatchets, iron arrowheads, bodkins, swords, picks to break the ice in Winter, knives, kettles, prunes, raisins, Indian corn, peas, crackers or sea biscuits, and tobacco; and what is necessary for the sustenance of the French in this country besides. In exchange for these they carry back hides of the moose, lynx, fox, otter, black ones being encountered occasionally, martens, badgers, and muskrats; but they deal principally in Beavers, in which they find their greatest profit. I was told that during one year they carried back as many as 22,000. The usual number for one year is 15,000 or 12,000, at one pistole each, which is not doing badly. It is true their expenses are very heavy, as they keep here forty persons and more, who are paid and maintained; this in addition to the expense of the crews of two ships, which consist of at least 150 men, who receive their wages and food. These wages are not all the same.⁵¹

A residence was established at Trois-Rivières by the Récollet missionaries in June 1615 and it was retained until 1628. Colonists were sent and a fort was constructed by Champlain at Trois-Rivières in 1634. It was designed to act as an outpost for Quebec and protect the Huron-Algonkin fur trade coming down the St. Lawrence. In the same year, a mission was established by two Jesuits, Paul Le Jeune and Jacques Buteux.⁵²

The Company de Caën's monopoly was revoked by Cardinal Richelieu in 1627, and Richelieu created the Company of New France, also called the Company of the Hundred Associates, whose members included court officials as well as merchants.⁵³ It suffered severe financial losses when the Kirke brothers captured Quebec in 1629.

Between 1629 and 1632, the English traded for furs at Tadoussac, and perhaps elsewhere along the St. Lawrence River. In the spring of 1631, the directors of the Company of New France in Paris and Rouen outfitted two vessels to supply the colony of Sainte-Anne on Cape Breton Island and also to trade and fish at Miscou and Tadoussac. One ship sailed for Sainte-Anne, whence the Captain, Charles Daniel, dispatched Michel Gallois and the vessel to Miscou. There Gallois found two Basque ships trading, one of which did not possess a trading licence. The master of the ship without a licence was arrested and a struggle ensued in which the Basques overpowered Gallois.⁵⁴ There is no further information on this incident.

As compensation for the financial losses which they sustained when Quebec was captured by the Kirke brothers, the de Caëns received, in 1632, a one year monopoly of the fur trade in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Emery de Caën was appointed governor of Canada for the year.⁵⁵

After New France was returned to France in 1632, a monopoly was granted to the Company of New France for a period of five years. It earned a profit of 300,000 livres. In 1637, the monopoly was granted to six members of the association for four years. However, by 1641 they had lost 70,000 livres and were required to subscribe 103,500 livres to remain solvent. Between 1641 and 1645, a profit of 85,000 livres was realized, but the association was unstable and had to deal with the Iroquois threat. Consequently, it ceded in 1645 its exclusive rights of trade to more influential individuals in New France, in return for 1,000 beaver

skins annually and a pledge to bring out 20 colonists each year. Two years later, the French government opened the trade to all the inhabitants of New France, and in 1653 the habitants were permitted to keep three-quarters instead of one-half the furs which they brought to the magazine. The returns declined as a result of the war with the Iroquois, and in 1660 the Company of Normandy purchased the trading rights from the Company of the Habitants for 10,000 livres to the "creditors and 50,000 livres for beaver duties." The Company of New France was dissolved in 1663.⁵⁶

In the 1630s, the Iroquois spread their terror as far down the St. Lawrence as Trois-Rivières, but the Company of New France declined to station a garrison at the strategically located Lachine Rapids. It was left to an association of private individuals, including a young priest named Jean-Jacques Olier, the founder of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris, to establish a colony there. The association, called the Compagnie des Prêtres de Saint-Sulpice, purchased Montreal Island in 1640 from governor Jean de Lauson, and then entered into an agreement with the Company of New France, pledging to bring out 40 settlers while the company engaged to send out 30. Paul de Chomedey de Maisonneuve arrived at Quebec with three ships and the colonists in August 1641. Charles Huault de Montmagny, Champlain's successor, tried in vain to dissuade him from proceeding that summer above Quebec because of the danger from the Iroquois,⁵⁷ and offered the Ile d'Orléans in exchange for the Island of Montreal, so that help would be more readily available in the event of an Iroquois attack. After being installed as governor of Montreal, Maisonneuve and the colonists returned to Quebec, where they wintered. The ensuing spring, they pitched their camp tents and constructed a chapel at Place Royale on Montreal Island, and surrounded the encampment with a ditch and an entrenchment of stakes. The fort was

damaged by flooding. Buildings of a more permanent nature were raised the following spring. The new village was named Ville-Marie and stood on or near the site selected by Champlain for his storehouses.⁵⁸

Montreal's fur trade languished until the end of the first Iroquois war. During its first two decades, Montreal was well blockaded by the Iroquois, who often lurked in ambush outside its walls. To be sure, brigades of fur trading Indians some years did reach it from the west. Shortly after Dollard Des Ormeaux's engagement with the Iroquois at the Long Sault in 1660, 300 Ottawa Indians traded 50,000 livres of beavers at Montreal.⁵⁹

Two Jesuits, Paul Le Jeune and Anne de Nouë and a lay brother, Gilbert Burel, arrived at Quebec in the summer of 1632. When Champlain returned to Quebec in 1633, he brought 200 colonists and four Jesuits, Jean de Brébeuf, Enemond Massé, Antoine Daniel and Ambroise Davost. Brébeuf, Daniel and Davost travelled with the Hurons in 1634 into Huronia and founded their first mission, named by Brébeuf Saint-Joseph, in the village of Ihonatiria. This village was decimated by pestilence in 1635 and 1636, and Brébeuf in 1637 established a new mission in the more populous village of Ossossané, 12 miles to the south and a little inland from Nottawasaga Bay.⁶⁰ The mission at Sainte-Marie, on the Wye River near Matchedash Bay, was founded in 1639.⁶¹ It became known as the Mission of Sainte Marie-among-the-Hurons. Other missions were founded, including Saint Joseph II, Saint Ignace II, Saint-Louis, Saint-John and Saint-Michel.

Throughout the 1630s and the 1640s, the Huron fur brigades passing through the French River-Lake Nipissing-Mattawa River route were subjected to frequent Iroquois ambushes. In July 1648, the Iroquois destroyed the Huron village of Teanaostaiaie, where the Saint-Joseph II mission was located,⁶² and in March 1649, the missions at Saint

Ignace II and Saint Louis.⁶³ Sainte-Marie was evacuated. Many of the surviving Hurons went to live among the tribes to the west and south, but the majority withdrew to Christian Island, where the Jesuits and 40 French soldiers constructed a fort. There was insufficient food for so many on the island, and by the summer of 1650 only 300 Hurons remained alive. These Hurons and the French abandoned Huronia and successfully reached Quebec.⁶⁴

In the decade following the destruction of the Jesuit missions in Huronia, Indian fur brigades infrequently ran successfully the Iroquois gauntlet down the Ottawa River. Pierre-Esprit Radisson and Medard Chouart des Groseilliers succeeded in fighting their way up the river in 1659 and went as far west as Chagouamigon in Lake Superior. They returned to Montreal shortly after Dollard Des Ormeaux's stand at the Long Sault.

The crown abolished the Company of New France in 1663 and assumed direct control over the colony. A governor general, an intendant and a superior council were to conduct its internal affairs.⁶⁵ The trade remained open to its inhabitants.

Alexandre de Prouville de Tracy reached Quebec in June 1665 with the regiment of Carignan-Salieres, and proceeded to raise three forts that summer on the Richelieu River. One had been erected in 1642 by Montmagny at Sorel and was named Fort Richelieu. Tracy constructed his fort "on the site of old Fort Richelieu." It was later named Sorel, in honour of its first commandant, Captain Sorel.⁶⁶ A second fortification was constructed at "the foot of the rapid" in the Richelieu River, and was named Saint-Louis. Subsequently, Captain Jacques de Chambly, who had supervised its construction and served as its first commandant, was granted or purchased Chambly seignory and raised a new fort "on the ruins of the first." It was renamed Fort Chambly.⁶⁷ A third

fort, named Fort Sainte Therèse, was built three leagues above Fort Chambly.⁶⁸ Fort Chambly was an important fur-trading centre until the 1680s, and there may have been some trade at the other two.

Tracy's campaign against the Mohawks in 1666 pacified the Iroquois, and opened the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes for the first time to the French. The Jesuits were quick to take advantage, establishing missions in the interior. The Jesuit Claude Allouez reached the rapids at Sault Ste. Marie in September 1667, and passed the winter in exploring the south shore of Lake Superior. In June 1668, he visited some Nipissings at Lake Alimipegon (Lake Nipigon).⁶⁹ The following year, Fathers Claude Dablon and Jacques Marquette resided at Sault Ste. Marie.⁷⁰ Simon-François Daumont Sieur de Saint-Lusson, in an elaborate ceremony at Sault Ste. Marie in 1671, took possession of lands northward and westward of Sault Ste. Marie.⁷¹

In the wake of these missionaries came the coureurs de bois. The Ottawa Indians, who resided about Michilimackinac, on the southern shore of Lake Superior and in Lake Michigan, had fallen heir, after the destruction of the Hurons, to the role of middlemen in the trade with the French. Radisson and Groseilliers had bartered with them at Chagouamigon (Chequamegon Bay) in 1659-60, and their example was followed by many coureurs de bois after the Iroquois threat had ended. In the 1670s numerous coureurs de bois congregated at Michilimackinac, where Father Marquette had established a mission.

Intendant Jean Talon received reports in 1670 that the Iroquois were hunting for beaver in the lands of France's Indian allies and had robbed them. He suggested to the crown that a fort manned by 100 soldiers should be placed on Lake Ontario to keep the Iroquois in check.⁷² However, Talon returned to France the same year, and his plan was not

implemented. In the ensuing two years, reports were received by the government in Quebec that the English were encouraging the Ottawa Indians to trade with them at Ganacheskiagon, Lake Ontario. To frustrate the English design, Governor General Daniel de R my de Courcelle, in 1672, met the Iroquois at Cataracoui (Kingston) and discussed his intention of constructing a trading fort there.⁷³ The Iroquois were well disposed. Before Courcelle could implement his plan, he was recalled to France.

In the winter of 1672-73, Courcelle's successor, Louis de Buade de Frontenac et de Palluau, was warned by Ren -Robert Cavelier de la Salle that the English were secretly urging the Ottawas to terminate their alliance with France. Frontenac made preparations to establish a fort at Cataracoui, and sent La Salle ahead to gather the Iroquois tribes at Kent  (Quinte) 30 leagues from Cataracoui, distribute presents and allay their suspicions of French intentions. Frontenac met the Iroquois in the spring of 1673, and on his departure left behind La Salle with a small garrison to construct a fort at Cataracoui.⁷⁴ The fort was "only sixty toises [400 feet] around and was only of earth supported by strong palisade,"⁷⁵ and was raised in one week.⁷⁶

There was dissatisfaction among the merchants of Montreal, who regarded Fort Frontenac as an attempt by La Salle and Frontenac to control the Great Lakes fur trade. La Salle was in France in 1674, and the following year returned to Canada with a grant of Fort Frontenac and the land four leagues east and west of it and a half league inland. He was to repay to the crown 10,000 livres, the cost of the fort, and was to maintain a garrison and form a small colony.⁷⁷ La Salle demolished the old fort and erected a new one. Father Louis Hennepin visited Fort Frontenac in the late 1670s and wrote:

This Fort, which at first was only surrounded with Stakes, Palisado's, and earthen Ramparts, has been enlarged since the commencement of my Mission into these Countries, to the circumference of Three hundred and sixty Toises (each of these being six foot in length) and is now adorn'd with Free-Stone, which they find naturally polish'd by the shock of the Water upon the brink of the Lake Ontario or Frontenac.

Hennepin saw three barques, "all deck'd and mounted," which, if necessary, in a short time could convey soldiers across the lake to pillage the villages of the Iroquois.⁷⁸

In 1682, Nicolas de la Salle wrote about Fort Frontenac:

Fort Frontenac is a square with four bastions which measure is toises from one corner to the other.

Three quarters of it are of masonry of hardstone, the wall is three feet thick and twelve high. There is one place where it is only four feet, not being completed. The remainder is closed in with stakes. There is inside a house of squared logs, a hundred feet long. There is also a blacksmith's shop, a guardhouse, a house for the officers, a well, and a cow-house. The ditches are fifteen feet wide.⁷⁹

From Fort Frontenac, La Salle conducted explorations south of the Great Lakes, along the Mississippi River. In so doing, he reached the fur hunters and was no longer dependent on the middlemen. His control of southwestern trade created dissatisfaction among many of the merchants of Quebec, and a strong faction, led by Jacques Le Ber and Charles Aubert de La Chesnaye, tried to undermine his position. Consequently La Salle went to France and in May 1678

was granted a patent by the king, permitting him to construct forts wherever he found necessary and to push his discoveries to Mexico. He was given exclusive right to trade in the lands which he discovered.

Frontenac was recalled in 1682, and was replaced by Joseph-Antoine le Febvre de la Barre. Fort Frontenac by this date had fallen into disrepair, as La Salle had diverted his attention and money to his new discoveries. The new governor entered into league with La Chesnaye and his associates as Frontenac had done with La Salle. A Sergent Champagne was sent by La Chesnaye to Fort Frontenac, ostensibly to supply and guard it, though it still belonged to La Salle. La Chesnaye's enemies, in 1683, accused Champagne of sending many of the furs which he received to the English. In addition, they stated that La Barre was about to transport more than 30 canoes of furs to the English through the fort.⁸⁰ The following year, Fort Frontenac was restored to La Salle by an order of the crown.

La Chesnaye was also accused of sending furs through Fort Chambly to the English at Orange (Albany), Monate (New York), and Boston under La Barre's protection. La Chesnaye some years before had entered into possession of Fort Chambly and later had sold it to Captain de Saint-Ours. As the latter now seems to have owed him some money, La Chesnaye retook possession of it. He also conducted a trade in beavers with the Indians in its vicinity.⁸¹

Louis-Armand de Lom d'Arce, Baron de Lahontan, writing in the late 1680s, says that Chambly "in former times" had been a place of "great Trade" in beaver. By Lahontan's time, the Soccokis (one of the Abenaki-related tribes living then in Maine), Mahingans (Mahicans) and Openangos (Abenaki), who had formerly patronized it, had retired to the English colonies so as not to expose themselves to the Iroquois. Trade was now "decay'd." While Lahontan was at Chambly, he saw two canoes loaded with beaver, which he thought had been

sent by La Barre, pass in the direction of the English. Smuggling, he noted, was prohibited, but the "little Fort that stands at the bottom of the Waterfall, upon the brink of the Basin of Chambli, being only single Pallisadoes, it cannot hinder People to pass that way; especially considering that the Prospect, of so great a profit, renders the Passengers the more daring."⁸²

The number of persons permitted to trade in the Great Lakes in the 1680s was regulated by licences (congés) granted in writing by the governor general to "poor Gentlemen and old Officers who have a Charge of Children." The number of congés could not exceed 25 per year. Each permitted the outfitting of two canoes, carrying merchandise not above the value of 1,000 crowns and manned by six men. They were usually sold by the recipients to the highest bidder. There were also individuals who obtained "private" licences and others who traded illegally on the Great Lakes.⁸³

On their return to Montreal, the Great Lakes traders were followed by many canoes of Ottawa and Huron Indians, 50 when Lahontan was in Montreal in 1685. These Indians calculated that they would receive better prices in Montreal than at Michilimackinac and elsewhere inland.⁸⁴

Most of the Montreal merchants, Lahontan says, represented merchants of Quebec and were supplied from Quebec. All the residents of Montreal were permitted to trade, but wine and brandy could not be dispensed. The Indians went from shop to shop, bargaining for the articles they fancied.⁸⁵ Lahontan adds that the governor of Montreal, François-Marie Perrot, had accumulated 50,00 crowns in his trade.⁸⁶ In the early 1670s, he built a storehouse on Ile Perrot, above Montreal Island and in the path of the fur brigades, and conducted a trade in liquor. He also employed coureurs de bois to visit the villages of the hunters. The merchants of Montreal complained to the government in Quebec, and Perrot

was arrested by Frontenac and for a time was jailed in France. On his return to New France in 1681, he again quarrelled with Frontenac but the two men subsequently resolved their differences.⁸⁷ Perrot was again free to employ his coureurs de bois, though it is not known whether he reoccupied his storehouse on Ile Perrot.

In 1669, Charles Le Moyne and Jacques Le Ber purchased from La Salle some land on the shoreline near the Lachine Rapids and two years later built a house and a storehouse for furs. Soon afterward, other Montreal merchants established "seigneuries," really trading forts, along the shores of Lake Saint-Louis. Le Moyne and Le Ber were obliged to transfer their operations in 1679 to the western end of the Island of Montreal. Their two buildings near the Lachine Rapids were still standing in the 1930s.⁸⁸

The importance of the "fairs" at Montreal declined in the 1680s, as fewer and fewer Indian middlemen undertook the journey to Montreal because of the growing hostility of the Iroquois. There were fairs at Quebec and Trois-Rivières; however, they too were not as rewarding as formerly.

In 1684, La Barre led an expedition against the Iroquois. He marched only as far as Fort Frontenac, being forced to abandon his foray when his army was disabled by a fever. Lahontan, who was in La Barre's advance party, discovered that La Salle had so neglected the defences of Fort Frontenac that repairs had to be made. The fort, Lahontan writes, "was a Square, consisting of large Curtains flanked with four little Bastions; these Flanks had but two Battlements, and the Walls were so low, that one might easily climb upon'em without a Ladder." He considered it well situated for trade with the Iroquois but militarily useless.⁸⁹

La Barre's successor, Jacques-René de Brisay de Denonville, led an army of 2,000 men to Fort Frontenac in

1687, and then proceeded to burn the villages and crops of the Senecas on the southern shore of Lake Ontario. Two years later the Iroquois, in reprisal, attacked and massacred the inhabitants of Lachine. After this incident, Denonville ordered that Fort Frontenac should be blown up. Frontenac arrived in New France soon after Denonville had issued the order, but too late to countermand it.⁹⁰ All the buildings were destroyed and "almost all" the walls.⁹¹ The fort was restored by Frontenac in 1695, and in the following year, he used it as a base for an attack upon the Onondagas and Oneidas.⁹²

After the restoration of peace between the English and French in 1713, the Indians of the Great Lakes resumed their voyages to Montreal. We learn from a memoir written by Governor General Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil in 1722 that Sieur Demusseaux, a merchant of Montreal, and his son "ont fait la Traite sur une habitation du Bout de l'Isle" between 1716 and 1719.

Le fils la faite Ensuite jusque a l'automne de 1720, sur ma terre [Vaudreuil's] au dessus du bout l'Isle que j'avois donnée a ferme a son Père et il la faite cette année avec le Sr. de Cuisy son cousin fils de Made Dargenteuil sur la terre que cette Dame a eu permission d'Etablir au dessous du Long Sault quoiqu'elle n'en ait aucun titre de concession.⁹³

Vaudreuil also writes,

Celuy a qui j'ay affermé L'Isle aux Tourtes y commerce publiquement avec les Sauvages qui sont Etablis et autres qui y vont chercher Leurs besoins, mais il n'en arreste aucuns de ceux qui veulent descendre a Montreal, leur Laissant a tous la Liberté d'y aller au traiter avec lui C'est de quoi je puis assurer Le Conseil.⁹⁴

Other Montreal merchants traded further up the Ottawa River. They depended heavily upon a trade in liquor, which was still prohibited in Montreal.

The trade at Montreal was smaller than it had been before the second Iroquois war. This decline to a large degree was occasioned by the establishment after 1710 of posts at Michipicoten, Kaministikwia and either on Nipigon River or on Lake Nipigon. The opening of the Prairies by Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye ended the role of the middlemen in the fur trade and sealed the fate of Montreal as an important trading centre, though it retained its importance as a base of operations for the trade.

Montreal annually attracted considerable numbers of hunters from the region above the Ottawa River, but in 1720, Vaudreuil re-established Témiscamingue. The date of the founding of the first trading post on Lake Témiscamingue is uncertain. W.S. Wallace gives 1679 as the date and the Compagnie du Nord as the founders, but that company did not begin its operation on Hudson Bay until 1684, and did not receive its monopoly of the bay trade and the right to establish posts inland of the bay until 1685.⁹⁵ Témiscamingue, if it was already in existence in 1685, passed under the company's control by virtue of its monopoly. The post was in operation by 1686.

Pierre de Troyes and his expedition of 30 soldiers and 66 Canadians, equipped by the Compagnie du Nord to capture the English posts on Hudson Bay, reached Lake Témiscamingue on 18 May 1686. Troyes relates that the Compagnie du Nord's post was on an island of Lake Témiscamingue. This island "peut avoir demye lieue de tour, et est entre deux rapides, provenant d'une petite rivière nommée Metabec Chouan." Fourteen Frenchmen were stationed there. Troyes took an inventory and reorganized Témiscamingue's trade. When he departed he left Jean Sebille and four men to man the post,

and two other men, Mathurin Guillet and Antoine Villedieu, were sent to purchase canoes from the Nipissing Indians. On Lake Témiscamingue, on the border of the present-day districts of Duhamel and Guigues, there was a mine, apparently of copper, which drew the attention of Troyes and the men at the trading post. Explorations were carried out at various times after this period, but the mine's remote location discouraged exploitation up to the second decade of the 20th century.⁹⁶

Troyes returned from Hudson Bay to Montreal through Lake Témiscamingue. He mentions neither the number of men at the post on his return, nor the number he left on his departure. According to a report from the Témiscamingue Indians in October 1688, the Iroquois that year killed all the Frenchmen at Témiscamingue and the remains of their bodies could be seen on the site. Abbé Ivanhoe Caron asserts that Témiscamingue was abandoned in 1688 because of the Iroquois incursions; this would mean that it was not reoccupied after the massacre. However, Sieur de Tonty wrote in a memorandum for 1707 that Governor General Frontenac, finding that the traders operating from Témiscamingue were intercepting the Indians descending the Ottawa River to Montreal, "demanda la suppression du dit Poste de Temiskamingues qu'il obtent par ce qu'il ruinoit entierement le Montreal." The post was not closed until the 1690s, perhaps about 1695. This would mean it was reoccupied after the 1688 massacre.⁹⁷

Governor General Vaudreuil states that during his absence in France in the early 1710s, Sieur Demusseaux had illegally sent his son and nephew, de Coutonge, twice to winter there. Sieur Charly (likely Jean-Baptiste Charly Saint-Ange), a Montreal merchant, had equipped an Abenaki Indian to trade in the area between Lake Témiscamingue and Lake Huron, and Jean Pauthier, also a Montreal merchant, supplied a Nipissing Indian, who annually frequented the

Témiscamingue region. According to Vaudreuil, the latter Indian did much to hamper the flow of trade down the Ottawa River to Montreal, and conducted his trade in liquor. After his death, Jean Pauthier employed other Indians for this purpose.⁹⁸

In 1720, Vaudreuil permitted Sieur de Pommeroy, with six men and two canoes equipped at the expense of Paul Guillet, to re-establish Témiscamingue and conduct a trade for one year, and this permission was extended for another year in 1721. Vaudreuil's ostensible reason for the re-establishment was the need to increase the amount of castor gras, which had hitherto been relatively rare in Canada; castor sec comprised the bulk of the beaver trade.⁹⁹ When the merchants of Montreal complained, Vaudreuil countered that his action would put an end to the illegal trade in liquor conducted by some Montreal merchants in the Témiscamingue region, a policy which was in the interests of the natives and the trade in general.

Notwithstanding Vaudreuil's strict orders to restrict his trade to the Témiscamingue region, Guillet, during the spring of 1722, penetrated as far as Lake Huron. He was immediately recalled to Montreal, and was not given a congé for 1723.¹⁰⁰

At the end of October 1724, Intendant Michel Bégon de La Picardière farmed Témiscamingue to the highest bidder, Sieur de La Gorgendière, who paid 6,000 livres per annum for five years.¹⁰¹ The territory leased extended from the Rivière du Lièvre (also called Rivière aux Lièvres) to Hudson Bay and from Rivière du Lièvre to Lake Nipissing.¹⁰² La Gorgendière was granted the right to obtain supplies at Manitoulin Island.¹⁰³ As the lease placed no restrictions upon either the quantity and quality of merchandise or the number of men and canoes, Vaudreuil was subjected to strong pressure from the merchants of Montreal to cancel it.

Vaudreuil bowed to the petitions of the merchants, and forbade La Gorgendière to dispatch a canoe without his permission.¹⁰⁴

In July 1725, La Gorgendière was permitted by Vaudreuil to conduct a trade at Témiscamingue for one year, in return for a rent of 2,000 livres, but this permission was not renewed the following year. La Gorgendière requested an indemnity for the losses which he had sustained in supplying the post for the original five-year period, and Intendant Gilles Hocquart and Governor Charles de Beauharnois de La Boische, suggested he be given 2,000 livres by the crown,¹⁰⁵ which was done.¹⁰⁶ In 1727, La Gorgendière was permitted by Beauharnois to collect the credits he had given the Indians at Rivière du Lièvre post.

During the 1730s, Témiscamingue was farmed out for 3,000 livres per annum to Sieur Charly, the merchant of Montreal, whose trade was conducted by Sieur Guillet. In 1739, Sieur Lanoullier received Témiscamingue without charge for the purpose of incrementing his income and helping him "arrange his affairs." He retained Guillet as his trader.¹⁰⁷ Lanoullier was in possession of Témiscamingue at least until 1746.¹⁰⁸ We learn from a memoir written in 1754 that for eight years Guillet had conducted the trade at Témiscamingue without paying rent, though he had expended considerable sums to foster the trade by giving presents to the natives.¹⁰⁹ It is not certain whether he was in his own employ or was commissioned by Lanoullier, but the latter is more likely for in 1752, Sieur Hery rented Témiscamingue for 3,500 livres.¹¹⁰

In 1753, Sieur Duquesne wrote to his cousin, Governor General Ange de Menneville, Marquis Duquesne, requesting the lease for the district for nine years, in order to reimburse him for the 27,000 livres deducted from his salary for 1752. He had been promised 27,000 livres by an individual seeking the lease.¹¹¹ There is no indication whether he obtained

it. In 1754, Governor General Duquesne suggested that Témiscamingue be united with the king's posts;¹¹² however, this recommendation was not implemented.

Bégon, in a memoir dated 20 October 1725, states that les Anciennes Limites de ce poste etoient pour le front depuis et compris la Rivière du Lièvre qui se decharge dans la grande Rivière des 8ta8ois du costé du nord, jusques et compris le lac Nepissingue, et pour la profondeur qusqu'a La baye D'hudson."¹¹³

In his "Memoire sur l'etat de la Nouvelle-France" written in 1757, Louis-Antoine de Bougainville writes about Témiscamingue.

Témiscamingue, poste situé sur le bord d'un lac de ce nom, affermé sept mille francs, les sauvage appellent l'endroit où est le poste Aubatswenanek. Les nations qui y traitent sont le Têtes de Boules ou gens des terres et les Namcosakio qui viennent du côté de la baie d'Hudson.¹¹⁴

The following are the Ottawa River posts enumerated by de Bougainville and his comments on them:

Le Long Sault, poste situé sur la rive du sud de la Grand Rivière ou des Outaouas, comme Carillon l'est sur la rive nord, au pied du même sault, à six lieues du lac des Deux-Montagnes. Ces deux petits postes ont été établis pour traiter au passage des Sauvages, qui sont les Népisings, Algonkins et Iroquois. Il s'y fait environ cent cinquante paquets, le mêmes pellereries qu'à Témiscamingue, quelques ours et quelques chats de plus.

M. le marquis de Vaudreuil, commandant du Long Sault, en retire 800 francs de rente, et en

temps de paix 4000.

Lac des Deux-Montagnes, mission établie sur le lac de ce nom qui est formé par la rivière des Outawais, à douze lieues de Montréal, et desservie par les Sulpiciens. Il peut y avoir deux cent cinquante Sauvages Nepissing, Algonkins et Iroquois; il n'y a ni commandant français ni garnison; le commerce est affermé par les prêtres pour neuf ans, deux mille francs; il en sort année commune cent cinquante paquets. Carillon à M. d'Aillebout de Cuisy. Les pelleteries qui sortent du lac des Deux-Montagnes sont de la même espèce que celles de Temiscamingue.¹¹⁵

One year after the capture of Montreal by the British, Alexander Henry the Elder ascended the Ottawa River, taking the Mattawa-Lake Nipissing-French River route into Lake Huron. Fourteen leagues (about 34 miles) above the Long Sault, he passed "a French fort, or trading-house, surrounded by a stockade." Attached was a small garden, from which he obtained some vegetables. Three leagues above it, he reached the mouth of the Hare River (Rivière du Lièvre), where he "passed another trading-house,"¹¹⁶ perhaps the old French Rivière du Lièvre post in Témiscamingue district.

He continued through Lac des Chats and the Portgage du Grand Calumet, then to the rapids called des Allumettes. Near the rapids, he saw "a trading fort, or house, surrounded by a stockade, which had been built by the French, and at which the quantity of peltries received was once not inconsiderable."¹¹⁷ At the mouth of the Rivière Dumoine there was another "fort, or trading-house," where Henry found an encampment of Muskegon Indians. He conducted a trade with them.¹¹⁸

After his return from France in 1711, La Vérendrye was permitted by the governor general to establish a small trading

post on his lands at La Gabelle, near Trois-Rivières. He passed some years there before he undertook his expeditions to the west of Lake Superior.¹¹⁹

La Salle obtained permission in 1679 from the Iroquois to raise a small stockade near the mouth of the Niagara River to serve only as a depot for furs brought from Michilimackinac and Detroit.¹²⁰ Eight years later, Denonville built, at the mouth of the river, a small stockaded fort, Fort Denonville designed to serve as a link in the chain of posts stretching from the St. Lawrence River to the Gulf of Mexico.¹²¹ It was abandoned in 1688. In 1722, Governor Burnett of the province of New York received permission from the Iroquois to erect a small trading post at the mouth of the Oswego River. Three years later, a new French fort was raised on the site of Fort Denonville. In 1728, Governor Burnett constructed at Oswego a stone fort, mounting cannon.¹²² Oswego injured the trade at forts Frontenac and Niagara, and French traders soon began frequenting, every spring and autumn, the mouth of the Credit River, meeting the northern Indians who otherwise would have gone to Oswego.¹²³ The Humber River-Holland River-Lake Simcoe route had been used for centuries as a short-cut to and from Georgian Bay. Father Louis Hennepin, in 1617, traded for Indian corn with residents of an Iroquois village, Tejajagon (Teiaiaagon),¹²⁴ located on the east bank of the Humber River, at one end of the Toronto carrying place. Another village, Eandatsekiagon, was at the mouth of the Rouge, on the other side of the carrying place. Between 1720 and 1730, a magazine dependent on Niagara was in existence on the site of Teiaiaagon, and between 1743 and 1746 Sieur Chalet traded at the mouth of the Humber.¹²⁵

We learn in an anonymous, undated memoir, probably written by Beauharnois in the mid-1730s, that the posts returning a "grande quantité" of beaver were "Lac Alepimigon,

Camanistigoya, La Pointe de Chagoumigon, dans le Lac Supérieur; Michilimakinac; la Baye; aux Sioux; le Poste de la Mer d'Ouest; Temiscamingue, et les terres de domaine de Tadoussac."¹²⁶

Another fort, at La Galette, was most likely in existence on the St. Lawrence River by the early 1730s. Governor General Beauharnois and Intendant François Clairambault d'Aigremont wrote in a dispatch dated 25 January 1729: "It is intended to load, at the proposed establishment at La Galette, the Lake Ontario vessels with the goods for the posts on the Lake, and thereby save a portion of the expense of forwarding canoes up." Fort Frontenac, the authors continue, was badly located, as the enemy, on their way to Montreal, could pass it at a distance of four leagues, but they "come within cannon shot of La Galette."¹²⁷ It was also called La Présentation, and stood on the site of the present Ogdensburg, New York.

Chevalier de Raymond wrote about La Présentation in 1754:

La Présentation; poste inutile sur la rivière Frontenac à 40 lieues au dessus de Montréal, établi nouvellement à l'instigation de l'abbé Piquet, sur lequel poste il y a bien des observations à faire et beaucoup de choses à dire, surtout sur le grosses dépenses que le Roy y a faites et qu'il occasionne actuellement.¹²⁸

A fur trade was conducted there.

During the latter part of Vaudreuil's and the first years of Beauharnois' term as governor general, the officers commanding the interior posts served as their lessees, paying the government a low rent. This made it possible to maintain an attractive trading tariff. Several fortunes were made, which encouraged the government to seek an increase in its revenue from the posts. They were subsequently

farmed out to the highest bidder. The lessees, in their turn, raised the tariff so steeply that by the latter part of the 1740s they were being undersold by Oswego.¹²⁹

The French were also more reluctant than the English at Oswego to conduct a trade in liquor. Beauharnois and Hocquart forbade the dispensing of brandy at forts Frontenac and Niagara and apparently at all the other inland posts between 1732 and 1734. As a result, the returns of furs from forts Frontenac and Niagara dropped from 52,000 lbs. to between 25,000 and 35,000 lbs. There was an outcry from the storekeepers at the two posts, and the crown in 1736 removed its ban, though it cautioned that liquor should be distributed in moderation.¹³⁰

Interim Governor General Roland-Michel Barrin, Marquis de La Galissonnière, and Intendant Begon concluded, in the latter part of the 1740s, that only a permanent post on the north shore of Lake Ontario could be effective in reducing the flow of trade to Oswego from the northwest. They recommended, in 1749, that 15 soldiers and some labourers should construct a "small stockaded fort" at Toronto. La Galissonnière conceded that the new post, to be named Fort Rouillé in honour of the French colonial minister, would injure the trade of forts Frontenac and Niagara, but he believed that if he obliged the fermier of Fort Rouillé to undersell the English at Oswego, France would monopolize the Lake Ontario fur trade. The Indians would then be isolated from the English and they could eventually be persuaded to destroy Oswego.¹³¹

Fort Rouillé was erected in 1750 by Chevalier de Portneuf, an ensign at Fort Frontenac, and five soldiers. The original fort was small and palisaded, and had a small house to store the goods. The officer returned to Fort Frontenac and was replaced by a clerk, bringing goods from Montreal. Despite the fact that it was not built in time

for the spring trade, 79 packs of furs were obtained. The small fort, being too small to be defended against Indians, was soon after replaced by a larger one. La Jonquière ordered that it should have double pickets, be

eighty feet by (indecipherable) not counting the throat of the bastions, with a lodging for the officer at the right side of the fort gate, and a guardhouse for twelve to fifteen soldiers at the left. The store will be placed along the parallel curtain where the clerk will live, and a bakery will be built in one of the bastions.

A carpenter and three labourers were sent in April 1751 to do the construction, and a clerk, a baker, a cooper and five or six men to conduct the trade. In 1754, there were one officer, two sergeants, five soldiers and a storekeeper. Goods purchasing about 1,700 lbs. of beaver were transported there. Fort Rouillé was never a major trading post, and failed in its objective of attracting a considerable portion of Oswego's trade. During its history, Fort Rouillé was more commonly known as Fort Toronto.¹³²

Fort Rouillé was located at the western entrance to Toronto harbour at the foot of the present-day Dufferin Street. E.J. Hathaway says that it consisted of "five small houses enclosed within a square about 180 feet on each side surrounded by a stockade about fifteen feet in height."¹³³ Captain Pouchot, the last French commandant at Fort Niagara, wrote in a memoir that Fort Rouillé "was a square of about thirty toises on a side externally, with flanks of fifteen feet."¹³⁴

All the inland posts were farmed out by the government in the mid-1740s. Sieur Chalet was the fermier of forts Frontenac and Niagara in 1745-46. Because of the war with England, he declined to renew his lease in 1747.¹³⁵ Sieur Gatineau farmed Michipicoten in 1744-45 for 3,750 livres,

but his lease having expired, he was permitted the following year to send one canoe, in return for a payment of 1,000 livres.¹³⁶ During the war with England in the latter part of that decade, the fermiers, having incurred substantial losses, unsuccessfully petitioned that they should be relieved from the payment of their rent.¹³⁷

La Galissonnière recommended in 1748 that only Nipigon, Camalestigouia (Kaministikwia), Michipicoten, Témiscamingue and Chagouamigon should be farmed out. Licences to trade at the other posts should be issued to all those who requested them, thereby creating a competition which would lower the tariff.¹³⁸ It is not certain whether La Galissonnière implemented this plan, but it was in operation the following year under his successor, Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de La Jonquière. All but 10,000 livres earned by the crown from selling congés went to aid the poor families in New France.¹³⁹

Chevalier de Raymond, in a memoir written in 1754, gives a list of the postes du nord and the postes du sud, with the number of congés allotted to each and their cost. He does not say whether they were sold individually or collectively. Each congé gave permission for one canoe containing merchandise valued at 6,000 livres.¹⁴⁰

The following are the posts relevant for this report:

The postes du nord: Témiscamingue had five congés purchased for 5,000 livres per annum; Michilimakinac, all its dependencies and all Lake Huron had twenty, for 20,000 livres; Kamanistigouya (Kaministikwia) had ten for 10,000 livres; Nipigon had seven for 7,000 livres; Michipicoten had four for 4,000 livres.

postes du sud: La Présentation had one congé for 1,000 livres; Fort Frontenac, Toronteaux (Fort Rouillé), Niagara and all Lake Ontario had twenty for 20,000 livres. The trade at Lac des Deux Montagnes was leased for this year for the first time. It was given six congés for 6,000 livres.

Chevalier de Raymond writes about Lac des Deux Montagnes:

Le Lac des Deux Montagnes qui n'a servi jusqu'à présent qu'à faire une si grande fortune à plusieurs paisant que je connais qu'il y en a qui ont fait venir cette année 1754 pour de grosses sommes d'argenteries en vaisselle et plats; tout le castor qu'ils font est porté chez les Anglais qui leur payent cent cinq sols la livre et font venir de chez eux en abondance du drap et autres marchandises prohibées; ils vendent ce drap aux voyageurs des pays d'en haut et leur font porter par les Sauvages jusqu'au-dessus du Long Saut pour leur éviter d'etre visités. M^{rs} les prêtres de Montréal pourront s'opposer que le Roy quoique maitre mette des congés au lac des Deux Montagnes parce qu'ils en retirent une rétribution; le bien general du commerce d'un pays et les intérêts du Roy etant préférables à l'intérêt particulier, il faut y établir six congés.¹⁴¹

The revenues derived from the congés were well below these estimates. Fortunes had been made in times of peace, but during the 1750s there were no prospects of gain for a farmer. Bougainville writes in 1757:

Formerly the posts were auctioned off, and the merchants could thus obtain possession; they gave a profit to the king and paid the officer who commanded. Today the governor general disposes of them for the benefit of his favourites, with the approbation of the court.¹⁴²

We are informed by an unknown English author, writing in 1754, that there were two forts between Montreal and Lake Ontario, "one about twelve Leagues above Mont Real, the other about forty Leagues from the Lake." The latter was La

Présentation, a mission and fort; the former was probably Long Sault. The author continues that at the entrance to the lake stood Fort Frontenac "which is built entirely of Stone and is about 100 yards square, and mounts ten Carriage Guns 6 Pounders." He saw "Fort Trunto" (Fort Rouillé) in 1750, before it had been completed. It then had "no Cannon, but had Embrazures made for the Purpose."¹⁴³

De Bougainville writes about Toronto, Fort Frontenac and La Presentation:

Toronto, situé au nord de lac Ontario vis-à-vis de Niagara, établi pour empêcher les Sauvages du nord d'aller commercer à Chouéguen; Chouéguen n'existant plus, ce poste devient inutile.

Le roi en fait le commerce, les effets y montent des bateaux conduits par des miliciens commandés pour cela; les Sauvages qui y traitent sont les Mississaugués et les Saulteux. Il en peut sortir cent cinquante paquets de pelleteries.

Frontenac ou Katarakoui, mauvais fort à l'entrée du lac Ontario; si Chouéguen n'eût pas été détruit, il eût fallu le rendre respectable; il y a un commandant, plusieurs officiers sous ses ordres et... hommes de garnison.

Ce poste est exploité par le roi qui, conséquemment, en supporte les charges; il faudrait que le commerce y fût libre. Les Sauvages qui y viennent en traite sont les Cinq-Nations et les Mississaugués. Il en peut sortir année commune vingt à trente paquets.

La Présentation, mission pour les Sauvages des Cinq-Nations établi par M. l'abbé Picquet, sur la rive droite du fleuve Saint-Laurent, à... lieue de Montréal. Il peut y avoir maintenant cent Sauvages des Cinq-Nations rassemblés par ses soins.

Ils y ont des terres qu'ils cultivent, des voliales et bestiaux en propriété. Il y a un mauvais fort de pieux debout, un commandant et une petite garnison. Ce poste s'exploite par le Roi; on n'y donne point d'eau-de-vie. Il en peut sortir année commune trente ou quarante paquets.¹⁴⁴

The following is a list made by de Bougainville of French posts and forts:

Récapitulation des forts et des postes.-
 Cap-Charles, Baie-des-Châteaux, Saint-Modet, la Baie-Rouge, l'Anse-au-Loup, la Forteau, Baie Philipeaux, Chichateka, Rivière Saint-Augustin, Méchatina, Nontagnaniou, Maingan, les Sept-Iles, les Ilets de Jérémie, Tadoussac, Chueretimi, Québec, Lorette, les Trois-Rivières, Beckancourt, Saint-François, Chambly, Saint-Jean, Saint-Frédéric, Carillon, Montréal, lac des Deux-Montagnes, Carillon, le Long-Sault, Temiscamingue, Abitibi, Michipicotton, Nepigon, Kamanistigouia, la Mer d'ouest, Chagouamingon, La Baie-des-Illinois, les Ouyatanons, les Miamis, la Rivière-Saint-Joseph, le Détroit, la Presqu'isle, la Rivière-au-Boeuf, le fort Machault, le fort Dusquesne, Niagara, Toronto, Catarakoui, la Présentation, Saint-Régis, le Sault, Saint-Louis.¹⁴⁵

Fort Niagara was captured by the British in 1758. They proceeded to Fort Rouillé the following year, and found that it had been destroyed by the retreating French. It was not reoccupied. Between 1761 and 1763, two traders, Bâby and Knaggs, conducted an illegal trade in rum, and in 1763 Knaggs was arrested and his supplies confiscated on the orders of General Gage.

The Humber-Holland route was important in transporting furs from the west. Sir William Johnson wrote in 1767 that if Fort Rouillé were rebuilt, traders would be willing to pay as much as a thousand pounds for the monopoly of its trade. In 1770, a French Canadian, Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, also known as "St. John," was given a licence to trade in the region of Toronto. His post was located on the east side of the mouth of the Humber, and had a cherry orchard behind it. Rousseau had been active in the region since the days of the French regime. As early as 1756, the Humber was called St. John's Creek, and his post on the Humber may have dated from at least as early as that year.

Between 1770 and 1780 traders were active on Lake Ontario at Pinewood Creek and Piminiscotyán Landing, at the mouth of the Ganeraské, and probably at Gandalskiagon, close to the mouth of Duffin's Creek. Another location was the Mississauga village on Rice Lake.¹⁴⁶

Moose Fort

The Hudson's Bay Company's first settlement on Hudson Bay was Charles Fort, founded in 1668 on Rupert River. This post attracted those natives who patronized the posts within the *Domaine du Roi* (the King's Posts), the region extending up the Saguenay River, through Little and Big Mistassini lakes to Rupert River. The company's next step was to attempt to intercept the fur trade flowing to New France from the northwest, principally from the Abitibi-Témiscamingue lakes region.

Pierre-Exprit Radisson visited "Moose Ceebe" River from his wintering post at Rupert River in January 1671. He returned with Governor Charles Bayly in March of the same year, and traded with the inhabitants of the region.¹⁴⁷ A house was built about a mile from the west end of Hayes Island

(also written Hays Island) in Moose River in the summer of 1673, but it was not occupied during the winter of 1673-74. Captain Samuel Cole, Médard Chouart des Grosselliers and Thomas Gorst were sent, in June 1674, by Bayly to trade there and soon afterward Bayly joined them. Fifteen hundred furs were obtained. The post on Hayes Island was continuously occupied from the winter of 1674-75.¹⁴⁸ Bayly resided there in 1674-75, and the shortage of provisions that winter created much dissatisfaction among his men.¹⁴⁹

In May 1680, the Governor and Committee wrote to John Nixon, who had succeeded Bayly, "we judge it fit to keep our grand Factory where it now is upon Hayses' Island in Moose River and there to keep our chief strength, to prevent the incroachment of the French too far upon the West Main." Isaac Reed represented Nixon at Moose, and in 1681 constructed a warehouse on Charlton Island.¹⁵⁰

Pierre de Troyes surprised and captured Moose Fort on 10 June 1686. John Bridgar, the fort's commander, and a number of his principal men were at the time absent at Charles Fort on Rupert River.¹⁵¹ The following description of Moose Factory is given by Troyes.

Ce fort est composé de grosses palissades qui, sortant de terre de la hauteur de dix sept a 18 pieds, forment quatre courtines dont chaque face est de cent trente pieds. Elles sont flanquées d'autant de bastions, dont le terre plain est soustenu de deux rangs de gros pieuds entrelassey, d'espace en espace, de madriers, qui les traversans d'un rang a l'autre, semble lier & rafermir la terre qu'ils renferment, et tiennent hors d'estat de pouvoir s'ēbouler. Ils estoient fort bien munis de canons, Les deux qui regardent la rivière estant percey pour trois pieces, qui paroussoient effectivement hors de leur embrasures,

scavoir un a châque flan, pour deffendre la courtine et l'autre, a la face du bastion, et deux qui regardoient le desert, qui est autour de fort, de vingt arpans ou environ, qui portoient six a sept livres de balles. Les embrasures estoient fort proprement faites, en sort qu'il eût esté impossible de glisser aucun coup de fusil le long de la piece, à cause d'une coulisse qui les joignoit et qui se retiroit avec facilité, lors qu'il la faillot manier. Voila l'exterieur de la place, qui en renfermoit une grande et une redoute au milieu, composée de trois étages, et bastie de pieces sur pieces, une terrasse au dessus faites de planches & solives, garnie de son parapet qui avoit a chaque face, quatre embrasures faite en forme des abords, dans lesquelles paroissoit seulement quatre pieces de canons, dont il y en avoit trois de deux livres et un de fonte, de huitte, qui pouvoient battre en cavalier tous les environs du fort, dont la principale entrée estoit dans le milieu de la courtine qui fait face à la rivière, fermée d'une porte epaisse de demi pied, renforcée de clous et grosse pentures et traversées de barre de fer, y aiant encore une fausse porte dans la courtine qui regard le bois... Il ne rest plus a present a ajouter a la description que j'ai faite du forte, la forge qui est dehors et un grand magasin avec une cuisine qui sont placey entre la première enceinte et la redoute, soubz laquelle le mineur avoit desja fait un trou assey suffisant pour y placer un baril de poudre de sol pour faire sauter, s'ils eussent resister...

Il y avoit hors du fort environ a quinze pas de la pointe d'une bastion un vieil bastiment nommé la Sainte Anne qui avoit esté autre fois aux françois. Il estoit du port de trois cents tonneaux et avoit esté mis la pour en oster ce que l'on trouveroit de meilleur et bruler le reste. L'estant allé visiter il me parut fort propre pour servir de prison a mes Anglois dont j'estois bien aise de demebler le fort.¹⁵²

Moose Fort was renamed by Troyes Fort Saint-Louis. The French retained it after the conclusion of the November 1686 Treaty of Neutrality between England and France.¹⁵³ The English retook it in 1693, lost it soon after and again recaptured it in 1696. It was ceded to France under the terms of the Treaty of Ryswick in 1797.¹⁵⁴

Although the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 restored all of Hudson Bay to the British, the latter did not reside on Moose River until 1730. Early in the autumn of that year, a new fort was erected. It was destroyed by fire in December 1735, but was quickly restored.¹⁵⁵ Turnor's map of 1774 places the factory on an unnamed island north of Hayes Island.¹⁵⁶ There is no evidence in the Moose Fort journals to indicate that its location had been altered between 1730 and 1774. However, the factory built in 1730 may have been on Hayes Island, for we are told in the founding journal that the fort's foundations were laid "on the same Island where the Factory stood formally but about 1/2 a mile higher up the River."¹⁵⁷ It is possible that its site was changed after the fire of 1735.

Andrew Graham, writes that

Moose Fort (Moosu Whiskihiggan) is situated on the south shore of Moose River (Moosu Sepee) not far from its entrance, nearly under the parallel of London, and 82° 10' West Longitude from that

metropolis. It is a large, well-built wooden fort, with several cannon on carriages, and other instruments' of war for its security. The timber hereabout grows to a great size, which renders the building very strong. The river, though but indifferent, is one of the best in Hudson's Bay, admitting the ship into a good harbour a little distance below the Fort. The complement of men, including officers, is from twenty-five to thirty. They trade about four or five thousand made beaver in furs and pelts. They have a good breed of cattle, and plenty of country provisions, except deer. A large strong sloop belongs to this place, and assists that belonging to Albany in dispatching the ship which is consigned conjointly to here and Albany.¹⁵⁸

Turnor writes about Moose Fort in October 1779:

Oct. 21st Thursday Arrived at Moose Fort after a very fatiguing Voyage of 22 days from Severn where found all well. I think Moose Fort in a most ruinous condition particularly the Mens Flanker not a Window but what is stoped with paper or rags & all unhung the platforms intirely worn out the Stairs in the Chiefs Flanker puled down and destroyed the steps or Stairs leeding from the Yard to the Chiefs apartment almost dangerous to Walk up the Smiths Shop & Cook rooms ready to fall and not a piece of Timber or board on the Plantation when a Board was wanted the Gun Chest were broke up and the Guns lay tumbling about the Warehouse, the Stockadoes most of them tumbling down and not two Months firewood on the plantation part of

which Mr. Jarvis procured that the whole place seems as though it was intended to be deserted. Dec. 14th Tuesday during the time I have been at this place the weather has been extremely disagreeable continually snow or thick weather, the Factory seems to wear a different face the Windows hung and glaized the Cabbins repaired new Stairs built in the Chiefs Flanker some Timber provided and boards sawn for repairs and making chests for the Guns but it will be a work of some time to put the Factory in repair being neither House Carpenter or Sawyer.¹⁵⁹

In December, he wrote:

11th Monday Arrived safe at Moose Fort found all well.

14th Thursday by the desire of Mr. Edward Jarvis & assisted by the House Carpenter we took a survey of the State of the West Flanker in which the men resides and found it in such a rotten condition as to require immediately to be rebuilt therefore made our Report of the defects to Mr. Edward Jarvis accordingly, there likewise requires a great repair to the Stockadoes, Platforms, Smiths Shop, Cook Rooms & Saw house, the main Girder of the first floor of the South or Chiefs Flanker requires to be taken up it being considerably settled, this Girder is supported in the middle by the Brickwork of the Chimney and at some time I suppose has had the Brickwork taken down without first properly shoreing the Girder and the weight throwd upon the fresh brick work before it was settled the Girder of the Roof having to Long a bearing without being properly trussed therefore a Shore was

set under the Girder of the Roof and upon the Girder of the First Floor which throws most of the weight of Roof upon the Girder of the First Floor but I think with little Labour they may be properly set up again. In my Opinion little can be done this Year towards the repairs of this place but providing & Squaring the Timber & Sawing some Boards. I cannot help thinking Moose Fort badly Situated as no Vessel bigger than a Long Boat can come to the Launch--about one Mile lower down the Island Sloops should come to a good Launch but wether the Expence of removing the Factory would not over ballance the advantages derived from it can be best determined by Your Honors.¹⁶⁰

Abitibi Region

On his march to Hudson Bay in 1686, Troyes passed through Lake Abitibi, where he constructed a fort. Troyes says in his journal:

Le deuxie., je escampé apres la messe, et fimes, ce jour la, qui fut fort beau, neuf lieues, et deux portages. Nous traversâmes un grand lac, fort agreable par l'objet de quatre isles qu'il renferme, et arrivâmes au giste celuy des abitibi. Je fus camper dans une prairie, sur la droite, en entrant, et comme il estoit de bonne heure j'alle visiter un endroit qui est tout proche, dont je trouve la situation fort propre a bastir un fort. Ce que je fis-suivant mes ordres. Le troise & les deux jours suivants, je fis construire le fort, sur une petite eminence qui est elevée du niveau de l'eau de vingt trois pieds.

Il est de pieux et flanqué de quatre petits bastions, je m'appliquē ensuite a faire représenter la forme des fortifications des Anglais. Je me servi, a cet effet, de picquets et de cordeaux n'ayant pu trouver de terrain propre pour ce subject dans mon voiage. Je fis appres cela mes détachemens. fist mettre les officiers a la liste, et fit voir a chacun ce qu'il y avoit a faire, leur commandant de si bien se souvenir de ce que je leur disois, lorsque nous irions a une attaque plus serieuse. L'evennement m'a fait voir que cet exercice n'avoit pas esté inutile.

Le sixie. je laissē le sr. de Cerry pour commander dans le fort, et luy donnē trois hommes. Je partis ensuite a soleil levant et fis cabanner au dessous du detroit de st. Germain.¹⁶¹

On H. Tallot's map of 1696, there is a post placed down the Abitibi River toward the English on the bay. Another is placed on a lake called Lac Piscoutagamy, and is described as "Poste du S^r. de S. Germain po'couper pres que tous les Sauvage du Nort et les empecher de descendre à la Baye de Hudson."¹⁶²

Abitibi was granted by the French crown to the Compagnie du Nord in 1695,¹⁶³ and was retained after 1695 when Frontenac closed Témiscamingue, which was injuring the trade of Montreal. On the re-establishment of Témiscamingue in 1720, Abitibi was placed in the Témiscamingue department, and it was farmed out. According to the reports of some Indians, the English from Moose, in 1730-31, settled a post on Abitibi River, 50 or 60 leagues below Lake Abitibi,¹⁶⁴ but it was not retained the following winter. In a memorial dated 20 October 1725, M. Bégon writes about the post of Abitibi:

At this portage is a post for trading with the Indians of the Neighbourhood and those of Hudson's Bay, who come up the River Monsipy. The course of this river to the ocean is about eighty leagues. This is the most advanced post towards Hudson's Bay where Fort Monsipy is situated, do not go further for fur trading. This is the only river of this post which conducts to Hudson's Bay.¹⁶⁵

De Bougainville says of Abitibi in 1756:

Tabitibi est un poste dépendant de Témiscamingue, à cent vingt lieues de l'établissement précédent, du côté de la baie d'Hudson; il peut y avoir cent hommes dans les deux postes; ils vivent de pêche et de chasse; ne sèment rien et n'ont aucun village; tout ce pays est montagneux et peu fertile. Il en sort environ cent vingt paquets en castors, loups-cerviers, martres loutres, pekans, carcjoux, cariboux.¹⁶⁶

After the English conquest, free traders either took over the French fort or built another post on the lake. John Long, while wintering on Crow Nest Lake, a large lake about 200 miles in circumference, located up the River Nipigon (probably modern Long Lake), was visited by a band of Indians from "Lake Arbitibi's." These Indians, Long remarks, "probably were dissatisfied with the trader they dealt with."¹⁶⁷

There is no reference in the pre-1760 Moose Fort journals, which begin in 1730, to any specific French trading house, though the presence of Frenchmen in the vicinity of Moose is noted from time to time. After 1740, natives dressed in French clothing increasingly patronized Moose; while we do not possess direct evidence, they undoubtedly were Abitibi Indians.

Within two years after the capture of Quebec, substantial numbers of both English and French traders had moved

northward toward Moose, cutting off much of the interior trade which Moose had secured throughout the French period. Though the number of free traders declined within a few years, at least two Canadian houses were occupied from winter to winter, one being on Lake Abitibi, the other at "Woo, pa, che, won," about 200 miles from Moose. The latter Canadian establishment, Euesbius B. Kitchins, a surgeon and the master of Moose, stated in 1772 was "the greatest nuisance this Factory has to engage with."¹⁶⁸ It was probably located where the Woopachewon River flows out of Lake Duparquet.

Michipicoten

The French established a house at the mouth of the Michipicoten River soon after the Treaty of Utrecht, most likely in 1716. In the latter year, Thomas Macklish at Albany wrote that the French had founded a settlement and had extended two outposts up the Albany River about seven days' traveling from his fort.¹⁶⁹ The settlement was probably at Michipicoten. The outposts most likely were withdrawn at the end of the winter of 1716-17, but Michipicoten remained in existence throughout the remainder of the French period.

Michipicoten served, in the 1720s, and 1730s, as a supply depot for La Vérendrye's explorations on the Prairies. There is no further reference to Michipicoten traders settling in the interior toward the Hudson's Bay Company's posts until 1742, when a party wintered within 120 miles of Albany. The English, in response, established Henley House in June 1743. For another decade, no Frenchman wintered on the Albany River. A year after the massacre of Henley's inhabitants in 1756, a number of men from Michipicoten passed a winter at Henley, after which they withdrew and burned it. Michipicoten was evacuated by the French by 1759, and is

enumerated by Bougainville as a French fort. He writes:

Michipicoten poste situé au Nord-est du lac Supérieur, comme celui de Kamanistigoya l'est au nord-ouest. Les Saulteurs y viennent en traite. Il en sort de cinquante à soixante paquets.¹⁷⁰

Following the British conquest, Michipicoten was frequented by free traders, both English and French. Alexander Henry the Elder, after enduring a winter of privation in 1766-67 at Sault Ste. Marie, changed his location the ensuing year to Michipicoten. His post there was "an old one of French establishment." When he arrived, he found ten lodges of Indians. To each Indian male he gave credit for 100 beaver skins, and to each female 30. Henry estimated that the region was so destitute of provisions, that only 18 families hunted over an area of 1,000 square miles. Of the 2,000 beaver skins in debts taken by the Indians, all but 30 were repaid.¹⁷¹

Henry remarks that he wintered again in 1767-68 at Michipicoten,¹⁷² but is silent on the succeeding winters. However, we shall see that he did engage a Canadian to represent him there in 1775-76, when he voyaged to the Upper Churchill River.

Of the post at Michipicoten, we are told nothing by Henry except that in April 1767 he built a house for storing maple sugar "in a hollow dug out of the snow." The house was "seven feet high, but yet was lower than the snow."¹⁷³

Edward Jarvis, the officer in charge of Henley, visited two Canadian houses at Michipicoten in June 1776. He descended the Missinaibi River, passed through Lake Matagami and then turned down Michipicoten River. Then he passed "into a lake called by the Indians Meshippicoot at which carrying path we left our canoe, and the two long tents of the pedlars presented themselves."¹⁷⁴ The lake referred to by Jarvis was in reality a bay of Lake Superior.

Jarvis observed that the Frenchmen "were the picture of famine," and though he had suffered throughout his voyage from diarrhea, he thought he was "in very good care when compared with them." On his arrival, there were only three "frenchmen" at the two houses; the full complement of one house was ten men, the other seven. The men who were absent were bringing canoes loaded with trading goods up to the houses.¹⁷⁵

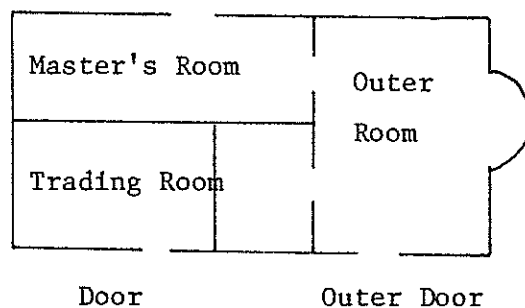
During his stay at Michipicoten, Jarvis conversed with the Frenchmen in an Indian tongue, but they were "almost as unintelligible to each other," as his hosts spoke a different dialect. The Canadians, although outwardly civil in their behaviour, were not well disposed toward him because of the revolution in America. However, he did not fear for his safety, for the enmity which the inhabitants of the two houses bore toward each other, he thought, gave him security.¹⁷⁶

On the return of the Canadians, Jarvis observed that only two of them wore breeches, the others dressing "as Indians, as to whose manners they conform." The owner of one house was a Mr. Jobbers; the other belonged to Alexander Henry the Elder, who employed Joseph Le Maire as his representative. Jobbers also hired a Canadian to supervise his trade, but Jarvis did not find out his name.¹⁷⁷

Jarvis gives the following description of the two houses:

Their houses were nothing more than logs fastened together by wooden spikes, in the form of a small country barn; the roof covered with birch rind: the entrance into the Huts was on the road side, which was towards the lake; and rather towards one end - About a third part was a kind of an outer room where were beds for two men; Indians likewise slept there promiscuously for tho there

is pallisados round each Hut, I observed no kind of fastening capable of keeping out even an Indian, who get drunk and sleep in their house as they please the remaining two thirds is again divided lengthways, the lesser half being the Masters room the other the trading room. Henrys House had as near as I could judge 2000 Made Beaver or More Jobbers 1500. There were two large canoes lying under the bank about 4 feet broad at widest part, and 13 of my steps long.¹⁷⁸



1 Diagram of a Canadian House at Michipicoten.¹⁷⁹

Le Maire informed Jarvis that he was paid \$400 per annum, but because he and his men were in constant danger of starving, he would return to Quebec when his contract expired in 1777. The Canadian asserted that he was not addicted to liquor, and begged Jarvis to use his influence to obtain employment for him with his company. Jarvis agreed to write a letter on his behalf.¹⁸⁰

During his stay in Michipicoten, Jarvis distributed presents to some natives who were residing in four tents and promised that each young man journeying to Albany would receive a coat there. The Indians complained that the distance to Albany was too great and averred that they were well treated by the Canadians. Jarvis' conduct so upset Le Maire that he feared that the Canadian would place him in irons.¹⁸¹ However, they parted on good terms.

On his voyage from Hudson Bay to Lake Superior in 1780-81, Philip Turnor visited Michipicoten. He stated:

went from S^o westerly to N^o 3/4 NE 1/2 & W 1/4 (and passed a river on N^o side which falls into this river by which river we are to return for Moose Fort) came to Meshipicoton House which is on the East side of the river at 10 AM, the river passed this day from 60 to 70 yards wide strong current mostly shole and gravelly bottom land high, the first part covered with Pine Asp &c the last 5 mile all burnt as are all the Woods round this spot Meschipicoton House is an exceeding bad building being built with small Ceader & mud consists of only two rooms one for the Master and the other for the men and have no communication with each other but by the front doors the House is covered with cedar bark and the only fastning is a slight single bolt the masters room has a double door but may nearly put a hand through them being only made with a hatchet the Trading room stands about 6 yards from the House at the west end the Stockadoes stands about 7 or 8 yards from the House and close to the out side of the Trading Room and have a kind of a Latch for a fastning to the door or gate and they have the pride to call

it a Fort they have a fine Plantation about 1/2 mile long and 1/4 broad and bounded by the river on one side and hills on the other opposite the House are large rocky hills or kind of small mountains the largest of which is called by the Indians the Meshipicoton stone, this Fort as they are pleased to call it is at present in the possession of J.B. Nolin a French Canadian he has four Men with him they have nothing but Fish to Live upon their canoe not yet arrived he expected it a month past, they call the Fish which they get Herring and are drying them for Winters stock but I think they are more like the Tick-a-meg we get at Moose & Albany Forts they have got at this place 2 Cows, 2 Bulls, 1 Mare, 1 Cock & 3 Hens they had a stone Horse but he died last winter they having been too sloathfull to procure Hay for the Winters as did likewise a calf the Cattle are of a small long legged breed, the Mare about 14 hands & 1/2 high 2 years old clean legged and fitt for the Saddle, Nolin informed me he had been there three Winters that he is in partnership with a Saint Jermaine that they bought the House with one Canoe of Goods of Mr. Henry for 15000 Livres that the first Winter he got 23 Packs of Furrs the next Winter he says he got 44 Packs in which was 34 Packs of Beaver, 3 of Otters, 3 of Catts, 1 1/2 of Martins and 2 1/2 of Bears, Musquash &c this year he says his trade is not half as good but if there should be good news from Montreal his Partner will come to Meshipicoton and he will make a Settlement at Me-caw-baw-nish Lake, but I should suppose if your Honors should again settle a House near Mis-sin-a-be Lake it would intirely stop their

progress if the Canadians should settle at Me-caw-baw-nish lake They would certainly carry away many Furrs which would otherways come to Wapiscogamy I should suppose if a House was settled and well supply'd at some place near Mis-sin-a-be Lake that it would effectually secure all the Indians near the House and between it and the Factory for both Winter and summer as the Canadians Cloth Blankets and Gunns are not so good as Your Honors Nolin informed me they had tried to get the same kind as Your Honors Trade but they could not procure them I could not perceive any difference in the Tobacco but never using any Self I could only Judge by the smell and the look of it he informs me he never trades any Liquor but gives it all to the Indians I saw him refuse 5 Beaver Skins and would not trade Liquor for them.¹⁸²

This house passed into the possession of the North West Company on its formation in 1784.

The First Phase of Anglo-Canadian Rivalry

Introduction

Soon after the British conquest of New France, Canadians and Englishmen began to penetrate as far north as Lake Abitibi, and proved to be more formidable trading rivals to Moose Fort than the French had been. Moose Fort's reaction to this threat was sluggish until Eusebius Kitchin succeeded as master upon the death of John Gorbut in July 1772. Kitchin eliminated many of the abuses practiced toward the Indians and distributed presents to those coming from the Lake Abitibi region. In July 1774, he sent John Thomas to explore the track to Lake Abitibi, and in the summer of 1776, without receiving instructions from the London Committee, resolved to found a house at Michipicoten, which Edward Jarvis had reached from Henley in June of that year. A settlement was established by Thomas Atkinson in December 1776, three-quarters of a mile from the junction of Wapiscogamy Creek with the Missinaibi River, to serve as a supply depot for the intended house at Michipicoten.

John Thomas was dispatched from Moose Fort in June 1777 to settle at Michipicoten, but he selected Missinaibi Lake instead, because of the difficulty in supplying Michipicoten. Thomas passed such a trying winter at Missinaibi Lake in 1777-78 that he refused to return the following autumn. Two men, John Smith and John Leask, resided there until the spring of 1780, when the belligerence of the Indians forced their withdrawal. Soon afterward, the post was burned by the Indians and was never restored.

A post was also established by Thomas Atkinson in the autumn of 1777 at Kesagami Lake, intended to act as a check against Abitibi House. Its trade was disappointing and it was closed after the winter of 1779-80.

On the recommendation of the London Committee, Philip Turnor set out in May 1782 to chart the water system leading to Lake Abitibi, but the loss of his sextant prevented him from completing his survey. Two years later, Turnor was instructed to settle at Lake Abitibi. For this purpose, the complement of men for Moose district, which included Eastmain, was raised from 34 in 1782 to 52 in 1783.¹ Turnor travelled only as far as Pusquachagama River (Frederick House River), thinking that country provisions would be more plentiful there than at Lake Abitibi. But provisions were scarce during the winter and the post was removed to Lake Waratowaha (Frederic House Lake). It was renamed Frederick House in honour of the second son of King George III. In 1785 there were 65 men for Moose district: 26 for Moose, 18 for Eastmain, 13 for Abitibi and 8 for Brunswick. By 1790, Eastmain seems to have been made independent of Moose. In 1792, Moose had 60 men.²

Frederic House's principal competition came from Dobie and Grant's establishment at Soweawamenica (on Lake Mistinikon). Richard Dobie had been one of the first pedlars on Lake Témiscamingue and in the mid-1780s entered into partnership with James Grant. Dobie and Grant, in the late 1780s, possessed posts at Lake Témiscamingue, Grand Lac, Soweawamenica, Abitibi Lake and Rivière Dumoine.

Beginning in 1788, men from Frederick House frequented Lake Abitibi each spring, but because of the anticipated difficulty in supplying Lake Abitibi, no thought was given to settling there. In 1790, Dobie sold all his business interests to Grant, Champion and Company. The new organization, two years later, founded a post in opposition to

Frederick House. It so severely injured the latter's trade, that John Thomas at Moose Fort was obliged to establish a house on Lake Abitibi in 1794. Another post, on Lake Kenogamisi, was established by Thomas the same year to intercept the Soweawamenica trade. In response, Grant, Campion and Company, in 1794, entertained a project to settle on Hudson Bay in opposition to Moose Fort, but having strained its financial resources, it sold its interests in the Témiscamingue department to McTavish, Frobisher and Company.

In the summer of 1788, William Bolland was sent by Thomas to Micawbawnish Lake, whence a competition could be conducted with the Canadians at Michipicoten and Pic River. Eight years later, Nor'Westers from Michipicoten settled in opposition to New Brunswick, and in response, in May 1797 John Moze was sent by George Gladman at New Brunswick to Michipicoten.

Early Anglo-Canadian Rivalry

Within a few years after the English conquest, free traders were present on Lake Témiscamingue, but did not occupy the French post. Richard Dobie was one of the first pedlars there. About 1776, Dobie, having made a substantial amount of money, sold his post to James Grant, but ten years later went into partnership with Grant.³ Lake Témiscamingue post was at the narrows of the lake on the east side.⁴ There were three other establishments in Témiscamingue department in 1788: Fort Abitibi, at the mouth of the Duparquet River, Grand Lac (Grand Lake Victoria) and Langue de Terre on Mistinikon Lake in northeastern Ontario, known to the Hudson's Bay Company as "So we, a, wa, min, a ca." Dobie and Grant also possessed a post on Rivière Dumoine, but it was added some time later to Témiscamingue district. There were also temporary outposts.⁵

On succeeding as master at Moose on the death of John Gorbut in July 1772,⁶ Eusebius Kitchin abolished many of the abuses practiced toward the Indians trading at Moose, and distributed presents to those coming from the Lake Abitibi region. This immediately attracted many who frequented the Canadians on Lake Abitibi.

In July 1774, John Thomas, a clerk at Moose and later in charge of that post, voyaged to Abitibi House by way of French Creek, Lake "Missa, ka, Mee" (Kesagami Lake), and Harricanaw River. This route was called by the Indians the "Mis, sa, ka, mee Path" (Big Water).⁷ He reached Abitibi Lake on 2 August, but could not find the Canadian house until 6 August.⁸ Thomas writes:

Saturday at 12 O'Clock A.M. came to the settlement, 2 French Men, 1 French Woman and a child, and an Indian Old Man who is Master of the settlement, in the absence of the French Master, who is gone to Montreal. His name is Pano, the Woman I understand is his Wife, they are of the Roman Catholick Religion by the Cross over their Gate and DIEU in capital Letters over their Bed,

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which is Feathers, one of them who calls himself Pano's Brother, Cou'd Speak a little broken English, he told me he was a Native of Montreal. that he was one Month six Days coming from thence, that they had 37 times to carry their Canoes which they bring their things down in, some of which Carriages are very long; he said. tho they were so long coming that in 14 Days they cou'd return as going with the stream, he asked me several Questions relative the country I came from, as how many Men we had, how many Carriage Guns, Whether we had a Taylor, a Cooper A Smith a Mason &c &

what Wages they had, I told him we had sixty Men, 24 Carriage Guns, that we had all the Tradesmen he mention'd. who are at 50£ pr Annum Each, that we had cattle Hogs and Poultry, and Plenty of Cabbages & other kind of Garden Stuff, he said that is very fine country, he ask'd me Several other Questions which I cou'd not Understand, but neither asked me my Name nor the Name of My Master, the other two did not Understand English nor any of them very little Indian, their House which put me in mind of a Barn, is Logs of Cedar notch'd at the Ends and let into Each other & about 4 Inches Space between Each log. which is fill'd with Loom mix'd with Hay. the Roof is of Cedar Bark, the Fire Place is of Stone & clay, their Windows Paper instead of Glass, their Warehouse a Separate Building from their Dwelling House. Build after the same Manner they are Building a New House, round these Houses they have a Row of Stockades, which are Trunnell'd instead of Nails, Neither is there any Nails in their Buildings, they have no fastening, to their Gate. Nor any Locks, but one to their Warehouse, & and one to the Door of the Apartment where they hay; if the Indians were Evil Minded they might shoot them in their Beds, through the spaces between the Logs where the Clay has fell out, they have about a dozen small cabbage Plants, and about the same Number of Lettices; - they are upon the Entrance of a River call'd Woo,pa,che,won, leads S. upon which River 7 Days Journey from thence going with the Stream is the Settlement called Woo,pa,che,won, which is at the Entrance of a Lake as the Indians say;... The French Men had no Cloathing on but a

Shirt and an arsgan, one of them had a Pair of Linnen Drawers; they told me Pano their Master would be back in the Fall of the Year; - I Traded 2 old otters, 2 yound Jackash's & one Musquash, for powder and Shot, for which I got about 3 lb of Shot and 1 1/2 of Powder, they wanted to Trade my Gun for Cloth, but I refused, they gave me a Pound Horn full of Powder Treated me with Dried Beaver & Geese, and gave me some pease, Flour & 3 Pieces of Pork, and Treated me with the greatest Civility & Friendship, with an Invitation to return another year, - I gave the Indian, Master a Yard of Tobacco, 1 Awl, 1 steel, 1 worm, 2 Needles, 2 Flints,... N.B. the Frenchmen in the Winter. Quit the House, and live in a Log tent about 50 yards below the Factory.⁹

After Edward Jarvis' voyage to Michipicoten from Henley in the summer of 1774, Kitchin discussed with Hutchins, the master of Albany, the feasibility of founding a post at Michipicoten from Moose. In 1776, Kitchin resolved to do so in the summer of 1777. His first step was to establish a house at "Great Fall," which he believed to be about 300 miles distant from Moose.¹⁰ It would serve as a half-way house and supplies would be lodged there during the winter of 1776-77 for the expedition to Lake Superior.¹¹ Kitchin instructed Atkinson that the house should not "exceed 24 Feet long, and 16 or 18 wide - that your Window Ports, are made to take in a sash of Six Panes of Glass, which according to ours here is 23 inches."¹²

Thomas Atkinson, the surgeon at Moose, and four men departed for Great Fall in October 1776. On his journey, Atkinson lost most of his provisions when one of his sledges sank through the ice.¹³ By December, the rivers were

beginning to freeze and were impassible, and Atkinson decided to settle at "Wapuscogamy," as he was informed that there was no wood fit for building higher up.¹⁴ On 12 December, he selected a site at "a place about 3/4 of a mile above the mouth of the Creek [Wapiscogamy Creek]".¹⁵ It was three-quarters of a mile from the junction of Wapiscogamy Creek with the Missinaibi River. According to Atkinson, it was 25 miles from Lake Wapiscogamy.¹⁶ Until new supplies reached him in January, Atkinson placed his men on rations.¹⁷ They resided the winter in a log tent, and began building a house, having two stories, in the spring.¹⁸ There were "two Rooms above Stairs."¹⁹ The house was surrounded by stockades. On 5 August, the men moved from their log tent into the house.²⁰

It was ill designed for protection against the natives, who by June 1780 had more than once climbed over the stockades. John Thomas observed: "they always take the indefensible side of the House, as there is one End so Ill contrived as to have neither Window or Loop hole in it."²¹

John Thomas wrote to Jarvis in February 1781,

Wappiscogamy House in its present form will never be able to contain Trading goods or provisions safe it being so ill contrived that I am obliged to keep the Gunpowder directly under the fireplace. The Girders that supports which I am continually in dread will again take fire which formerly has been the Case, and burnt one entirely through and the heat of the weather is so great in summer, that we have experienced its spoiling our Salt Geese, and the foundation of this house or rather Log tent being on the surface of the ground puts it out of my power to dig a Cellar without either undermining the Chimney or frame of the house the latter of which the dogs

often do in summer when the Muscatoes are troublesome, not to mention the smallness of the house (the extream length being only 26 Feet and Width 18 feet) but the inconvenience and danger of it both from fire and Attacks of the Natives one end having neither window or port Hole in it wherefore I proposed adding four small Flankers to the Corners which would render it both safe and Convenient would not take up any great additional time or need a greater number of Hands than we are at present provided I had one of the number qualified to do the Carpenters part.²²

Wapiscogamy House was open throughout the year.

An expedition, led by John Thomas, departed from Moose in June 1777 destined for Lake Superior.²³ Having lost much of his surveying equipment when one of his canoes was upset, Thomas was unable to accurately map his route.²⁴ As he lost his provisions as well in the accident, he left his men at the "Lake at the Head of Moose River" (Missinaibi Lake), and continued with his guide to Michipicoten, arriving there three days later.²⁵ He found five Frenchmen living "in one House, the other house they use as a Store House." Thomas conversed with the Frenchmen in an Indian language and was hospitably treated and given some food when he departed.²⁶ Having discovered no location more convenient for settling than Missinaibi Lake, he returned to his men. He rationalized that though Missinaibi Lake was distant 40 miles from Lake Superior, he was "Equally as well situated for annoying them in their trade as if I was directly on Lake Superior." The numerous falls between Missinaibi Lake and Lake Superior, he asserted, would make it difficult to supply a house at Michipicoten.²⁷

Missinaibi Lake, called by Thomas "Massenappe," however, was poor for fishing. In August, Thomas and men went down

to Wapiscogamy for new supplies. But as only a limited amount of European provisions was available there and few fish could be caught at Missinaibi Lake, Thomas, in November, dispatched three of his men to Wapiscogamy and remained at his post with only one Eskimo man.²⁸ By November, two log tents had been constructed "one for dwelling in, the other for a store Tent."²⁹ The foundation of a house had been laid and a saw-pit had been dug.³⁰ Trade was hampered by a lack of goods.³¹ It is not certain whether the men returned later in the winter, but we do learn that supplies were late in arriving from Wapiscogamy.

While visiting the Canadians at Michipicoten, Thomas learned that there was a new settlement at "the Head of our South River." One of the Frenchmen at this settlement was drowned in the summer of 1777.³²

Thomas passed such an uncomfortable winter at Missinaibi Lake that the ensuing autumn he refused to return, notwithstanding the fact that the post had a full year's stock of provisions. He was given charge of Wapiscogamy until the spring, at which time he was to conduct the trade of Missinaibi. Until the spring only two Englishmen, John Smith, a sawyer, and John Leask (also written Lisk), a tailor, tended Missinaibi House.³³ The 1777-78 winter was particularly severe throughout the Michipicoten region; the French residents at "Meshipicoot" almost starved and two of them were obliged to leave.³⁴

Both Leask and Smith resided alone at Missinaibi House throughout the summer and the winter of 1779-80. The difficulties encountered in supplying it from Wapiscogamy and the scarcity of country provisions made it inadvisable to station more men there.

In the spring of 1780, Smith and Leask were forced to withdraw because of the belligerence of the Indians. Thomas Atkinson writes in his journal for 17 May 1780 that the two

men related to him that the Indians had several times attempted to rob them and they were "firmly persuaded" that the Indians would have taken their lives had they not left the house in the middle of the night of 11 May. Before leaving, they buried all the furs and goods under the house.³⁵

Not until 17 June were men sent to bring the effects from Missinaibi House, but the following day Atkinson was informed by a party of Indians that Missinaibi House had been "Burnt to the Ground" and everything left there had been destroyed. These Indians claimed that they had taken shelter in the house for 14 days from the hostile band and had not once ventured out of the house even for wood or water.³⁶ Atkinson doubted the truth of this story. There is no further information about this incident.

On his return from Michipicoten, after surveying the region between Wapiscogamy House and Lake Superior, Philip Turnor, on 21 July 1781, paddled through Missinaibi Lake for six hours and arrived at the place "where Mis-sin-a-bee House stood." He gives no account of its remains.³⁷ He concluded from the paucity of inhabitants and provisions in the Michipicoten region that the expence in supplying a post at Missinaibi Lake would be "very great in proportion to the trade that would be got at it." Nevertheless, he recommended that four or five men should be sent from Wapiscogamy either to Missinaibi Lake or "nearer Meshipicoton" for a month in the spring. From their trade, it could be determined whether a wintering post would be profitable, but he warned that such a house would require at least ten men.³⁸

The house at Missinaibi Lake was never reopened by the Hudson's Bay Company. From time to time, men from Wapiscogamy visited the lake. When the company did move further inland from Wapiscogamy, it selected Micaubanish Lake.

As Wapiscogamy House was badly located and ill-designed for defence, John Thomas, in the spring of 1781, searched for

a more eligible site, but none could be found.³⁹ In June, a new house was commenced on the same site, apparently employing the flanker system design, for we read for 26 October 1785: "one man laying the floor in the Warehouse flanker."⁴⁰ It was renamed Brunswick House, in honour of King George III. The new building was not occupied by the men until December 1785.⁴¹ There were both inner and outer stockades.⁴² The old house was used for storing hay and other things.⁴³ The London Committee considered the new post to be "too extensive."⁴⁴

Michipicoten was the closest Canadian settlement to Brunswick House and the only one mentioned in the latter's journals. In May 1784, William Bolland was informed by some natives that the master of Michipicoten had questioned them intensively about his house's location and strength, and had promised "to come down and destroy it" that summer.⁴⁵ This threat, no doubt, was designed to discourage them and others from frequenting Brunswick.

In the summer of 1788, New Brunswick House was founded on Micaubanish Lake, a more advantageous location than Wapiscogamy Creek. Brunswick House endured until May 1791, when Magnus Garrock transported most of the trading goods and stores to New Brunswick. Two men were left for the summer to guard the effects which could not be transported immediately.⁴⁶ Even the weatherboarding was removed. In its last winter of operation, Brunswick House returned only 304 MB.⁴⁷

George Moore and seven men from Moose re-established Brunswick House in the autumn of 1801 "in a temporary manner to receive Indians Furrs and prevent their falling into the Canadas [North West Company's] Hands." It was abandoned at the end of the winter, as the Canadians had left their establishment. It was open again in 1805-06 in opposition to the Canadians and was abandoned in May 1806.⁴⁸

Colin Robertson on passing Brunswick House in June 1817, noted in his journal,

Tuesday... Left our encampment at four mile point this morning at five O'Clock, breakfasted at Old Brunswick at seven, there is nothing remaining of that old establishment, but the fosses and a few decayed Stockades. Old Brunswick is certainly one of the most pleasant spots I have seen in this part of the country, there are two small hills, and when you reach the summit of the second, you have a delightful and extensive prospect of a fine country, through which you observe a small but rich River, teaming with Sturgeon and Whitefish, serpentine amid the vallies as far as the eye can reach. This river empties itself into the Misinnabi a mile below the old Fort, where the North West Company had a trading post some years ago.⁴⁹

Part of Kitchin's strategy in 1777 for arresting the increasing losses of furs to the Canadians included the founding of a house on "Mesackamee Lake" (Kesagami Lake), situated 70 miles southeast of Moose. It was designed to act as a check on Abitibi house, which John Thomas had visited in the summer of 1774. A party of three men, led by George Atkinson, could not leave Moose until the middle of October 1777 because of the late arrival of the ship at Moose and the shallow water in the interior.⁵⁰ Its progress was hampered by ice in French Creek; between 14 and 26 October, scarcely 70 miles were covered and the canoes were broken several times by the ice.⁵¹ Atkinson halted his voyage on 26 October, and three days later his men constructed a log tent "Down the Creek [French Creek] ... to keep our things in."⁵² There he stayed, trapping martens, until 25 November, when he loaded his goods and provisions onto two

large sledges and resumed his journey to Kesagami Lake.⁵³

Twenty-five days later, Atkinson entered "Small Lake Mesakamee," and the following evening he reached the head of the lake, where he intended to settle.⁵⁴ The site which he selected was frequented each summer by many natives and was near a creek where fish were plentiful.⁵⁵ Turnor, on his map, places it at the narrowest part of Kesagami Lake. Atkinson estimates that he paddled "about 20 miles" into the lake.⁵⁶

A log tent was constructed in which the three men resided the whole winter. In the middle of May, a piece of ground near the log tent was cleared,⁵⁷ and early the next month the foundation for a house was laid.⁵⁸ It was constructed of squared logs, but because nails were not available, as soon as it was completed, it tumbled down, injuring one man.⁵⁹ It was rebuilt in the same manner, logs being piled one upon the other,⁶⁰ and may not have been completed before Atkinson was recalled at the beginning of July to Moose to take charge of the sloop.⁶¹ On departing, Atkinson delivered up his house to an Eskimo man sent by Kitchin from Moose.⁶² Only 74-3/12 MB were obtained during the winter.⁶³

George Donald apparently resided at the post in the latter part of the summer. Edward Jarvis, who succeeded Kitchin as master at Moose during the summer of 1779, on 30 September wrote to Donald that he thought that it was necessary that Kesagami House should be evacuated "at least for a time," and ordered him to convey all the goods and furs to Moose.⁶⁴ Kesagami House, however, was occupied in 1779-80, for in his returns for the inland settlements Edward Jarvis lists 36-1/12 MB as the trade from "Mesackamy."⁶⁵ It was again abandoned the ensuing winter. In the journal of his voyage to Michipicoten in the summer of 1781, Turnor implies that it was no longer retained;⁶⁶

on his map, he refers to it as "Mesackamy Late House."

Andrew Stewart, with four men, settled on "Mesaugumme Lake" in October 1815, but did not return the following year. His house was five hours paddling to "the lower end of the lake," going from the house back to Moose.⁶⁷

Attempts to Reach Lake Abitibi

The London Committee in its "General Letter" of 16 May 1781, expressed its desire that Philip Turnor should continue his inland surveys of any regions where the Canadians were quartered. Edward Jarvis at Moose instructed him to chart the water system leading to Lake Abitibi.⁶⁸ Turnor left Moose at the end of May 1782 with three men, but was required to abort his exploration in the first days of June, after losing his sextant when his canoe overturned on the Abitibi River.⁶⁹

Despite Turnor's unfortunate experience, John Thomas, Jarvis's successor - Jarvis was transferred to Albany - made preparations for settling on Lake Abitibi. The destruction of York and Fort Prince of Wales in 1782 by the French admiral Jean-François Galaup, Comte de La Perouse, however, postponed this plan.⁷⁰ Indeed, a council, held at Albany in 1783, recommended that all settlements subordinate to Moose and Albany should be evacuated for a time and the men should be concentrated at the two bay posts in order to offer a stout resistance to any French attack. The evacuation of Eastmain and Brunswick was ordered by Thomas in April⁷¹ and May⁷² respectively. In the autumn, when the danger had passed, Brunswick was given its usual complement of men, and the plans for Lake Abitibi were reanimated.

In June 1784, Philip Turnor, with nine men, including Germain Maugenest, a Canadian trader transferred from Albany to serve as an assistant because of his knowledge of the native peoples, proceeded up Abitibi River bound for Abitibi

Lake. An additional 40 shillings were given to each man wintering inland, a practice already in use at Albany.⁷³ Turnor stopped at the mouth of the "Pis, quo, chang, a ma" (also written as Pusquachagama) River (Frederick House River), because he calculated that if he continued his journey, he would be in "great danger" for want of provisions. Lake Abitibi, he wrote to Thomas, was so "poor and barren" that the natives fished there only when they were "waiting for a Drink."⁷⁴ Temporary quarters were set up by Turnor,⁷⁵ with the approbation of Thomas, at Pusquachagama River, where provisions were thought to be more plentiful and the prospects for trade appeared better than at Lake Abitibi.⁷⁶ Finding that provisions were scarce during the winter at Pusquachagama River, Turnor instructed his assistant, Edward Clouston, to remove to a more convenient locality in the spring, while he conveyed the furs to Moose.⁷⁷ Clouston journeyed about 52 miles south to Lake Waratowaha, and on "a little gravel hill on the south-east shore" of the lake, erected a building divided into a warehouse and dwelling house.⁷⁸ Richard Good, the master of this post in 1801-02, computed its distance into the lake from Abitibi River at 11-3/4 miles and 48 yards.⁷⁹

Turnor took charge of the post, named Frederick House in honour of the second son of King George III, in the middle of October. In the course of the winter, some of his men suffered from scurvy.⁸⁰

Frederick House's principal competition came from Dobie and Grant's establishment at Saweawamenica. Turnor was on good personal terms with the Canadian master, an unnamed Scotsman from Montreal. The latter was hospitably treated when he visited Turnor at the end of December 1785,⁸¹ as was his clerk, also a Scotsman, when he arrived in the spring of 1786.⁸² Both were given provisions for their return voyage.

Competition between the two houses, however, was spirited. The Canadian clerk informed Turnor that he had been authorized to undersell his opponents by as much as one-third and trust any hunter.⁸³ He promised that he would settle beside Frederick House⁸⁴ and occupy Turnor's former residence at Pusquachagama River. Consequently, in June 1786, Turnor sent George Beckwith, John Johnson and an Indian to take possession of Pusquachagama River House. Soon after they reached the house, it was destroyed by fire and all the goods were lost.⁸⁵ At the end of the spring, the master at Saweawamenica was replaced by his clerk.⁸⁶ No attempt was made by the Canadians the following winter to establish themselves beside Frederick House.

In the summer of 1787, Turnor conducted a survey of the Canadian settlements in the Abitibi region, but he either did not keep a record of his journey or the journal has not survived.⁸⁷ That summer, he was recalled by Thomas at Moose, and was given charge of New Brunswick. During the ensuing two years, George Donald was master of Frederick House, and William Bolland resided there during the summer.

The practice, beginning in 1788, of sending men each spring from Frederick House to Abitibi Lake intensified the competition in the Abitibi region. The Indians of Lake Abitibi were so attached to the Canadians, who gave large presents, that these visits were never attended with success. John Mannell's sojourn in 1790 was singularly unsuccessful: he returned with only 8-1/3 MB. Thomas did not entertain the idea of founding a wintering post on that lake, as it would be difficult to supply from Moose. Because of the shallowness of the Abitibi River, only small birchbark canoes could be used to convey the goods and provisions to Frederick House.⁸⁸

By 1791, men of both companies were tenting on Pusquashagamy Lake,⁸⁹ and in 1792-93 an "Old Man" repre-

sented the Hudson's Bay Company. In October 1792, his opponents "ransacked his Tent and took everything that was of use for their own purposes."⁹⁰ After this episode, two additional Hudson's Bay Company men were sent there,⁹¹ and they remained until February, when they were transferred to Big Lake.⁹²

In the mid-1780s, Dobie and Grant experienced competition from Frederick House and Beaubien Desrivières. The latter was from Lac des Deux Montagnes, and had posts at Langue de Terre, Grand Lac and Rivière Dumoine.⁹³ A young, well-educated individual was needed to meet the challenge, and in 1785 Aeneas Cameron was offered by Dobie half his own shares if he undertook the management of the department. Cameron accepted, though it is not certain whether he was given any shares.⁹⁴

Though the Canadian rival was forced to retire from the trade in 1790, the Témiscamingue department still did not show impressive returns. As Dobie's health was failing, he sold all his Montreal interests to Grant, Campion and Company. William Grant of Trois-Rivières was the senior partner.⁹⁵ Until 1794, James Grant was nominally in charge of Témiscamingue House, when he was succeeded by Aeneas Cameron.⁹⁶

New Brunswick House

On 28 May 1788, William Bolland and eleven Englishmen left Moose Fort for Micaubanish Lake, where they arrived on 11 July. They found a suitable location for a post "about 5 miles from the mouth of the creek and right opposite to it, close to an excellent fishing place."⁹⁷ They immediately built a log tent and another one in September.⁹⁸ In the autumn of 1789, Germain Maugenest succeeded Bolland as master of Micaubanish House.

By the autumn of 1789, the post seems to have consisted of one building, divided into a master's room, a warehouse, and a section for the men.⁹⁹ The closest Canadian establishment in 1792-93 was at the Pic, which Philip Good, travelling overland, visited in June 1793.¹⁰⁰ Competition was also experienced from Michipicoten, which was trying to draw away the Micawbanish Indians by offering coats to the chief Indians.¹⁰¹ Peter Good and a man were sent, in April 1794, with a small assortment of goods to "waylay" the natives going toward Michipicoten.¹⁰²

Four Canadians from Michipicoten established a house at Micaubanish Lake at the end of July 1796, within viewing distance of the Hudson's Bay Company house. George Gladman, who had succeeded Maugenest as master, ordered his men in October to construct a "small house" about 20 yards beyond the Canadian house because the Canadians had a location "too much screened from our view of any Indians coming and going to them."¹⁰³ The Canadian master, an unidentified French Canadian, proposed that the hunters should be at liberty to choose the house they preferred, but Gladman rejected the proposal.¹⁰⁴

During the winter, Gladman made preparations for an expedition to Michipicoten, but fearing that the Nor'westers would send reinforcements to Micaubanish Lake in the spring, he decided to temporize.¹⁰⁵ The Canadian, seeing these activities, left at the end of April to reinforce Michipicoten, and solicited Gladman's protection of his house and goods, as he could not leave a person there. Two weeks later, John Moze was sent to settle at Michipicoten.¹⁰⁶ The Canadians returned to Micaubanish Lake at the end of May; they left the following month, carrying away everything of value.¹⁰⁷

However, they did return in August 1797. There was little contact between the men of the two posts during the winter. The following autumn, a Canadian outpost was

established at Meashaquagamy Lake. It was unproductive and the men almost starved.¹⁰⁸ Gladman also sent a man there who finding no country provisions returned in October.¹⁰⁹ He went back in December and passed the winter, leaving at the end of June.¹¹⁰

By the end of March, the Canadians at Micaubanish Lake had expended their provisions. Gladman notes in his journal for April 2:

The Canadian Master set off for Meshipicoton to get a supply of Provisions, his clerk being in such a weak state as to be unable to walk is left as well as his family to our Humanity for support till he returns and having taken security of the Master not to molest our Trade, I thought it in such a case my duty to afford him a small supply of Provisions for his journey, as they must all otherwise inevitably persist.¹¹¹

After the Canadian master's departure, Gladman sent men to both "Capoonacauggamy" (Kabinakagami) Lake and Missinaibi Lake to secure his debts before traders could come from Michipicoten and the Pic. This year, the name of Gladman's post was changed to New Brunswick House.¹¹²

Moze departed from Micaubanish House for Michipicoten in May 1797. On his approach to Michipicoten, he noted that the Canadians had "several log Tents" about 12 miles from their post, where men were sawing wood, as all the trees until that point had been burned.¹¹³ On 8 June, he pitched a tent one-third of a mile from Michipicoten House, and afterward visited the post, which had three houses, "two new one unfinished." He was kindly received by the master, Alexander Henry, who was attended only by his family, his men being absent. Henry informed Moze that he could select any site for his establishment except his garden.¹¹⁴ Moze settled "opposite the junction of Assinogamy with Meshipicoton

River, and 1 mile & 1/4 from Meshipicoton Bay. 1/3 of a mile" from the Canadian post.¹¹⁵

A house, whose dimensions are not stated, having a cellar, garret and storeroom, was constructed during the summer,¹¹⁶ and the following spring the foundation of a warehouse was laid.¹¹⁷ At the same time, "some small wood" was collected to enclose the point where the house was located to prevent the Canadians from approaching too close.¹¹⁸ A half-bushel of potatoes, supplied by Henry, was planted by Moze in June 1797 "up the river," the ground near the house being "little else but sand and of poor quality."¹¹⁹

Before Moze began constructing his post, Henry proposed an agreement whereby neither would intercept the Indians, permitting them the liberty of selecting the house of their choice. Henry threatened that he would retain another trader, Mr. B. St. Germain, who had arrived from Montreal, and obtain reinforcements if this proposal were not accepted. On reflection, Moze considered that it would be imprudent to reject it, and an agreement was drawn up for the period of one year, which both men signed.¹²⁰

When the Canadians returned to Micaubanish Lake in August, 1799, they immediately sent men to Meashaquagamy Lake. The Canadian master, Leon Chenier, declined Gladman's proposal for a "fair and uninterrupted" trade, and therefore, Gladman sent parties in October to re-establish the posts at Michipicoten, and Meashaquagamy Lake.¹²¹ There were a number of disputes at both Meashaquagamy and New Brunswick.¹²²

In the spring, the Canadians evacuated Micaubanish Lake, and Chenier and a man passed the winter of 1800-01 at the "old" house on Meashaquagamy Lake.¹²³ Gladman did not send any men there until the end of March. The Canadians left for Michipicoten at the beginning of May with nine bundles of furs.¹²⁴ They were again at Meashaquagamy Lake in

1801-02,¹²⁵ and the following year wintered at both Meashaquagamy and Missinaibi lakes.¹²⁶

In the summer of 1798, Mr. St. Germain, who had formerly wintered beside the Hudson's Bay Company posts at Osnaburgh and Red Lake, replaced Henry at Michipicoten.¹²⁷ As in the previous winter, relations between the masters were harmonious, with the Canadians getting the majority of the trade. Moze had only 420 MB to forward to Moose in June.¹²⁸ The Canadian house served as a stopping off point between Montreal and the Grand Portage, and Moze was visited each summer by two or three partners of the North West Company.¹²⁹

After the summer of 1799, Moze passed the entire year at Michipicoten. During the summer he usually had one man; in the winter he usually had four.¹³⁰ Trade was conducted free of disputes until St. Germain's last year at Michipicoten, 1800-01. In the summer of 1800, the Canadians unsuccessfully endeavoured to stop a canoe of Indians from landing at Moze's house,¹³¹ and the ensuing spring they damaged his fishing nets.¹³²

Leon Chenier, St. Germain's successor, began dispensing large amounts of liquor as presents in the summer of 1801, and succeeded in receiving the majority of the hunts.¹³³ At the end of May 1802, he landed a raft of logs and boards near the Hudson's Bay Company house, intending to build a house beside it to spy upon it and overawe the natives.¹³⁴ While the Canadians were still in the process of raising the structure, some Indians in two canoes, who were indebted to Moze, passed his house without stopping. Thinking that they intended to land at the new Canadian house, he ordered two men to overtake them. One canoe was stopped and all the furs were removed.¹³⁵ Chenier demanded that these furs be given to him as payment for a debt, but Moze refused. However, the following day, Roderic McKenzie, a partner of the

North West Company, arrived from Montreal, and reinforced Chenier's demands. McKenzie promised that if Moze complied, he would return all the furs which the Indians had "laid by" for him; should he decline, he would arrest and take him to Montreal. Moze judged it prudent to acquiesce to McKenzie's proposal.¹³⁶

After Chenier had completed his house, Moze, in July, gathered logs and bark for a house which he intended to construct at "the Assinnogamy carrying place" on the "opposite side of the river to the Canadian house."¹³⁷ Work did not commence until 8 November. Moze first marked out a square and then enclosed it with railings. Chenier questioned his right to construct on this land, but did not force the issue. Instead, he ordered his men to erect a small house beside it. Moze's building was made of logs and may have been no more than a log tent.¹³⁸ It is probable that it was unattended most of the winter, for the lack of provisions forced Moze to dispatch two men to New Brunswick in January.¹³⁹ The Canadians were responsible for his inadequate supplies; during the autumn fishing season they had placed their nets on both sides of his, thereby limiting his catch.¹⁴⁰

Several outposts were maintained by the Canadians from Michipicoten between 1800 and 1803. Until 1800, there was only one, at New Brunswick. During the winter of 1800-01, at least two Canadians resided on Missinaibi Lake, returning with six bundles of furs in May.¹⁴¹ The ensuing August five Canadians set off in two large canoes for Missinaibi Lake and Meashequagamy Lake, where a new outpost was established.¹⁴² The Canadians at Missinaibi Lake this winter were extremely active, and the Indians coming from there complained that they had been "plunder'd... of the greatest part of their Hunt."¹⁴³

We learn from an entry for 23 May 1801 in Moze's journal that Chenier, two men and three Indians returned to

Michipicoten "from his wintering ground near N.B." with "nine stout bundles of Furs."¹⁴⁴ His house was probably at Wapparsaticar Lake, where Canadians definitely resided in 1801-02. They passed a trying winter there the latter year; in April two of them arrived at Michipicoten, suffering from hunger and fatigue.¹⁴⁵ The main body of men, at the end of June, brought only six bundles, together not weighing more than 300 lbs.¹⁴⁶ The Nor'Westers also had a house "one day journey on this side St. Marys,"¹⁴⁷ most likely founded before the turn of the 19th century.

Frederick House and Lake Abitibi

In October 1792, Isaac Constant and Michael China, two clerks in the employ of Grant, Campion and Company, settled with three labourers within one-half mile of Frederick House "on the Devils Island,"¹⁴⁸ and were joined in the spring by one clerk from Abitibi and another from Soweawaminica.¹⁴⁹ By distributing large presents and "lying about the Rivers," they severely injured Frederick House's receipts. Indeed, John Mannall, who had only three men with him at Frederick House, was convinced that unless the Canadians in the interior were opposed and he received reinforcements, the major portion of the trade in his region would be lost.¹⁵⁰

This increase in Canadian competition compelled Thomas to dispatch, in the summer of 1793, George Gladman to explore Harricanaw River, Mannall the road to the Canadian settlement at Soweawaminica, and Philip Good the route to the Pic River.¹⁵¹ Despite the success of the expeditions, a general knowledge of the interior was still wanting at Moose, and Thomas lamented that the Canadian opposition "must remain uninterrupted from here for want of a knowledge of the country."¹⁵²

That summer, Robert Folster, at Frederick House, reported that the Canadians beside him were busily procuring goods and provisions in preparation for establishing themselves in the spring at Moose Fort.¹⁵³ In July and August, they had four people with "two Tents" around Frederick House, and succeeded in stopping many of the hunters from visiting Folster. Their design was to prevent them from frequenting either house, thus forcing them to go to Abitibi House.¹⁵⁴ Only four Canadians passed the winter months at Frederick House, but they received at least one additional man from Soweawamenica in the spring.¹⁵⁵

In its instructions for 1794, the London Committee stated that Frederick House had proved to be of little use and should be abandoned as soon as convenient. The committee ordered that the track to Lake Témiscamingue should be explored to determine whether a settlement on that lake was practical. Meanwhile, a post was to be immediately established on Lake Abitibi.¹⁵⁶ Accordingly Thomas, in November 1794, outfitted an expedition, consisting of six Englishmen and commanded by George Gladman, for the exploration of the water system employed by the Canadians at Lake Témiscamingue to supply Lake Abitibi.¹⁵⁷ It was to be followed in June by another party, which was to found a post on Lake Abitibi.¹⁵⁸ At the same time, another group was to settle at the head of the south branch of Moose River, in opposition to the Canadians at Soweawamenica.¹⁵⁹

Gladman and four men departed from Moose for Frederick House in March 1794,¹⁶⁰ and after a short stop there, continued toward Lake Abitibi. Near the entrance of Lake Abitibi, Gladman encountered three Canadians who showed him the way to their post, located at the other end of the lake.¹⁶¹ He writes:

... When the Lake grew narrower, Entered a River West S.E. 4 and arrived at the Abbittibi Settle-

ment which consists of two small low Dwelling Houses and a wholesale and retail store, it stands on a Point looking into the Lake. Pitched my Tent on the opposite side in view of their House and about 300 yards distance. There are about Twelve Trading Indians here some have Traded, and all their Furrs are in the Canadians Possession, indeed I perceive but small hopes of getting much Trade here this year as our arrival is so unexpected to the Indians and the Canadians watch so closely. Two of them pitched a Guard Tent within a few yards of mine. Went over and paid a visit to Mr. McDougall the Master of the Canadian Settlement, who received me with much Kindness, and observed that he hoped however opposite our Interests were as far as regarded Trade, we Might live on Terms of Perpetual Civility together though he said, at the same time we must Expect when a Pack of Furrs was to be got our Zeal for our Employers would create temporary Disputes, but they would avoid Personal animosities, which I assured him was equally opposite to my sentiments.¹⁶²

While Gladman was at Lake Abitibi, a Canadian clerk and two men arrived from the Canadian settlement "near F.H." (Frederick House). Further reinforcements were received from Témiscamingue in the latter part of May, making the number of Canadians at Abitibi four clerks, four men and the master. The Canadians, so numerous and experienced, frustrated Gladman's efforts to trade; they constantly followed his men, and from their "Guard Tent," they kept his tent under surveillance day and night.¹⁶³ Their strength and trading skill so impressed Gladman that he observed on

his departure from Lake Abitibi on May 31,

Abittibi House is a very old Establishment and the Indians about it in general, are as much attached to them as our home Indians are to us, which would operate very much (at least for some time) against a settlement made by us here. The establishment will be very expensive and I doubt little productive for some time, for besides the above reasons, the Canadian Servants are well acquainted with the Country and more dextrous in Canoes, than the generality of our Men and will upon our settling here have a number of them; these they will pour out into every Quarter and effectually secure most of the Indian Trade; and it is their constant practice in this part of the Country to seize all the Peltry the Indians have without allowing them the Liberty of Trading where they (the Indians) choose, and as a plausible pretence for this they constantly keep the Natives in Debt to them. To give a proper check to the Canadian influence will be proper that our Settlement here should have Ten good Men at least, and to stand an equal chance with them in going about after Indians, they should be supplied with not less than Six Months European Provisions.... One of the Gentlemen concerned in this Canada Company told me in Conversation that in the Year 1769 they Made 75 Packs on Abittibi Lake, but now they think themselves well paid, if they procure Thirty.¹⁶⁴

Gladman then proceeded to Lake Témiscamingue, which he surveyed to determine whether it should be settled from Moose. He writes about Timiscaming House,

The Houses stand on a Point on the East side stretching into the Lake on a high Situation, another point projects from the opposite side making a narrow Channel only 1/4 mile across, thro which a Strong Current runs to the Southward. The Houses consist of a Wholesale and Retail Warehouse, a House for a Master and Clerks and another for Man all at right Angles within Pallisadoes. Ten or Twelve Yards higher up on the Point there are two other commodious dwelling Houses one for the Master and the other Mr. Grant's in which they reside, these are very neatly fitted up, with printed Cotton Curtains, the Walls neatly papered and plaistered but all on one Floor, - besides these they have some detached Buildings as a Smith's Forge, (they have an Armourer constantly here who makes all the Ironwork for their Trade, Barrs of Iron come up in the bottoms of their canoes without much inconvenience) also a very complete Ice House, a Magazine but all in irregular situations, around these are several detached spots of Garden Ground, but the Land is poor, and nothing appears likely to come to Perfection but Potatoes, which are uncommonly productive here, many Bushells are thrown about around their Houses, tho they say they give great quantities to the Indians and are now feeding Hogs with them, these besides Poultry are all their live stock. They have other Dwelling Houses for the Winter, (this situation being too bleak and open) about half a Mile behind the Point to the Southward, of their Trade I can gather little Information, all the Furrs I saw would not amount to 1000 M Beaver,

in Beaver, Otter, Cats and many Musquash, but as the larger Canoes are returned to Montreal some time since much must have gone down by the, as all the Posts Ere that had lodged the principal part of their Collections here, there are no Indians about to form any Calculations of the Furr's collected at this particular Post. --The Land all round the Lake is high barren Rocky and had a very unfavourable appearance for Provisions, Pidgeons I understand are sometimes pretty plentiful, for about 3 Weeks in Summer, the season for them is about commencing now, there are very few Rabbits to be got, the Fish which are very scarce to be got here are Pike and Perch principally, but the chief Dependance of the Canadians is on the Provisions they bring up from Montreal, Indian Corn and Grease is served out regularly to the Men each Day, and also some Pease, but Pork, Flour, Salt and c. they must Buy, if they want it. Pork is 3 Livres p. Pound, Flour 2, Mr. Cameron the Master here asured me they had not four Pounds at the End of the Year to pay to any Man in their Service. But the Clerks are exempted from any Expence, either for Food or Cloathing. There are 3 of the large Montreal Canoes lying here which are about 36 feet long, 2 1/2 deep, and 6 wide in Mid-ships, carry 70 Bales, Bags, and Kegs each, and are navigated by 8 Men. Mr. Grant and Mr. Cameron received us with great civility, gave me two Apartments for myself and People. -- They keep an excellent Table and entertained me with Madeira and London Bottled Porter.

Gladman recommended against the establishment of a post on Lake Timiscaming because of the problems of supplying it.

Robert Folster, Mannall's assistant at Frederick House, and ten Englishmen reached Lake Abitibi in the latter part of June. Folster's journal begins with the construction of his house and we must turn to Gladman for its location. Gladman, on his return from Lake Témiscamingue, re-entered Lake Abitibi on the west side, paddled through the lake, "pass'd the last Carrying place and arrived at Abbittibbi Settlement." There he met five of his company's employees who informed him that Folster had begun to build on a point "about 2 miles below." Gladman then proceeded there, and supervised the construction of "a house to store the goods in" before departing for Moose.¹⁶⁶ It was on the peninsula jutting into the lake at the mouth of the Duparquet River.

Eight days after Folster's arrival, the Canadians raised a house "nearly along side" him. Two clerks and four men were stationed there. In response, Folster, in August, had three men construct a "temporary" building above the Canadians' old house, where the Canadian master still resided. After receiving reinforcements of five men from Lake Témiscamingue, making 12 men in all, the Canadian master, James Grant, dispatched six to establish a temporary dwelling at the west end of the lake, 60 miles from Folster.¹⁶⁷

Having only four men, Folster was at a disadvantage, and as most of those who desired to trade with him had already taken debts from the Canadians, few were willing to enter his house, especially as the Canadians were beside him. A few hid their furs a short distance from his house, to be picked up by one of his men; other furs were procured by men tenting with hunting parties. But the Nor'Westers, who invariably accompanied their rivals, carried away most of the furs. In June, Folster left Lake Abitibi with 697 1/2 MB.¹⁶⁸

While half of Folster's men were away in July conveying the trade to Moose Fort, a half-Indian son of James Grant, the Canadian master, burned "to ashes" the small house which Folster had raised beside the Canadians the previous winter. Folster considered this but a small loss because he did not have any men to station there during the summer.¹⁶⁹

By October 1795, eighteen Nor'Westers, seven clerks and eleven labourers, were concentrated on Lake Abitibi, three for each Hudson's Bay company man. Alexander Belly, Folster's assistant, and one man resided on Abitibi River, four days' journey in winter from Abitibi House, and were opposed by six Canadians from Abitibi. At a lake about nine miles from Folster's house, there were four Canadians tenting; Folster could spare only two men to oppose them.¹⁷⁰

Another group of Canadians were encamped 40 miles from Belly.¹⁷¹ The Canadian master, one of his clerks and their wives were tenting about 10 miles down the lake, where one man was sent by Folster at the end of February. Only two clerks and one man resided at the Canadian house. His opponents, Folster observed in February, were so numerous that they were starving.¹⁷²

When Folster's "Tenters" returned in May, they had only 30 MB to show for their efforts.¹⁷³ In all, 621 MB were conveyed in June to Moose.¹⁷⁴ While the Canadians received the majority of the trade, they had overtaxed their resources. The ensuing winter, fewer men were under Grant's command, though we are not told how many. Belly, on Abitibi River, had only four opponents.¹⁷⁵ Consequently, Folster's trade almost doubled, 1071 1/2 MB being sent to Moose in June 1797.¹⁷⁶ Yet even this reduced competition could not be continued. Some time during the summer, the two masters concluded a verbal agreement not to "waylay" any Indians.

In June 1797, the Hudson's Bay Company post was plundered by Indians and damage was done to the warehouse and

men's house, but they were quickly repaired and a new warehouse was added. Less than a month later, a number of Canadians began to build "a Long side" Folster.¹⁷⁷ The new post was completed at the end of October and the old one was abandoned.¹⁷⁸ By lavishly distributing liquor and paying high prices, the Canadian master cut Folster's trade in half this winter.¹⁷⁹

On the orders of Thomas at Moose, preparations were made in June 1798 to raise a new post on an island some distance away.¹⁸⁰ But construction did not begin until the following June,¹⁸¹ and it was not ready for habitation until the summer of 1800. There was at least one house of three stories, for we read: the "Carpenter planing boards for the Middle floor."¹⁸² Folster was undisturbed until the middle of April 1801, when the Canadians cleared "about 6 foot of ground on the Island." The Master informed him that he had been ordered by Alexander MacDougall, who in the summer of 1800 had established a house on Hudson Bay in opposition to Moose, to settle beside him.¹⁸³

After the establishment of Abitibi House, Thomas planned to evacuate Frederick House, if the Canadians relinquished their house beside it.¹⁸⁴ However, in 1794-95, three men from Soweawaminica resided in the Canadian house, the master being a Mr. Grant.¹⁸⁵ In the autumn, they erected a "Watch House" on the top of the hill on Devil's Island. John Manson had only one man with him at Frederick House,¹⁸⁶ Thomas having concentrated his main strength on Lake Abitibi where there was a greater expectation of trade. Frederick House had returned only 120 MB the previous year,¹⁸⁷ and there was little hope for an improvement. "Kinoogumisee" House (Kinogamissi House) on Kenogamissi Lake, founded by John Mannall in the autumn of 1794, was also given priority over Frederick House. Frederick House subsequently served as a supply station for both Abitibi and Kenogamissi. It is

probable that Frederick House's receipts declined in 1794-95, because Manson was confined to his bed by illness most of the winter.¹⁸⁸ He was replaced by Thomas Isbister in May.¹⁸⁹

Frederick House had three masters in 1795-96, Isbister, John Flett and Thomas Mowat. At no time during the winter months did any of them have more than two labourers. This arrangement was continued until Frederick House was closed in the summer of 1813. Only in one year, 1799-1800, was a master given three men, but one of them was incapacitated by a broken leg and the other two were newly arrived from England and were incapable even of hunting.¹⁹⁰ The people stationed at Frederick House were the only ones who could be spared by the officer in charge of Abitibi House, who was annually outnumbered.

As Frederick House was used as an inland depot, it was never closed during the summer months. Without exception, a master and a labourer were stationed there during that season. A garden producing oats, barley and potatoes was cultivated.

The Canadians retained their house on Devil's Island until 1812, but there were probably never more than four or five men stationed there at any one time. There was little contact between the two posts until 1801, and the name of the Canadian master is never mentioned before 1803. Richard Good went hunting with his "neighbour" in January 1802.¹⁹¹ There is only one recorded act of violence after 1800. In his journal for 3 April 1803, John Flett notes that while his two assistants were leading two Indian families to Frederick House, they were stopped by the Canadian master "George Mack bride" (McBride), who pointed his gun at them and "swore he would blow their brain if they would not abundan [sic] the furs." Having no arms to defend themselves, they did not contest the issue.¹⁹²

There are no journals for Frederick House after 1805-06, and our knowledge of its subsequent history is restricted to the information we can glean from the Hudson's Bay Company's Abitibi House journals. Joseph Turnor was in charge of Frederick House in 1807-08 and may have had two men.¹⁹³ It is not certain whether the Canadians were more numerous, but they did receive the majority of the trade until 1812. Good writes in his journal for 13 June 1810 that he observed the Nor'Westers unload from a canoe from Frederick House ten bundles of furs; three of them appeared to be only "Rolls," and the other seven were not "of the largest size Packs."¹⁹⁴ The ensuing June they brought 17 bundles, "but not of the largest size," from Frederick House.¹⁹⁵

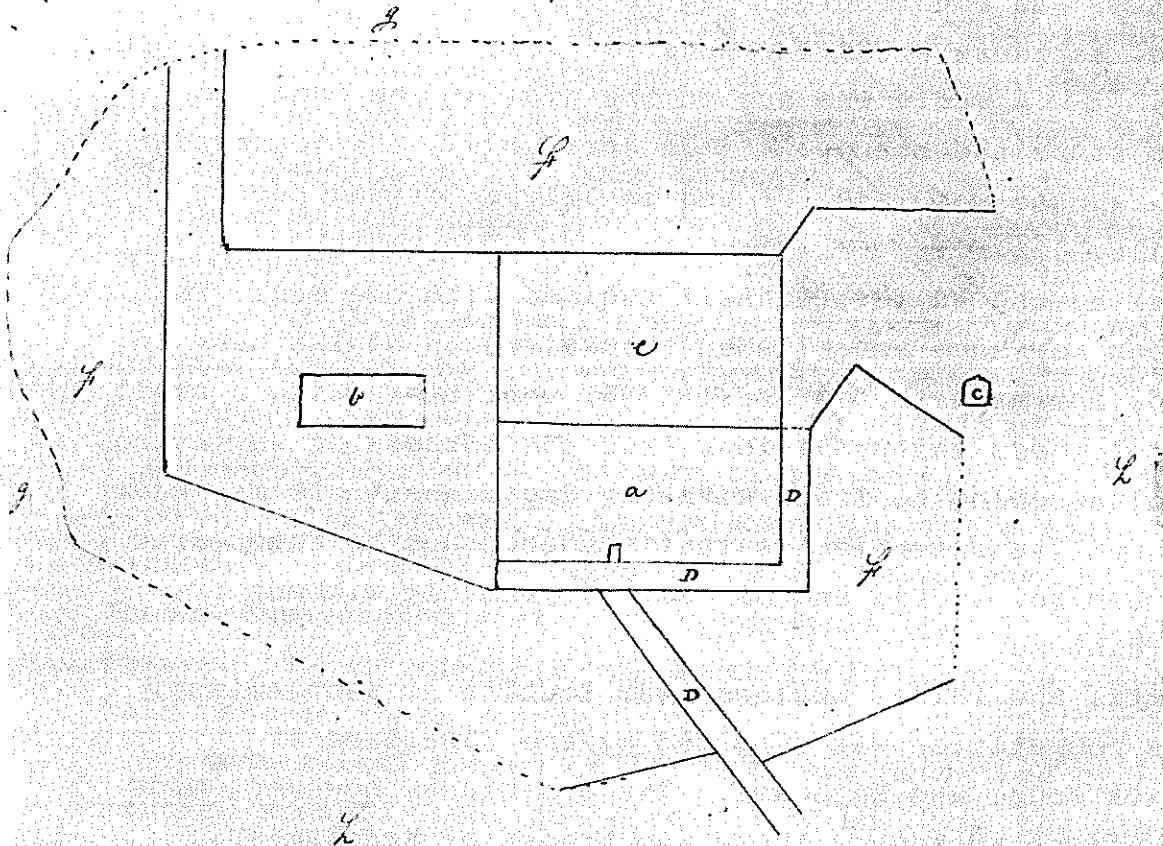
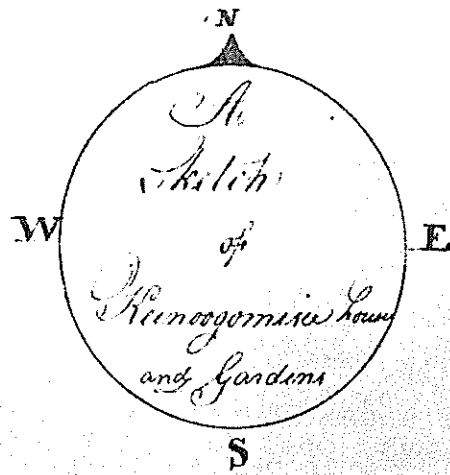
There were never more than two buildings, a dwelling house and a warehouse, at the Hudson's Bay Company post in the period before 1805-06.

During the winter of 1812-13, Frederick House was attacked by Indians, and the warehouse was looted.¹⁹⁶ Hugh Slater, who had been left in charge of the house while Alexander Belly, the master, journeyed with a man to Kenogamissi for supplies, was found shot to death in the men's house.¹⁹⁷ The bodies of Belly, Robert Sabiston, and four Indians were discovered in June on their route to Kenogamissi.¹⁹⁸ At least five other Indian bodies were found at Frederick House.¹⁹⁹ After this incident, Frederick House was not reoccupied. Hudson's Bay Company men wintered on Frederick House Lake between 1817 and 1821, but they dwelt in log tents.²⁰⁰

Kenogamissi

John Mannall, with three Englishmen, John Slater, Andrew Thompson and Thomas Moore, and 20 Indians, left Moose at the end of June 1794, bound for Kenogamissi Lake to found a

- 2 Sketch of Keenoogomisee House and gardens. (Hudson's Bay Company, B.99/e/1/70.4d, 1813-14.)



References —

- a — The House
- b — Warehouse
- c — Vault
- d — Platform
- e — Garden
- f — Ground in Cultivation
- g — a Swamp
- L — the Lake

settlement designed to intercept the Soweawaminica trade.²⁰¹ Not long before, the Canadians (Grant, Campion and Company) had settled on Matagami Lake, called by Mannall, "Martawagum-mick Lake."²⁰²

The expedition from Moose entered "Kinoogumisee Lake" (Kenogamissi Lake) on 20 July. Five miles into the lake, on "a point on the W^t side," a house 28 feet by 14, covered with bark, was constructed.²⁰³ It had at least two stories, as there are references to "lower floors" and "upper floors."²⁰⁴ A vault was dug on the side of the bank, and used to store the brandy.²⁰⁵ In April 1795, the foundation of a warehouse was laid,²⁰⁶ and in July a "drying tent" was built.²⁰⁷

During the summer, Mannall resided with one man. The Canadians may have established themselves on Wenisk Lake in 1795-96, for Mannall, in April 1796, went there with a small amount of goods and provisions "for the purpose of waylaying the Indians going to Trade with the Canadians." It may have been Mannall's intention to settle there, but he reappeared at Kenogamissi at the end of May,²⁰⁸ probably without having done so.

Until the 1810s, business was routine at Kenogamissi, and its competition was supplied by the Canadians at Frederick House and Matagami. The Canadians, however, made little effort to seduce those who traded at Kenogamissi. Nor'Westers not infrequently passed through Kenogamissi Lake on their journeys between Frederick House and Matagami Lake, and men from Kenogamissi House usually accompanied them to prevent their contact with the lake's Indians.²⁰⁹

In 1797-98, Frederick House was the more important of the two North West Company houses. Roderick Chesholm was then the master at Frederick House,²¹⁰ and in 1799-1800, Mr. MacKay was in charge at Matagami Lake.²¹¹ Mannall, in July 1799, made his first visit to Matagami Lake, which by

then had become his principal competitor, but as the master was absent, he could obtain little information on the extent and nature of its trade.²¹²

When Mannall returned from Moose in October 1800, he learned that the North West Company had established itself on "Carcoutish Lake" (Kakatoosh Lake, Modern Groundhog Lake). By doing this, they expected to intercept the Indians coming to Kenogamissi from the west. In November, Richard Good and two men departed for Kakatoosh Lake with the intention of settling in opposition, but the desertion of the guide aborted the expedition.²¹³ This Canadian post, which continued in operation throughout the pre-1821 period, was also called "Flying Post."

Philip Good, Mannall's assistant since the founding of Kenogamissi and the man who had usually resided there for the summer, succeeded as master in 1801-02. The post entered a period of decline at the turn of the century; in 1801-02, Good had only two men²¹⁴ and only one the following winter.²¹⁵ In 1803-04, John Davis was in charge and John Thomas the ensuing year. It is possible that it was closed between 1807-08 and 1810-11, as there is a gap in the journals between these years.

Kenogamissi House, in 1813-14, was described by its master, Richard Good, as "a very good building the dimensions of it is 42 feet by 22 besides which there is a warehouse 15 feet by 9."²¹⁶ Two Canadian posts competed with it, Mattagami, under Angus Cameron, and Kakatoosh, whose master was a Mr. McKay,²¹⁷ perhaps the same McKay who had been at Mattagami in 1799-1800. Good was on friendly terms with both Canadians, and even supplied Cameron with some poultry in March 1814.²¹⁸

Grant, Champion and Company, in 1794, entertained a project to establish a house at Moose Fort. But in 1795 the company, having strained its financial resources, sold its

interests in the Témiscamingue department to McTavish, Frobisher and Company, partners in the North West Company. Aeneas Cameron was retained as supervisor of the department, and in 1798 became a partner in the North West Company.²¹⁹

The Last Two Decades of Anglo-Canadian Rivalry

Introduction

The new Hudson's Bay Company's posts at Kenogamissi Lake, Michipicoten and Abitibi Lake placed an intolerable strain upon the resources of the North West Company, which had concentrated upon the more lucrative trade in western Canada. Hence at the beginning of 1800, the North West Company conveyed to John Thomas at Moose Fort a proposal for a mutual withdrawal; Moose Fort would withdraw from Michipicoten, Kenogamissi and Abitibi, and in return the Nor'Westers would evacuate New Brunswick, Mattagami and Frederick House. Thomas rejected the proposal, and as a result, an expedition was sent in June 1800 from Témiscamingue to settle on the bay in opposition to Moose Fort.

Alexander McDougall, the expedition's leader, selected the head of Hayes Island as the location for his house, and for one year, men from Moose Fort resided beside it. During their first winter, the Canadians maintained one post inland (at the mouth of the Abitibi River), but in subsequent years they went inland only in the spring. They were residing at Hannah Bay, in opposition to an outpost from Moose Fort, as early as the spring of 1803.

The negotiations for a mutual withdrawal were resumed in the summer of 1801. Although England's war with Napoleon limited his supplies and handicapped his competition with the Nor'Westers, Thomas, left on his own by the London Committee to negotiate, would not yield to McDougall's terms. John Moze did evacuate Michipicoten in the summer of 1803, but he did so without Thomas's consent. After the peace with

Napoleon in 1802, the shipment of the required amounts of European provisions, especially wheat, was resumed. Meanwhile it was becoming more difficult for the Nor'Westers to supply their force on the bay. In 1803, the Nor'Westers brought most of their supplies for the bay directly from England by ship, while some were still conveyed overland from Canada. That year they established themselves in opposition to Eastmain and Rupert River. This necessitated a greater distribution of their experienced hands, and inexperienced Orkneymen were recruited to augment the force. In both supplies and experience Moose Fort was superior, and between 1803 and 1806, when they withdrew from the bay, the Nor'Westers obtained an increasingly smaller portion of the trade. Aeneas Cameron, the Canadian commander on the bay in 1805 and 1806, in the latter year received an order to abandon his establishments on the east coast of the bay, but he withdrew from all his posts.

After their withdrawal from the bay, the Nor'Westers concentrated their strength at Lake Abitibi. During the 1800-06 period, Moose Fort had been unable to spare more than a handful of men for Lake Abitibi and the Canadians blockaded the Hudson's Bay Company's house so well that the hunters who desired to trade with it hid their furs at a distance. After 1806, the Nor'Westers' opposition was even more formidable. Napoleon's Continental System, meanwhile, excluded the Hudson's Bay Company from its continental markets, leaving it with large amounts of unsold furs in its warehouses. European provisions were scarce and expensive. Instructions were sent to the governor at Moose to reduce the numbers of furs and withdraw from regions where they were purchased at a high cost.¹ As a result, Abitibi House was closed in the summer of 1811.

England's exclusion from the continent deprived the navy of timber from the Baltic states. The high prices for

this article encouraged the London Committee in 1809 to send Alexander Christie, an experienced lumberer, and four men to exploit the timber resources in the vicinity of Moose. The industry was prosecuted until 1817, when a decline in prices made it no longer worthwhile.²

In the spring of 1810, the London Committee began a far-reaching reorganization of the structure of its trade. The Southern and Northern Departments were created and a superintendent for each was appointed. The Southern Department, under Thomas Thomas, comprised Moose, Albany and Eastmain factories. Each superintendent, given the title "Chief Factor," was initially allotted a salary of £100 per annum and a share in the profits in the first three years not less than £50 per annum. Under the superintendents were masters of districts, called "Traders," who were given £50 per annum and a share in the profits for the first three years not less than £20 per annum. In 1813 and 1814, the London Committee, in order to encourage greater activity by its officers, placed half the company's profits in a central fund. Each officer was allocated shares on the basis of rank, ten to each superintendent, four to each Chief Factor, two to every second in command at a factory and one to each junior trader. Promotions from junior trader were to depend upon merit rather than seniority. The superintendent was not attached to any factory on the bay, but went from post to post co-ordinating the department's trade and assessing the performance of his subordinates. He was ordered to winter at an inland post. A "second" was stationed with the governor at Moose and after 1817 one at Eastmain. Traders were appointed for Albany, Eastmain, New Brunswick, Kenogamissi, Big River and Nasquiscow.³

An accountant was stationed at each factory on the bay to regulate the appropriation of goods and provisions for the inland trade. The committee was particularly upset by

the annual consumption of 40 to 50 lbs. of European provisions per servant and the great concentration of idle men on the bay. It believed that three-quarters of those at Moose in 1814 could be dispensed with; that a bay factory's complement should be no more than a small post's, having only an accountant, blacksmith and cooper and a small number of labourers. Each district, headed by a trading master, was assigned a clerk to keep its accounts, which were to be forwarded to the bay factories.⁴

John Hodgson continued as governor at Moose after the initial stages of the reorganization. But by 1813 it was apparent to the committee that Moose was still mismanaged and Hodgson was incapable of introducing reforms. Thomas Thomas was instructed to immediately suspend and oblige him to leave Moose. His replacement was Thomas Vincent, who had established his reputation as a reformer at Albany. In 1814, William Auld, the superintendent of the Northern Department, was dismissed from the service because of his opposition to the Red River colony and his suspected friendly relations with the Nor'Westers, and was succeeded by Thomas Thomas. The vacant office of superintendent of the Southern Department was filled locum tenens by Vincent.⁵ The following year, he was permanently installed as superintendent.

Vincent, in 1814-15, commenced an ambitious project to resuscitate his company's declining trade in the region north of Lake Superior. An outpost from Kinogamissi was founded at Matagami Lake, where Kenogamissi's principal competitor was located. It was a failure, and was withdrawn two years later, but meanwhile, the Nor'Westers' post at Kenogamissi Lake, founded in retaliation, considerably reduced Kenogamissi House's trade in the succeeding years. Hence, in the Kenogamissi-Matagami region Vincent's policy resulted only in the weakening of his company's position.

The Nor'Westers withdrew from New Brunswick House at the end of the 1803-04 season, and did not return until September 1812. We possess little information on their activities between these years in the territory which they included in Michipicoten department. The minutes of the North West Company's council meetings at Fort William between 1806 and 1813 published by W.S. Wallace show that in 1806-07 the department was assigned to Ber. St. Germain and Leon Chenier, with Donald McIntosh and John Robertson serving as their clerks. James Leith was master between 1807-08 and 1809-10, Archibald McLellan between 1808-09 and 1812-13, and Hugh McGillis in 1813-14.⁶

Donald McIntosh re-established New Brunswick House for the North West Company in 1812. For two years he succeeded in getting the better of his less resourceful opponent, John Euston. Euston's successor, George Gladman, was a more enterprising and able individual, and the trade was evenly divided.

In January 1815, the London Committee sent out explicit instructions to the officers inland on the manner in which they should conduct themselves toward the Canadians. Particular attention was to be paid to squatting or trespassing upon the lands within the company's charter. Commissions as Justices of the Peace for the Canadas were obtained for the principal officers on the bay, and they were instructed to swear in their junior officers as constables and issue them warrants when necessary. The cutting of more than three trees on the company's land was considered to be a felony. The company's officers were authorized to arrest any trespasser who committed a felony, threatened or committed an act of violence. Officers were not to enforce their powers if the opposing force was equal or superior in numbers; then evidence should be collected for later prosecution. An officer could destroy a partially completed Canadian building, but not one which was roofed over and inhabited.⁷

Vincent, in 1815-16, chose New Brunswick House as his winter headquarters. He immediately made his authority felt by ordering a watch-house to be built in front of the Canadian master's house, and successfully defying Morrison, McIntosh's successor, to erect one in front of his post. The ascendancy won was never lost, and the Nor'Westers' trade at New Brunswick steadily declined in the period before the coalition of 1821.

In the summer of 1816, Vincent sent Richard Good to re-establish Michipicoten House. Between 1816 and the coalition of 1821, neither house at Michipicoten received a rewarding trade. Only the revenue from the interior establishments permitted the North West Company to maintain Michipicoten. It served primarily as a supply depot, as did the Hudson's Bay Company's house.

Vincent's overbearing conduct was not restricted to the Canadians. Complaints were received by the London Committee that he was partial toward some officers, harsh toward others, and from principles of false economy had inadequately supplied some inland parties, exposing them to the danger of starvation. He was accused of drinking heavily and often behaving in a rude and boistrous manner toward the officers when inland. At the mess table, he acted in a high-handed manner toward the junior officers. He had separated from his Indian wife and had taken another man's woman. While the committee acknowledged that the charges were exaggerated, it nevertheless concluded that his conduct called for a reprimand, and it was disturbed by the lack of harmony in the Southern Department. His failure to reduce the complement of the bay posts also received criticism.⁸ Nevertheless, Vincent, for lack of a better administrator, was retained as supervisor of the Southern Department until the coalition of 1821.

The Canadians at Moose Fort

The posts established by John Thomas at Kenogamissi Lake, Michipicoten and Abitibi Lake in the last decade of the 18th century placed an intolerable strain upon the resources of the North West Company, which had committed the bulk of its men and supplies to western Canada. Not until the mid-1790s were large canoes employed in supplying Témiscamingue and Abitibi from Montreal, and even then the goods and provisions received were just adequate to support the house on Lake Abitibi, where few crops could be grown and fish were scarce. In February 1800, proposals for a mutual withdrawal of the two companies were conveyed to Moose by "Messrs. McGilivray & McDougall" (Alexander McDougall) through Robert Folster at Abitibi Lake. They provided that the Hudson's Bay Company should relinquish Michipicoten, Kenogamissi and Abitibi while the North West Company would undertake to evacuate New Brunswick, Matagami (Dog Lake) and Frederick House. Thomas, however, was unreceptive.⁹

Unable to obtain the withdrawal, Aeneas Cameron, a North West Company partner and the master at Témiscamingue, sent a party to Hudson Bay to settle in opposition to Moose Fort. Robert Folster remarks, in his journal in June 1800, that seven canoes, bound for Moose with goods and provisions, reached his opponents' house.¹⁰ Within a week, the canoes were on their way down the Abitibi River, and on the night of 30 June, they landed at the head of "Hazey's" (Hayes or Hays) Island. The following morning, Thomas visited the island; he estimated that the men numbered "upwards of thirty," most of them being Iroquois Indians. The principal people were Alexander McDougall, Mr. Constant, who probably had been stationed at either Frederick House or Abitibi, and a Mr. Bell. Later in the day, Constant visited Moose, accompanied by a large number of the Iroquois. All but eight men returned to Abitibi a few days later, and those

who were left behind immediately began to construct a post at the head of Hayes Island.¹¹ They were relatively well supplied, especially with shot and powder, while Moose had not yet received its European goods and provisions.¹²

On the morning of 12 September, Thomas took 15 men with him to Hayes Island, selected a site near the Canadians and proceeded to clear the woods. This work was resumed a week later by four labourers. Meanwhile, others were engaged in squaring timber, brought by boat to the island. There is no description of either establishment on Hayes Island. The Hudson's Bay Company post had only one house, for we read that the men were building "a House."¹³ A Mr. Brown was placed in charge of it, and had no more than three men with him during the winter.¹⁴

At the beginning of November, Canadians from Hayes Island voyaged inland and stopped and built a house on an island at the mouth of the Abitibi River,¹⁵ 20 miles from Moose. Seven men were in the party, but only three remained for the winter. As they were strategically well placed to intercept much of Moose's inland trade, Thomas, on 24 November, dispatched three men to reside beside them, and another man soon after joined them.¹⁶ The Hudson's Bay Company master seems to have been a Mr. Hendy.¹⁷ Provisions were conveyed from Moose by sledges.¹⁸ The people of Moose Fort who were not quartered at either of the two new posts were either hunting geese at Hannah Bay House (sometimes four men) or employed in observing the movements of the Canadians and endeavouring to prevent their contact with the Indians.¹⁹ At the beginning of February, John Thomas and Joe Turnor settled at Cutophogan in opposition to some Canadians who not long before had built a tent there.²⁰ Some time during the winter, three Hudson's Bay Company men reoccupied "old" Brunswick House.²¹

The Nor'Westers evacuated their house on the island at the mouth of the Abitibi River, called by Thomas "Abitibi branch house," at the beginning of May, and changed their location "up to the Brunswick and Kenoogumese Fork of the river." Their opponents followed them.²² It is not certain whether they constructed a house or log tent. Neither side returned to either location the following winter.

The winter was not free from disputes. In February, Thomas complained to Alexander McDougall, the Canadian master at Hayes Island, that a Canadian "up the river" had threatened one of his men with a pistol,²³ and McDougall, in May, protested against an alleged attack on one of his men.²⁴

In order to discourage the natives from coming down in the spring to Moose, the Canadians spread a rumour that the Iroquois, who had accompanied them from Montreal the previous summer, would return and destroy the factory. As Gladman, who had replaced Thomas for this winter, remembered that the Iroquois had paid much attention to the fort and one had made a sketch of it while visiting at the beginning of July, he did not take this rumour too lightly. He thought that McDougall seemed "also evidently anxious to provoke Dissention as much as possible."²⁵

Hayes Island House was abandoned and the men following the Canadians on the Abitibi River were recalled at the beginning of June. All the men were concentrated at Moose.²⁶ When 15 Iroquois appeared at Moose on 7 June, Gladman declined giving them admittance, but thought it prudent to accede to their requests for small presents of tobacco and pipes and other articles. At night he doubled the watch.²⁷ The threat of an Iroquois attack soon dissipated; however, the house on Hayes Island was never reoccupied.

Reinforced by these Iroquois, the Canadians, in June, used their numerical strength to intimidate the natives and harrass their opponents. Alexander Belly, on coming down

with his receipts from Frederick House, was stopped while paddling within view of the North West Company house. One Canadian held "a loaded Gun in his Face" and examined the contents of his canoe. Another attempted to carry off two canoes of Indians accompanying him. The Indians navigated their canoes into the willows and were pursued by the Canadian, whose face was blacked all over to disguise him.²⁸

In February, a party of Nor'Westers surveyed the country in the direction of Hannah Bay and Eastmain.²⁹ That summer, six Canadians in a large canoe set off for Hannah Bay, and they were accompanied by a canoe of Hudson's Bay Company men who were to observe their movements.³⁰ As there is no reference to a Canadian post at Hannah Bay until April 1803, it is probable that these Nor'Westers returned. The house which was in operation in 1803 was situated near the Hudson Bay Company's, which for many years had been used for goose hunting. David Robertson, its master, wrote to Thomas in April 1803 that three of his men, Craigie, Bews, and Pearson, had gone to the Canadian house, gotten drunk, and then had ravished an old Indian woman.³¹ Of the three Canadians residing at Hannah Bay in July 1803, two were carpenters, indicating that the post either was not completed or additions were being made.³² Thomas Fraser may have been its master.³³ The Nor'Westers at Hannah Bay were less concerned with trading for furs than with hunting geese and procuring "Feathers and Quills" from the Indians.³⁴

During the summer of 1801, negotiations were resumed for a mutual withdrawal in the region between Moose and Lake Superior. The London Committee left the terms and conduct of the negotiations to the master at Moose, who was on the spot and had a better grasp of the local situation.³⁵ Thomas, having returned from England, proposed that New Brunswick, Kenogamissi and Frederick House should be retained by his employers, while the North West Company should

operate houses at Michipicoten, Mattagami and Abitibi.³⁶ The proposal was communicated by McDougall to William McGillivray, who was empowered by the North West Company to conduct the negotiations. McGillivray insisted that the Hudson's Bay Company should relinquish all its inland posts except Frederick House and New Brunswick. Thomas, however, adamantly insisted on retaining Kenogamissi, though he doubted that it could be maintained much longer unless the inland trade improved and larger supplies were received from England, which was at war with France. In April, Thomas wrote to Bolland at Eastmain:

If I was to consider my own case and convenience I should not hesitate a moment in accepting the Canadian's proposals, but while there are hopes of effecting our purpose by opposition would be rather premature to come so readily to their wishes.³⁷

The peace with Napoleon in 1802 again permitted the export of grain, and after this date it was the North West Company which experienced problems in supplying its posts, especially those on the bay. There are no records after 1803 of negotiations for a mutual withdrawal. Between 1801 and 1806, the year the Canadians left the bay, only one post, Michipicoten, was evacuated by the Hudson's Bay Company. John Moze, its master, in January 1803 made it clear to Thomas that he could not endure another winter at Michipicoten, and suggested that the outfits destined for his house could be employed more successfully in some other location north of Lake Superior.³⁸ Thomas preferred that Moze should relocate in the region between New Brunswick and Michipicoten, where a number of hunters who did not trade at New Brunswick could be found. As Moze reported that the XY Company would be at Michipicoten the ensuing winter, Thomas thought that the Canadians could be receptive to a proposal

for the evacuation of New Brunswick in return for Michipicoten, and empowered George Gladman, now in charge of New Brunswick, to supervise the negotiations.³⁹ However, before Gladman could authorize him to begin negotiations, Moze, who was determined to leave by the summer, concluded an arrangement with William McGillivray for a unilateral withdrawal. Thomas considered the terms to be contrary to his intentions,⁴⁰ and he subsequently disavowed Moze's action in a letter to McGillivray.⁴¹ But the Hudson's Bay Company did not return to Michipicoten for more than a decade.

The Canadians on Hudson Bay were supplied, during the summers of 1801 and 1802, by large canoes which travelled from Montreal up the Ottawa River and through lakes Témiscamingue and Abitibi. This long and difficult route limited the bulk and variety of the goods. To place its trade on a more even footing with its rival, the North West Company, in 1803, engaged Captain John Richards, formerly in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, to bring supplies by ship directly from England. Fearing that the ship could be intercepted when it entered Hudson Bay, the Nor'Westers also conveyed supplies overland.⁴² The overland party, commanded by Angus Shaw, the North West Company's administrator of the king's posts, started from either Tadoussac or Chicoutimi. Thomas says it descended the Eastmain River, and some of the men were left to found a post on "old" Factory Island in opposition to Eastmain.⁴³ The main body continued to Charlton Island, where Shaw constructed a storehouse and two or three tents. The Eddystone, the ship outfitted by the Canadians, landed on Charlton Island on 1 September, despite being threatened with an attack by Captain Hanwell aboard the Rupert, which had sailed from Moose to endeavour to enforce the company's charter.⁴⁴

The Canadian force on the bay in 1803-04 was bigger and better supplied than previously, but the hands brought out by the Eddystone were inexperienced Orkneymen.⁴⁵ In the spring they were stationed at strategic points above Moose, including the mouth of the Abitibi River. Their trade, however, was disappointing. The natives were firmly attached to Moose, and the newly arrived Orkneymen showed little talent in trading with them. In August 1804, some Indians, having traded with Nor'Westers, changed their minds, paddled after the Canadian canoe, overtook it and seized their furs, apparently after threatening to shoot the traders. Subsequently Thomas Fraser, who was the master at Hayes Island, accused two Hudson's Bay Company employees of inciting the Indians to commit the deed and supplying them with shot and powder for their guns. John George McTavish, who was left in charge of the Hudson Bay operation after Shaw's departure on the Eddystone in September 1803, demanded the restitution of the furs, but Thomas refused.⁴⁶ McTavish had taken his residence on Charlton Island; the post there was named Fort St. Andrews.

The Canadians at Hannah Bay House, as elsewhere, fared badly in the competition. Robertson proudly wrote to Thomas in June 1804 that his opponents had not obtained a single beaver pelt.⁴⁷ This was remarkable, because one of Robertson's men, John Clouston, at the beginning of May, had deserted to the Canadians and related all the details of Robertson's dealings with the Indians.⁴⁸ Thomas considered that his trade for 1804-05 was "very successful," showing an increase over the previous winter.⁴⁹

As his hands, by the summer of 1804, were predominantly Orkneymen who could best be commanded by their experienced compatriots, McTavish began recruiting a number of Thomas's men. Robert Folster, the founder and master of Abitibi House, having completed his contract, was hired by McTavish

and made his assistant on Charlton Island.⁵⁰ T. Thomas, notwithstanding the fact that he was still bound by a contract, in October was given charge of the house on Hayes Island. John Thomas remonstrated against this; McTavish, however, countered that the officers at both York and Albany had engaged men under contract to his company.⁵¹

Nevertheless, the North West Company fared no better in 1804-05. Even the threat of violence did not deter the Indians from trading at Moose Fort.⁵² In November, provisions and goods were gathered at Hayes Island House for an intended house at Old Brunswick, but bad travelling conditions forced the abandonment of the project.⁵³ Robert Folster and ten hands resided at Hayes Island.

Aeneas Cameron was on the bay in the summers of 1805 and 1806, and apparently had orders the latter summer to close the establishments on the east coast. He abandoned Hayes Island and Hannah Bay as well, and he was apparently criticized for this by his company.⁵⁴

McTavish and Folster, in September 1806, departed aboard the Schooner Desire. Cameron set off for Canada by way of Abitibi River with Frederick Schultz, Thomas Frazer and two Hudson's Bay Company deserters, Paulson and Clouston.⁵⁵ After the Nor'Westers' withdrawal, their "houses" at Hayes Island were dismantled, and part of the materials was brought to Moose to be used in the construction of new buildings.⁵⁶

Preparations were made, in 1808, for another expedition to the bay. The project, however, was abandoned when McDougall learned from the Hudson's Bay Company master at Lake Abitibi, Richard Good, that Abitibi House would soon be abandoned.⁵⁷

Lake Abitibi

During the summer of 1801, the Canadians augmented their force in the Lake Abitibi region. Coercion was again against the hunters. A number of them, on leaving Folster's post with their debts, were intercepted by Nor'Westers and stripped "quite naked;" they had everything taken away "even their guns and the clothes of [sic] their backs."⁵⁸

Folster, in October, unsuccessfully tried to reach an agreement with the Canadians regulating the trade at Lake Abitibi and Frederick House. Only three men, Folster and two labourers could be spared for Abitibi House in the autumn of 1802,⁵⁹ as the Nor'Westers were again at Hayes Island. The Canadians blockaded Abitibi House so well that the Indians paddled through the lake only under the cover of darkness and would not enter Folster's house before midnight. The majority of the hunters desiring to trade with Folster hid their furs, and requested him to fetch them. One hunter left his 40 miles from the post.⁶⁰

Having completed his contract period in the summer of 1802, Folster joined the Canadians and was replaced at Abitibi House by Richard Good, formerly his assistant. Good adopted the Canadian practice of "waylaying" the Indians, but he was so badly outnumbered that he could seldom obtain any furs of quality.⁶¹ Most of those he did receive were hidden by the Indians at a safe distance from his house. The Canadians were just as successful the following winter.

In both 1802-03 and 1803-04, Joseph Turnor, sometimes with one man, was stationed at the carrying place at the end of Lake Abitibi leading to Frederick House. However, he encountered few Indians who still had their furs.⁶² John Leask and William Leask were there in the spring of 1805, but received only 36 MB.⁶³ No Hudson's Bay Company men were stationed there in 1805-06. Instead, Thomas Knight and William Trumbland were dispatched in November to Whitefish River, where the Canadians were already residing.⁶⁴ Knight's

tent was destroyed by fire in March and all his goods were lost, but it was immediately rebuilt.⁶⁵ Thomas Isbister tented at Conaisee River and William Leask "at a River above Ye Canadian House"⁶⁶ (on Abitibi Lake), which apparently had been moved back to its former site on the mainland. Thomas Knight, with William Harvey, was again, in 1806-07, beside the Canadians on Whitefish River.⁶⁷ In February, William Leask was dispatched to "Cootoo, cg, ga, my" River to tent beside the Nor'Westers.⁶⁸

In the autumn of 1806, George McBride was replaced as master of the Canadian house⁶⁹ by Donald McKay,⁷⁰ who had 12 men.⁷¹ As in the previous few winters, Good may have had fewer than half that number. The Canadians made 20 packs of furs.⁷² Good does not mention his trade; it was most likely only a fraction of this amount.

The ensuing November, Thomas Knight and John Knight went back to Whitefish River, where the Canadians were again tenting.⁷³ Thomas Isbister and Hugh Cooper were sent to "Cootoo, cg, ga, may River (above our opponents' house."⁷⁴ After their departure, Good had only one hand with him at his house most of the winter.⁷⁵

The master of the Canadian post in 1807-08 was Alexander McDougall, the former commander of the post on Hayes Island. Though the Nor'Westers do not seem to have been as active and may not have been as numerous as in former winters, McDougall was well in control of the trade.⁷⁶ Only a little more than 500 MB was received by Good this winter.⁷⁷

In 1808-09, Thomas Knight tented with one man at Bashkan. James Heddle and John Knight were at Whitefish River⁷⁸ until March, and then changed their location to Conaisee River, where the Canadians had been tenting all winter and had snared numerous rabbits, the chief source of country provisions in the Lake Abitibi region.⁷⁹ The Canadians obtained even a larger proportion of the trade this

year. Good remarks in his journal for June 27,

I must here beg leave to remark that the Trade here has decreased greatly this year the only reason I can assign is my not having waylaid em this Season as before. Not having men & if I had, had em the scarcity of Provisions would have prevented me from so doing.

Without Provisions ample enough to oppose our Opponents with energy I fear the Honourable Company will carry on a losing trade at this Settlement, As all the encouragement & presents that I have distributed amongst em in hopes of increasing [sic] the trade of this place has proved fruitless.⁸⁰

The Hudson's Bay Company house remained open only another two winters. During that time, Good and his people were as much concerned with catching rabbits for food as procuring furs. In 1809-10, Hugh Cooper and John Knight tented at Whitefish River beside the Nor'Westers, who successfully used threats of violence against them to obtain the majority of the hunts.⁸¹

The following autumn, J. Richard and William Leask were sent to tent at Conaisee River, Thomas Knight and James Heddle to Whitefish River and John Knight and Hugh Cooper to Cootoocgamay River.⁸² The tenters at Cootoocgamay River, in January, were obliged to move their tent "a distance on this side of our Opponents;" few rabbits could be caught where they were located, and the Indians were reluctant to bring their furs to them because of the presence of the opposition.⁸³ Knight and Heddle abandoned their tent at Whitefish River and returned to Abitibi House at the beginning of April, having been unable to catch sufficient rabbits to maintain themselves. They did not procure one pelt during their period of residence. All the furs went to the

Canadians, who were tenting within sight of them. The hunters usually arrived at the Canadian tent during the night, and when they did come during the day, they left their hunts at a distance.⁸⁴ The Nor'Westers were unopposed at Cochegec, and obtained there six bundles of furs. In contrast to this, Good had only seven bundles in his house at the end of May.⁸⁵

The natives of the Lake Abitibi region showed themselves less inclined each year to trade with Good, and by 1809-10, the Nor'Westers no longer had to employ threats and violence against them to secure the major part of their hunts. Orders had been sent to Moose by the London Committee to eliminate those outposts considered unproductive, for Napoleon's Continental System had left the company with large stocks of unsold furs. Accordingly, Abitibi House was evacuated at the end of the 1810-11 outfit.⁸⁶

Five years later, during the winter of 1815-16, George Gladman passed through Lake Abitibi on his way to Montreal and visited Alexander McDougall, who was still in charge of Lake Abitibi, and his clerk Thomas Frazer. Gladman remarks in his journal, "this was originally our House, built on an Island near this point, but taken down by the Canadians and rebuilt here upon our abandoning this post in 1812."⁸⁷ This statement indicates that it was not too distant from the former site, and was on the mainland opposite the island.

Gladman was given a cold reception by McDougall, who expatiated upon the ill treatment Canadian traders had received from the Hudson's Bay Company. At one point in the conversation, McDougall remarked that "he did not know whether he did his duty in not stopping" Gladman and his party. When Gladman defied McDougall to stop him, he explained that he did not mean that he would restrain him physically, but that he would prevent him from obtaining an Indian to guide him beyond Lake Abitibi.⁸⁸ Gladman, how-

ever, found his way to Fort Coulonge without the aid of a guide from Lake Abitibi.

Aeneas Cameron settled in Montreal in 1804, and was replaced at Témiscamingue by Donald McKay, formerly at Mattagami.⁸⁹ When Gladman visited Témiscamingue on his journey between London and Moose in 1814, he found Alexander McDougall temporarily in charge. Gladman writes that McDougall had "but one man with him, but says he has four men at the upper end of the Lake making Hay; here are 6 or 7 Cattle and some Poultry, about the Houses, the buildings are all in a ruinous state, very unlike the appearance they made when I was here before."⁹⁰

Two years later, Gladman again passed through Lake Témiscamingue, this time travelling between Albany and London, bearing the information that the Eddystone had been unable to leave the bay because of ice. He was given "a most kind reception" by the master, Donald McKay, and was invited to pass a day or two in "this hospitable Mansion" and refresh himself, which he readily accepted. As Gladman's provisions were insufficient for his long and arduous voyage to Montreal, McKay graciously offered to add to them.⁹¹

After the abandonment of Frederick House in 1813, the closest post to Témiscamingue maintained by the Hudson's Bay Company was Kenogamissi Lake House, which was opposed by two Canadian houses, Mattagami and the Flying Post.⁹² George McBride was in charge of Flying Post.⁹³ The Canadian House at Frederick Lake was closed in 1812. Subsequently, there were six posts in the Témiscamingue department: Témiscamingue, Abitibi, Grand Lac, Waswanipi, Mattagami and Flying Post. Angus Cameron, the nephew of Aeneas Cameron, was at Mattagami and Andrew McPherson at Grand Luc.⁹⁴

Until 1816, McDougall was in charge of the Témiscamingue department. On his retirement that year, he was replaced by Donald McKay. When McKay died in 1820, George McBride,

though still a clerk, succeeded him. Two years later, Angus Cameron became master of Témiscamingue on the sudden death of McBride.⁹⁵

During its period under North West Company control, Lake Témiscamingue department apparently answered directly to Montreal. The wintering partners at Témiscamingue House never attended the annual gatherings at Fort William.⁹⁶

Kenogamissi

The live and let-live policy at Kenogamissi changed when Thomas Vincent, the governor of the newly created Southern Department, in 1814-15 began an ambitious project of resuscitating his company's declining trade in the area north of Lake Superior; he eventually desired to exclude the Canadians from this territory, which he considered to be within his company's charter. He directed that an outpost from Kenogamissi should be established at Mattagami Lake in the summer of 1814.⁹⁷ Its founder, George Budge, found that the Indians would "not dare look at strangers," being afraid of the Nor'Westers,⁹⁸ and few furs were received the first year. Budge fared no better the ensuing winter when two of his men deserted.⁹⁹

It is not certain whether Budge built beside the Canadians. The house he occupied in 1814-15 burned to the ground while he was at Moose for the summer. The Canadians disclaimed responsibility for the fire.¹⁰⁰ Angus Cameron, the Canadian master, treated his opponents "very civilly" during their two winters' residence;¹⁰¹ he might have acted differently had they posed a threat to his trade.

The Canadians responded to Vincent's action by settling, in the autumn of 1815, on Kenogamissi Lake. John Grant, Cameron's assistant, and two men, selected a site two miles below Kenogamissi House.¹⁰² This new house competed suc-

cessfully, and considerably injured Kenogamissi's trade in the succeeding years. Meanwhile, the Hudson's Bay Company outpost at Mattagami, having failed to procure a single pelt in 1816-17 under James Kellock, was closed.¹⁰³ Vincent's ambitions in this quarter had led only to the weakening of his position, and Kenogamissi was hard-pressed to get its share of the trade; the Nor'Westers often took by force furs destined for it.¹⁰⁴ In 1816-17, Grant had three men.¹⁰⁵ Hugh McBride was at Kakatoosh.¹⁰⁶

Two Nor'Westers also resided at Wowayaston Carrying Place in the autumn of 1815, and Good was required, in November, to dispatch two men, James Kellock and David Marwick, to oppose them.¹⁰⁷ By the end of December, the Canadians, lacking adequate provisions, had left for Mattagami. Good's men, however, remained for the winter, hunting rabbits.¹⁰⁸

Men were occasionally stationed by Alexander Stewart, who became master of Kinoogumisee district in 1816-17, at Wowayaston Carrying Place during the winters of 1816-17 and 1817-18 for the purpose of intercepting the Indians and hunting.¹⁰⁹

Some time in the autumn of 1815, probably in October, Joseph Turner journeyed to Pushquagamy Lake (perhaps Modern Horwood Lake), 40 miles to the eastward of Kenogamissi, and constructed either a house or a log tent.¹¹⁰ He passed the latter part of the winter with two men, John Bead and J. Louttitt. The two men returned to Kenogamissi at the end of March with a paltry 49 MB, leaving behind Turnor, who was short of provisions.¹¹¹ Grant went there during the early summer; however, Turnor by then had debted most of the hunters for the following year.¹¹² The outpost was reoccupied in 1816-17,¹¹³ but was given up the succeeding winter.

After the abandonment of Pushquagamy Lake, Joseph Turnor was shifted to Wyaskash Lake¹¹⁴ and given two men. It is

not certain whether he resided there the whole winter. We learn only that he and his men left in December with 100 MB.¹¹⁵ Both Turnor, with three hands, and the Canadians, whose master's name is unknown, wintered at Wyaskash Lake in 1817-18.¹¹⁶ Turnor's tent was "about 1 1/2 miles from the mouth of the river"¹¹⁷ which led into the lake. The site of the Canadian house is not stated. Turnor, at times, forcibly prevented hunters from reaching his opponents, and had his men constantly passing throughout the region.¹¹⁸ Peter Spence, the master of "Kinoogumisee district," wrote in his report for 1818-19, "Wyaskash Post only being settled the two preceeding winter, they also have dwelt in Log Tents."¹¹⁹

The Canadian house on Kenogamissi Lake was not in operation in 1819-20, and until January 1820, the men previously assigned to it were concentrated on Wyaskash Lake. The officer in charge, David Stewart, had two clerks and four men. Stewart departed in January, 1820, and may have taken most or all of his men with him.¹²⁰ Turnor was there again in 1820-21, and was unopposed.¹²¹

Peter Spence at Kenogamissi received six additional men in the summer of 1817 to re-establish the old settlement at Frederick House Lake. Three men, including James Kellock, went there in October 1817, and two others were sent later in the winter.¹²² Kellock and his men, according to Peter Spence, dwelt in log tents;¹²³ Spence does not indicate whether they were on the former site of Frederick House. No Canadians were seen until spring, when Stewart and a clerk spent a short time there. Stewart could obtain little,¹²⁴ as Kellock had already collected most of the hunts. Kellock obtained 170 MB.¹²⁵

The ensuing year, Kellock again was given four men for Frederick House Lake,¹²⁶ but only one remained throughout the winter. This year trade was improved, totalling

433 MB,¹²⁷ and there is no mention of Nor'Westers. Henry Lawson replaced Kellock in 1819-20.¹²⁸ Early in the spring of 1820, a tent, which had been used as a warehouse, was consumed by fire, and a considerable part of the company's property was lost.¹²⁹ It was rebuilt the following winter by Lawson and his two men.¹³⁰

In 1817-18, the Canadians settled a new post somewhere to the westward of Kakatoosh (Flying Post).¹³¹

On the union of the two companies in 1821, Kenogamissi House and its outposts were closed, and the two North West Company posts in operation that winter, Mattagami and Kakatoosh, were the only establishments in Kinoogumisee district.

New Brunswick House and Michipicoten

As has been seen, Moze abandoned Michipicoten in the spring of 1803 and Thomas disavowed the agreement signed with McGillivray. There is no evidence that Thomas subsequently concluded an arrangement with any of the partners of the North West Company, but the Canadians withdrew from New Brunswick at the end of the 1803-04 season. They did not return until September 1812, when six men settled not too far away from the Hudson's Bay Company post, although well screened by trees from its view. The two sides engaged in an active competition, and the Nor'Westers seem to have gotten a considerable part of the trade. In May, the Canadian master, having run short of provisions, retired to Michipicoten; while he was gone, John Mannall, his opponent, cleared the wood between the two houses.¹³²

Donald McIntosh, who formerly had been in charge at Mattagami, returned with three men in August 1813. He was more vigorous and capable than John Euston, Mannall's replacement. Euston lamented:

My Neighbour McIntosh thinks nothing of robbing the Indians whither they are due him or not. he makes all his own he can get his hands upon. he is a greedy [_____], and pays no regard to honor or honesty.¹³³

Canadian men tented beside the Indians, and so strict a watch was kept on the Hudson's Bay Company house that rarely was a hunter able to enter it. In October, one of Euston's men was robbed.¹³⁴ McKintosh departed for Michipicoten at the end of June, leaving a man to tend his house.¹³⁵

John Euston, in his report of 1813-14, describes both his and his opponent's house in the following manner:

New Brunswick House is situated on a point fronting the North East. three miles from the head of a creek which empties in the Main River about eight or nine miles below the house. this lake is about 12 miles in length and not I believe above 1 3/4 in breadth. with several Islands, is ab 290 or 300 miles distant from Moose.

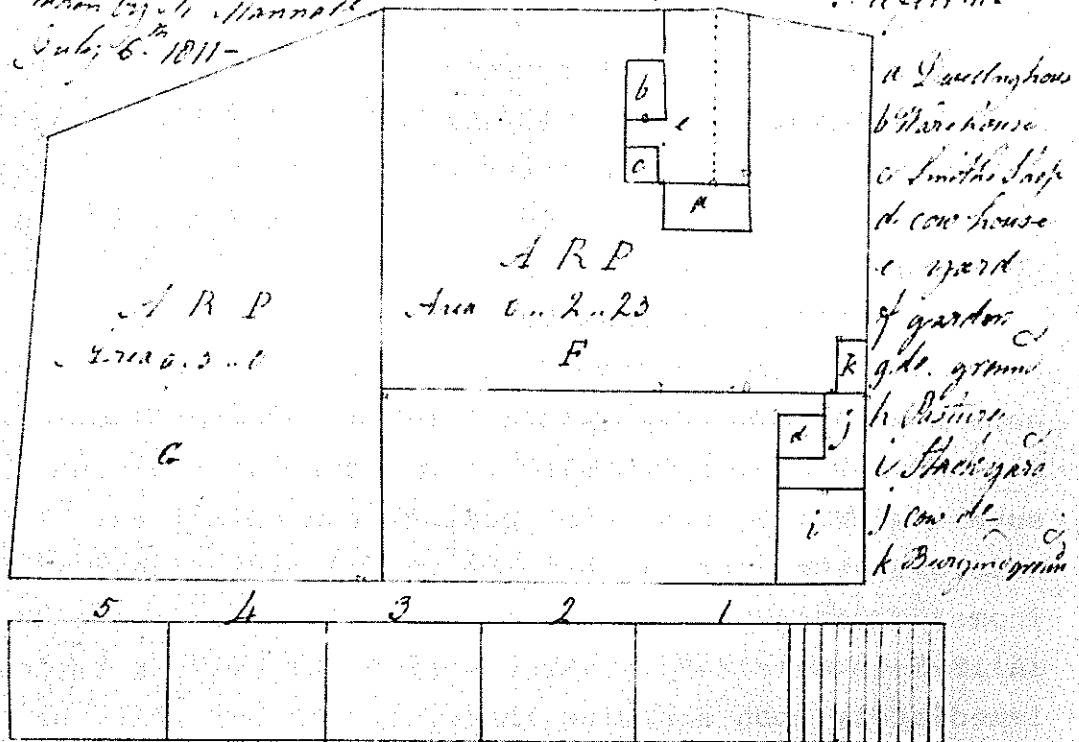
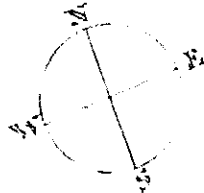
The Houses are built of squair [sic] logs. weather boarded on the outside, with one floor up stairs and a garret. the warehouse is only one room high and a garret, weather boarded on the outside the same as the dwelling house. [136]

The Canadian Masters House is built of sqaire logs, about 20 feet in length and 14 or 15 in breadth, roofed with cedar bark and earth, there warehouse and Mens is built of round logs match'd in the corners and roofed in the same manner as the Masters house, each of these are about 16 or 18 feet in length and 12 or 14 in breadth. they have cleared about one acre of ground and planted potatoes and other vegetable therein.¹³⁷

- 3 "Plan of New Brunswick taken by Mr. Mannall, July 6th, 1811." (Hudson's Bay Company, B.145/e/1/702, 1811.)



4 Plan of
New Broomfield
taken by G. Hannell
July 6th 1811-



A Scale of Links

- 4th The soil in general near and about the House is clayey with a small surface of black earth.
- 5th The gardens within the large spaciades, is tolerably or may be called well cultivated. grows turnips cabbage Potatoes carrots peaspice onions cucumbers &c &c. The fields about the house yields tolerable grass for pasture. but no hay.
- 6th See the fourth paragraph, on the first head. both quantity and quality of the natural production are already explained.
- 7th I am not able to speak to the practicability of extent the cultivation may be brought to - but there is several

acres

In 1814-15, both McIntosh and George Gladman, Euston's replacement, placed outposts at Meashaquagamy and Wappisaticat lakes. Gladman's house at Wappisaticat Lake [also written Waupissattiga Lake], built by Alex Johnston and John Richards, attracted few Indians.¹³⁸ The trade at Meashaquagamy house, founded by William Leask and Thomas Richards for the Hudson's Bay Company, was equally as unproductive, and provisions were scarce. Competition was animated but fair at the three locations, as Gladman was more capable than his predecessor, and McIntosh could not take the same liberties that he had the year before. McIntosh again left one man at New Brunswick for the summer.¹³⁹

In its instructions for 1814, the London Committee ordered the superintendents of the Northern and Southern departments to winter at a centrally located post inland, giving them the opportunity of personally co-ordinating and supervising the opposition against the Canadians. If possible, they were to enforce the company's charter.¹⁴⁰ Thomas Vincent, the superintendent of the Southern Department, in 1815-16 selected New Brunswick as his winter residence. Immediately upon arriving there, in October 1815, he ordered Charles McCormick, who had replaced Gladman, to pitch

Upon a spot in front of the Canadian Master's house to build a watch-house on, to prevent any of the natives carrying their furs to the Canadian Settlement. When Mr. Morrison [McIntosh's successor] threatened to build a house close to the Hudson's Bay Company House if this design were implemented Vincent told him that if he attempted anything of the kind we would throw his logs, or materials into the Lake; and if he showed any resistance we would make him a prisoner.¹⁴¹

Nevertheless, Morrison, McIntosh's successor, staked out a piece of ground on the west side of McCormick's house when

the latter began laying the foundation of the watch-house. For want of logs, Morrison pitched a tent. Thereupon, McCormick ordered him to remove it immediately or he would order it to be thrown into the lake. Morrison at first refused, but when he saw that McCormick was determined to remove the tent, he ordered his men to take it down.¹⁴²

The watch-house was completed by the end of October, and a man and a boy were stationed there from time to time. In addition, McCormick set up marten traps from the "bottom of the small Lake to the upper entrance of the Beaver creek," an area about six miles in circumference. They completely surrounded the Canadian establishment so that none of Morrison's men could pass without McCormick's knowledge. Marten traps were also set between the lake and Missinaibi River, which was part of the track to Lake Waupissattiga.¹⁴³

Despite this ill-treatment, Morrison did give McCormick provisions during the winter; the lack of supplies was occasioned by the failure of the ship to reach Moose in the summer of 1815.¹⁴⁴ Supplies were purchased during the summer of 1816 by Lord Selkirk from Sault Ste. Marie for the posts inland.¹⁴⁵

When the ice began to break up in May, McCormick stationed two men permanently in the watch-house and Morrison pitched his tent beside it. In the space of two weeks, one hunter reached the North West Company house, while McCormick received 700 MB. McCormick's activities made Morrison "very cross at times," but he was careful not to do anything with which McCormick could find fault.¹⁴⁶ Two men were left by Morrison to care for his post during the summer.

During the winter of 1815-16, two Nor'Westers were stationed at Gulls Ground (probably Gull Lake), and McCormick's men were there during the spring.¹⁴⁷ Three men were sent, at the end of November, by McCormick to Waupissattiga Lake, where Nor'Westers had established themselves. His men en-

countered considerable hardships during the winter, and neither side obtained much trade.¹⁴⁸

At the end of August 1815, McCormick dispatched a Mr. Johnstone and two men to settle beside the Canadians on Mattagami Lake. Johnstone reported in January 1816:

We arrived here the 7th of Sept and found Jno Brown, (a free man) staying in the Canadian house, which they have removed further in the woods that the old established place was a few years ago: but I thought proper to settle at the old place, as the Indians from their quarters have got very large debts from them, and do not like to come on that account openly to us....The Canadians have built a house about 16 feet from ours where one man has remained since the fall.¹⁴⁹

Governor Vincent observed, in 1817, that it was 20 miles inside the lake, "nearly opposite this part of the Lake on the N.W. side is a large Island, nearly opposite to the middle of which is a Canadian settlement where a clerk & two men winter & where we also have an Outpost from New Brunswick to oppose them."¹⁵⁰

Johnstone did not receive any furs all winter,¹⁵¹ and by March he and his men were on the point of starvation. Brown kindly sent Johnstone's two men, Beads and Clouston, to Michipicoten for provisions.¹⁵² By the end of spring, Johnstone had traded only 100 MB.¹⁵³

An outpost was also established, in the summer of 1815, by McCormick's predecessor, George Gladman, at "Capoonacaugamy Lake" (Kabinakagami Lake). Peter Spence and three men reached the lake on 20 July and settled "about two miles North of the river we came out at, on a point." Spence adds:

I have built a small house on what I think the best for vegetation 28 feet by 17, about 100 yards nigher the point, which will command a more ex-

tensive view of the general passes of the natives.

I have taken possession of these two places in

case out opponents may visit us.¹⁵⁴

Donald McIntosh, now in charge of Michipicoten, decided that John Brown should oppose Spence. Brown founded a post in October, but seems to have divided his time between it and Mattagami.¹⁵⁵ Reinforcements were sent to Kabinakagami Lake by McCormick during the winter for fear that the Canadians would be reinforced in the spring, and Spence was replaced by Jacob Truthwaite. One man deserted to the Canadians. Truthwaite returned to New Brunswick with 400 MB. After his departure, both companies' houses were consumed by fire.¹⁵⁶ At the end of June, Truthwaite returned to Kabinakagami Lake directly from Moose, in order to prevent further desertions.¹⁵⁷

In the summer of 1816, Vincent, as part of his strategy to cripple the trade of the Canadians in the area under his jurisdiction, ordered Richard Good to re-establish Michipicoten House. Vincent used the seizure of an Albany packet by Donald McIntosh, at Michipicoten, as his pretext. Good's post was 10 miles from the portage.¹⁵⁸ Andrew Stewart, Good's successor, in June 1818 gives the following description of it.

The State of this Post with regard to the Buildings are as follows, one Masters house 14 ft by 17 ft containing two small apartments, one store house 15 ft by 18 ft, one Mens house 13 ft. by 27 ft. and one small house where Patrick McNulty and family (the Colonists) lived during last Winter, the two better houses were built in Septr. It is my intention to convert the Mens house into a Store and the Store house to be filled up for the Men, as the latter is far too small as a Store house, nearly a sufficient number of logs

are got home for building a new dwelling house for the Master.¹⁵⁹

In his report the ensuing June, Stewart says:

Since the last Michippicoton Annual Report we have completely finished erecting two good habitational Houses one of which (the Masters' residence) is 32 feet by 22, the other as the Mens dwelling or 20 feet by 12, both houses are covered on the Roofs with Weatherboarding, the side walls are also Weatherboarded. The foundation of another Store 30 feet by 17 laid in May for which the Posts and Sidewall logs are on the Spot, besides sufficient Timber has been cut about eight miles from the house for covering the Roof and weatherboarding the Sidewalls and most of the logs have been rafted to the house in the spring.

We have lately built a log house of 10 feet long, 7 feet broad and 7 feet high, four feet under the Surface of the Earth for the purpose of Keeping Potatoes during Winter.¹⁶⁰

This establishment served as a victualling station for passing canoes¹⁶¹ and a depot for provisions, which were purchased by Stewart from Mr. Ermatinger, a merchant at Sault Ste. Marie. These supplies were designed to supplement those received at Moose from England, and this measure immediately proved beneficial, because the supply ship did not reach Moose in 1817-18.

Few furs were received by Stewart in 1817-18,¹⁶² and trade was "very trifling" in 1818-19.¹⁶³ The Canadians' receipts, however, were also poor, and only the revenue from their interior establishments permitted them to sustain Michipicoten. In 1817-18, the Canadian outposts from Michipicoten were New Brunswick,¹⁶⁴ and Mattagami: the

latter was opposed by an outpost from New Brunswick under Richard Good, with two men.¹⁶⁵ The two Canadian outposts were again open the following winter. In 1818-19, McIntosh had a house at Batchawana Bay, manned by an "old Canadian trader" and three men.¹⁶⁶ Gabriel Franchère had passed a couple of days in the summer of 1814 at "a poor little post in charge of a Mr. Goedike [Frederick Goedike]" in Batchawana Bay.¹⁶⁷

At New Brunswick, McCormick, in 1816-17, again received the major portion of the trade. Morrison was careful not to give him cause for complaint, because Lord Selkirk was at Fort William and McCormick had sent men to arrest Donald McIntosh at Michipicoten, and John Robertson, a Hudson's Bay Company deserter. Outposts were maintained by Morrison at Gulls Ground, Mattagami and Waupissattiga to intercept the trade before it reached New Brunswick, but McCormick countered by settling in opposition to them.¹⁶⁸

Two Nor'Westers resided at Gulls Ground until the end of January, when they were forced to withdraw because they were "almost starving." McCormick's two men passed the entire winter there. At Mattagami four men, including Spence, wintered for McCormick. Spence was replaced by Alex Johnstone at the beginning of December, but as the latter showed little ability and expended his provisions too rapidly, he was in turn removed and replaced in February by Alexander McElwaine.¹⁶⁹ The trade at Mattagami was poor this winter.

Kabinakagami Lake was more productive, though the furs were purchased at a high price, because the Canadian, Brown, liberally distributed liquor.¹⁷⁰ The houses, which had been burned the previous spring, were rebuilt.

The Canadians wintered at Waupissattiga Lake, and on 22 October, Charles Beads and his wife were sent there in

opposition.¹⁷¹ Another man was later dispatched to aid Beads, but he was of little use; he refused to work and complained of ailments.¹⁷²

Morrison was replaced in 1817-18 by David Holmes, who apparently passed most of the winter in an inebriated state. At the end of May, he visited McCormick's house in "almost a deranged state of mind," having eaten little or no food the previous few days. McCormick gave him something to calm his nerves. The following day, Holmes attempted to commit suicide. When McCormick reached the Canadian house, he found two men attempting to extricate a knife from his hand. McCormick succeeded in wresting it away but not before Holmes had given himself a superficial wound on his throat.¹⁷³ As a result of Holmes' inactivity, McCormick's trade increased this winter.

Both outposts at Mattagami were retained. Philip Good was McCormick's representative and Brown his opponent.¹⁷⁴ Few furs were received by either.¹⁷⁵

Truthwaite wintered at Kabinakagami Lake. The Canadians, after debting their hunters in the autumn, left¹⁷⁶ and did not return until the middle of March.¹⁷⁷ Country provisions were scarce, and some natives were forced to eat their furs to survive; consequently, the Hudson's Bay Company's trade was not as productive as in the previous year, while the Canadians obtained "little or nothing."¹⁷⁸ Want of food was also general in the Waupassattiga Lake region, and neither McCormick's men, Charles Beads and two others, nor their opponents conducted a fruitful trade.¹⁷⁹ Two of McCormick's men spent the winter on Gull Lake, and Nor'Westers were either there throughout this period or visited it from time to time.¹⁸⁰

McCormick again had a numerical superiority in 1818-19, and received the majority of the trade at New Brunswick. He re-occupied his outposts at Kabinokagami, Gull Lake and

Waupissattiga. The outpost at Mattagami was placed under the supervision of Michipicoten.¹⁸¹

Truthwaite was unopposed at Kabinakagami throughout the winter months. A Mr. Rousseau from Michipicoten may have been there in March,¹⁸² but Truthwaite makes no mention of him in his reports to McCormick. John Clouston was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Waupissattiga; it is not certain whether he had opposition,¹⁸³ but in the spring McCormick sent him reinforcements.¹⁸⁴ Despite the fact that McCormick's men at Gull Lake, William Leask and William Craigie, had a penchant for liquor and quarrelled with each other,¹⁸⁵ they did receive more furs than their opponents.

Augustin Nolin, a free trader at Sault Ste. Marie, in the summer of 1818 equipped a party under the command of his clerk, Dufont, to compete with the Hudson's Bay Company house at Kabinakagami.¹⁸⁶ On his journey, Dufont stopped at Michipicoten, and he was persuaded by Stewart to change his destination to Mattagami where he would oppose the Nor'Westers. Dufont and Stewart signed an agreement whereby each would supply an equal amount of goods and share the returns equally.¹⁸⁷

Meanwhile, George Monin, one of Stewart's men, was given the task of founding and supervising the outpost,¹⁸⁸ but he was relieved of command in September because of his addiction to liquor and replaced by Dufont. There were four Canadians with Dufont at the outpost,¹⁸⁹ and only two of Stewart's men, including Monin. The receipts were not as high as expected and the post lost money. Yet the Canadians lost less than the Hudson's Bay Company; they outnumbered Stewart's men five to two, and consequently received the greater part of the wages.¹⁹⁰ In addition, when Monin conducted an inventory at the end of May, he discovered that 20 martens were missing, and Dufont was accused of stealing them.¹⁹¹

In December, Dufont dispatched one man and three natives to hunt for a time in the vicinity of Kabinakagami Lake. Governor Vincent considered this an infringement upon the agreement. It prompted him to remark that in future all free traders would be vigorously opposed, for if they were successful, it would encourage others from Sault Ste. Marie to "inundate these parts and totally destroy the few Beavers left."¹⁹² Vincent held Nolin entirely responsible for Dufont's conduct, and this affair was not closed without a couple of years of wrangling. John Brown, with three men, represented the Canadians at Mattagami.¹⁹³

In reaction to Dufont's presence at Mattagami, McIntosh, in the spring of 1819, stationed one of his clerks at Michipicoten, Mr. Rousseau, and two men from Mattagami at Kabinakagami.¹⁹⁴ Two men resided throughout the winter of 1819-20 for McIntosh at Kabinakagami.¹⁹⁵ A new post was apparently established in 1819-20 at Batchewana Bay by another of McIntosh's clerks, François Hilliery, who had only one man.¹⁹⁶ Six packs, about 400 MB, were traded in 1819-20 by the Canadian post at New Brunswick, while Mattagami, where Brown resided with two men, and Kabinakagami together obtained 9 1/2 packs.¹⁹⁷

The failure of the outpost at Mattagami, and McIntosh's reaction to it convinced Stewart that it would be foolhardy to winter there again. John Murphy, who replaced McCormick in the autumn of 1819 at New Brunswick, desired to retain the post, but did not have any men to spare. He wrote a series of letters soliciting Stewart's aid.¹⁹⁸ Stewart, however, maintained that it would prove unprofitable, and could induce Brown at Mattagami to apply to McIntosh, who had two clerks and four men, for a couple of men to settle at Missinaibi or elsewhere.¹⁹⁹

Some time before the summer of 1820, McIntosh erected a watch-house beside Stewart. At the end of July 1820, Stewart

commenced putting up a range of pickets nine feet high between his men's dwelling house and the watch-house, placed to within five feet of the latter. The pickets were set "quite close to each other," preventing the Canadians from "seeing anything beyond the distance of five feet."²⁰⁰

McIntosh demanded their removal from his watch-house to "the distance of at least one half the space," but Stewart would not yield, and McIntosh did not press his point.²⁰¹

As has been seen, Holmes tolerated McCormick's overbearing conduct only because of his numerical inferiority and Lord Selkirk's presence at Fort William. Selkirk had departed by 1819. On 25 August 1819, while visiting McCormick, Holmes defended his company's conduct in the "Athabasca Affair," and slighted the character and conduct of Governor Williams. This led to an exchange of insults and ultimately to a challenge by one of McCormick's men, Mr. Corcoran, to a duel. Holmes declined, but "stood up to exert his skill at Pugilism." Corcoran took up the challenge and "beat and kick'd him to his own house."²⁰²

The following day, Holmes returned to McCormick's house to apologize in the "most humiliating manner," and invited McCormick to pass the evening at his house. That evening, the conversation on the "Athabasca Affair" was resumed. Holmes said something in French to one of his men, who returned with something concealed behind his back. When he declined to reveal what he was hiding, he was knocked down by Corcoran, and then was disarmed of a pistol which was loaded and ready-cocked. Corcoran struck Holmes with the butt end of the pistol, and then both he and McCormick left the house, retaining the weapon.²⁰³ Subsequently, Holmes asserted that his man had taken the pistol on his own initiative, having feared that the conversation would degenerate into a quarrel. Although McCormick did not believe him, he returned the pistol. He forbade his men in future

to associate or converse with the Canadians.²⁰⁴

Soon afterward, McCormick was replaced by Mr. Murphy,²⁰⁵ who immediately reoccupied the watch tower. Holmes passed much of the winter of 1819-20 in drinking, and this did not escape the attention of Donald McIntosh, who had returned to Michipicoten after being released by Lord Selkirk. McIntosh sent a man to New Brunswick to investigate his conduct,²⁰⁶ and at the end of the trading season, he replaced Holmes with a Mr. Clarke.

Murphy, at the beginning of March 1820, dispatched John Vincent to settle at Capuscasee (Kapuskasung Lake), but he failed to reach his destination. On his return to New Brunswick, Vincent was directed to go to Michipicoten for supplies, and from there he was to proceed to Missinaibi Lake.²⁰⁷ Murphy, before replacing McCormick, had led a party to Missinaibi Lake in November 1818, but the advent of bad weather had forced his return to New Brunswick. He came within two miles of the place where he had been the previous year (1817-18).²⁰⁸ Vincent reached Missinaibi Lake by May, and apparently constructed a new wintering post.

When he returned in the autumn of 1819 to Kabinakagami Lake, Truthwaite discovered that the Nor'Westers had passed the summer there and had received a considerable number of furs.²⁰⁹ The Canadians remained the entire winter of 1819-20.²¹⁰

Murphy repaired the watch-house at New Brunswick in the autumn of 1820 and manned it both day and night during the spring.²¹¹ As a result, Clarke received only four packs of "very indifferent furs," one and one-half fewer than Holmes had in the previous winter, and three fewer than in any former year.²¹² After learning, in May, about the coalition of the two companies, Clarke placed his goods in Murphy's warehouse, and at the beginning of June departed for Michipicoten with his furs.²¹³

Competition was so animated at the outposts in 1820-21 that a large part of the provisions and goods of both companies at New Brunswick and Michipicoten were consumed. McIntosh maintained posts at Mattagami, Missinaibi and Kapuskasing lakes. At Kapuskasing, he stationed four men, the same number as his opponents. The Hudson's Bay Company's post was founded by James Crookshanks.²¹⁴

Brown, with two men, spent part of the winter at Mattagami, where he was unopposed. Stewart, at Michipicoten, declined to challenge him, arguing that a post at Mattagami would be unproductive. Murphy countered that an establishment there would prevent the Canadians from annoying his outpost at Kabinakagami and concentrating more men at New Brunswick, but Stewart was adamant in his refusal.²¹⁵ As Murphy was already maintaining outposts at lakes Kabinakagami, Missinaibi, Wauppissattiga, Washoggomy and Kapuskasing, he could not spare sufficient men for a new settlement.

John Clouston and Drummond Craigie wintered for Murphy at Washoggomy Lake. Their house was situated "in a small Bay of the lake not far from the Creek" through which they had entered the lake. During the winter, the two men were killed, probably by natives, and their bodies were mutilated.²¹⁶

McIntosh, in the autumn of 1820, stationed Brown and two men at Mattagami and two men at Kabinakagami.²¹⁷ Murphy sent John Corcoran and Charles Beads to Missinaibi Lake. In January, McIntosh withdrew his men from Kabinakagami, dispatched one to reinforce Mattagami, and recalled the other to Michipicoten, where he was given supplies and goods to settle at Missinaibi.²¹⁸ Brown resided at the latter lake for two months, but did not obtain "even a rat-skin" before he left at the beginning of April.²¹⁹ The Canadians also retained their post at Batchewana.²²⁰

During the winter, Brown and three men attempted to arrest Corcoran, alledging that he had incited one of his men to attack a Nor'Wester. Corcoran resisted, and Brown decided against resorting to violence.²²¹

Murphy continued to press Stewart for an outpost at Mattagami and Stewart finally consented to establish one in the spring.²²² Before a party could be equipped, Alexander McKenzie arrived at Michipicoten with the news of the union of the two companies.

Because of the high prices charged by Ermatinger for his provisions, Governor Vincent determined, in April 1820, that in the future New Brunswick would be supplied entirely from Moose, and Michipicoten would be used only as a haven for canoes in distress passing through Lake Superior. By 1820-21, canoes crossing the lake were frequently calling at Michipicoten for provisions. Vincent ordered that Stewart should sell nothing to "passing strangers" except in cases of urgent necessity. Nor could they expect "regular supplies" or provisions at Michipicoten while navigation was open, as they could conveniently purchase them at Sault Ste. Marie or Point Meuron. The governor judged that country provisions would be adequate for both the men at Michipicoten and the canoes in distress.²²³

New Brunswick was still supplied, in 1820-21, from Michipicoten,²²⁴ and it was not until the end of the 1820s that Governor Simpson succeeded in cutting the dependence of his interior posts on Canadian goods and provisions. Subsequently, the supplies were brought to Michipicoten from Moose, and then distributed to the establishments in Lake Huron district.

Vincent, in his report for the Southern Department in 1820, writes about Michipicoten,

This place was established as a Provision post or depot to supply travellers passing to and from the

the Northern Department to Canada, no trade is procured at it nor do I expect any ever will at best not worth speaking of; it is a heavy burden on the Southern Department and no benefit to it whatever.²²⁵

The voyageurs from Moose were treated in a royal fashion on their arrival at Michipicoten. George Keith writes for 7 July 1830,

our hardy Voyageurs were immediately after delivering the Goods indulged with a rigale consisting of 100 lbs Flour 50 lbs Mess Pork 25 lbs Tallow 36 lbs Maple Sugar 20 lbs Tobacco and Six Gallons Rum - This was allotted to twenty six hired Servants - The five Indians employed received a separate portion of these articles and both Parties seemed perfectly satisfied -²²⁶

It is probable that the North West Company house was used after the coalition of 1821, for Stewart and four of his five men departed from Michipicoten.²²⁷

John Murphy writes in his 1819-20 report for New Brunswick, "We have completely enclosed with stockades of 10 feet in length two acres of new ground." Timber was sawed for

a new men's house intended to consist of an upper and lower apartments of 24 feet in length by 16 in breath. We have also timber collected and most of it is square for a new store.²²⁸

In this report for 1820-21, Murphy gives a detailed description of his post:

The old establishment consists of a two storey house of 32 feet in length by 18 in depth at one end is added a room which the men sleep in a store or warehouse with cellar & loft. A

wainscotting (thin board & forge: & fish shed of the same. these are surrounded by a high stockading which also encloses a of [] acre. On the south immediately outside of this stockading is an excellent byre and hay yard surrounded by a lower range of stockading. There is another enclosure called by these people "a park" of about 2 acres, the range of stockading which surrounds this of the same height with that of the hay yard (5 feet) at the end of this park which lies to the West of the high stockading or fort is a saw house. In the house the Master, clerks and all the people reside. In the year 1817/18 the interior underneath a total alteration much for the better and much to the accommodation and comfort of the inhabitants. This house has now a very great inclination to the south end indeed at a short distance one is afraid of seeing it fall down or upset; this inclination has been caused by the action of the sun and water on the bottom logs producing in them a rot: We must either replace the foundation or throw down the house altogether and rebuild it. The store may do yet with a small repair as may also the byre; the forge we removed last fall from one side of the fort (the W side) to the other, this was done in prosecution of a plan of improvement designed in the preceeding year. All the old stockading must be renewed. The convulsive efforts of our opponents left us little leisure to turn our attention to improvements in the building ect. We have however built up a new house of good squared timber, the house is 24 feet in length by 10 in breadth, it is in-

tended for a mens dwelling house: We have also laid the foundation of a store 20 feet by 18 and have square timber on the spot to finish it. We have begun and expect will finish this summer a new range of stockading which united to the range [_____] up last year will completely supply the old stockading in rear of the old plantation besides giving us 4 acres more of ground making in all 8 acres. The rest of the old stockading must be renewed as fast as possible. it becomes the more necessary now as a defence against the evil designs of the vagabond Indians who having no longer our rapacious thirst of gain to take advantage of must turn either to labour or murder probably the latter as to them the lesser evil.²²⁹

George Gladman wrote on 1 June 1823:

State of the Post- at the present time, the building here are in general in a state of de-lapidation & decay- a new Mens House has been partly built but for want of a person competent to carry it on it remains in the same condition as left by Chs. Beads last fall- a foundation for a Provisions store has been laid, but nothing further has been done towards the completion of it.²³⁰

Ottawa River 1793-1821

There are no accounts of the posts on the Ottawa River for three decades after Alexander Henry's 1761 narrative. In 1793, John McDonnell followed the same route westward as Henry. He mentions no trading post until he reached the Portage des Chats. "Just below" the portage there was "a pretty farm which was formerly a place of some trade."²³¹

No post had yet been established in Lac des Chats. The next settlement which he sighted was Fort Coulonge, which he described as "a sorry hut, situated near the foot of the Mountains."²³² The last one he saw before reaching Sault Ste. Marie was Rivière Dumoine.²³³

Daniel Harmon relates, in his diary for 1800, that the North West Company had "a small establishment" at the Chats.²³⁴ The only other post in operation which he notes is Fort Coulonge.²³⁵ At Grand Calumet Portage, he saw a house which formerly had been active in the trade, but had been closed for several years, as those who had hunted there had gone further north.²³⁶

Between 1801 and 1805, the North West Company and the short-lived XY Company actively competed along the Ottawa River. In 1802-03, the principal establishment of the XY Company was the "Chat", likely at Portage des Chats, owned by Alexander McKenzie. J.B. Grout was its master. Its chief competition came from the North West Company post, Fort Coulonge. In December 1802, McKenzie sent a Mr. Delaunay to Grout in order to enable him "to make a small establishment" at the Grand Calumet, or in the "Chenaux;" Delaunay had "orders to bend his force upwards towards Fort Coulonge." If the Nor'Westers had "no establishment at the Calumet (which Peyette informs us they have), then Delaunay must go to Fort Coulonge, or even further up, and get every information in his power where the Indians hunt." Delaunay was to be sparingly supplied and never given more than two kegs of rum at a time, because he was "addicted to drinking." Two men, John Rich and William Gibson, were to accompany him.²³⁷ It is not certain whether Delaunay established himself at Grand Calumet; it is certain that he did not at Fort Coulonge.

Fort Coulonge experienced a lucrative trade in 1802-03, prompting McKenzie to write in September 1803 to D. Cameron, who was in charge of the Chats, that he had

no doubt but that a number of Packs will be made there (Fort Coulonge) this year but if it were possible I should prefer a settlement at Rivière Dumoin because 1st that they are too well arranged at the former place and that it is not far from Lac Ronde where we are sending goods at present under the care and management of Frans Albert who has direction to send his people that way in the course of the Fall and Winter 2 and it will divide their force and weaken them at Fort Coulonge and placing us in a situation to share in the Hunt of the Timiscaming Indians.

Cameron was left to decide whether the establishment should be at either Rivière Dumoine or Fort Coulonge, and a Mr. Payette was selected as its master.²³⁸ The site selected was Fort Coulonge.

There was also another post: Cameron was in charge of a post further north than the Chats, but its location is not mentioned. He was instructed not to advance any money because the hunters would then go the Chats.²³⁹

By September 1803, the XY Company had at least one post on Rivière du Lièvre. In the latter part of 1802, Francois Albert of Rivière-du-Loup offered his services to the company,²⁴⁰ and was hired for three years as a "Commis pour les Chenaux, et le Haut de la Rivière du Lièvre."²⁴¹ Albert was in charge of an establishment in 1803-04.²⁴² There may have been another one in the Rivière du Lièvre region, for we read in a letter written by Sutherland to Gabriel Foulbert, whose post is not mentioned:

il vous sera utile cette automne, soit pour voyager ou pour travailler a la Maison, et vous enverrez Cayolle dans la riviere du Lievre pour aider a rendre les effets a la poste ou ils doivent hiverner, et alors restera avec

vous.... Votre fils Gabriel ira avec eux pour hiverner... Laverdure ayant tout ce que lui est nécessaire vous n'aurez pas besoin de lui rien avancer. Il faut donner le montant discomptes de votre fils Gabriel et de Chelefoux a Mons Albert, ainsi que le bled d'Inde que vous aurez prepares... Comme on aura besoin de Farine pour la Riviere de Lievre, il faut tacher en avoir en change pour vos marchandises, dans le cours de l'automne et l'hiver, et alors ils pourront l'envoyer chercher chez vous, sans faire des Frais, et vous en tiendra un compte exact des tous ce qui vous les fournirez.²⁴³

The XY Company, in 1803-04, had at least two establishments on the Ottawa River below the Chats. Sutherland wrote to Saint-Valier Mailloux in October 1803. "Mons Reid est placé aux Lac de Deux Montagnes, un autre des jeuns Messieurs s'en va chez Mons Raymond a la prairie - et L'autre ira Chez Faniant par la première bonne occasion."²⁴⁴ Mailloux was also a master of a post, perhaps on Rivière du Lièvre or above Trois-Rivières.

In 1810, John Hodgson, the master of Albany, was dismissed, having amassed, by not altogether legal means, a considerable amount of money during his career with the Hudson's Bay Company. Hodgson had fathered 12 children, and desired that they should settle at Montreal, but he could not find a guide until two years later, when Jean-Baptiste Perrault offered his services for £50. Hodgson carried with him upwards of £8,000.²⁴⁵ At Abitibi, he was kindly received by Fraser, who gave him some provisions. Hodgson, at McKay's invitation, stopped four days at Lake Témiscamingue.²⁴⁶ Perrault, in his journal, mentions only one post, Fort Coulonge, between Lake Témiscamingue and the Chats.²⁴⁷

The "Chats" House was at Portage des Chats, and was owned by "one of the Mrs. [sic] M'Kenzies," of the North West Company. Having been informed by McKay that war had been declared between England and the United States, Hodgson was reluctant to proceed any further for fear that his children would be conscripted into the army. He purchased McKenzie's establishment for £1,000 and settled there. George Gladman of Albany visited him two years later on his return to Albany from London.²⁴⁸

Gladman twice travelled along the Ottawa River between Moose Fort and Montreal. On his first trip, ascending from Montreal in 1814, the first post he noticed was Fort Coulonge, which he said had four houses.²⁴⁹ He gives a more detailed account of it on his second voyage, in the winter of 1816, this time travelling from Moose to Montreal.²⁵⁰ He says he was given a civil reception by a Monsieur Godar, its master.

I engaged an Indian as guide to Chats (Mr. Hodgson's settlement) and procured Provisions for the day to my people to be paid for....The Canadians have here 1 Horse, 1 Sheep, 1 Pig, 2 very small Cattle, all miserably poor but no Vegetable or Provisions except Indian Corn and Salt Pork this a far worse provided post than the Interior ones we have passed, there are two Canadian servant's about the House, and several Indians. The Houses are four, a Store, Masters dwelling, Men's House and two divisions more under the same roof, presume workshops, the fourth is for Cattle and &c and the Hay kept at one end, a piece of open Water opposite the door, and two or three Islands one of which I stopped in July 1814 passing here.²⁵¹

Gabriel Franchère, who passed Fort Coulonge in the summer of

1814, says its master was Mr. Goddin²⁵² (undoubtedly Joseph Goddin).

Gladman does not mention, on his first trip, the existence of a North West Company house at Lac des Chats. On his second voyage, he remarks that there was an old "Shanty House" there.²⁵³

Nicholas Garry, who was sent by the Hudson's Bay Company after the coalition of 1821 to survey the company's fur-trading establishments, on June 15 entered Lac des Chats and passed two North West Company trading posts, both consisting of "miserable huts."²⁵⁴ The following day, he passed Fort Coulouge, managed by Mr. Goddin, and noticed an encampment of Algonkins near it.²⁵⁵ There was a North West Company establishment on Lake Nipissing, but Garry did not visit it.²⁵⁶ He was told that the company also had a post in the village of Lac des Deux Montagnes under the charge of Mr. Fisher (Alexander Fisher), which produced annually 60 packs of beaver, each weighing 90 pounds.²⁵⁷

Lake Huron

As has been seen, at least one lessee of the Témiscamingue Department in the pre-1763 period traded illegally in the vicinity of Lake Huron. We possess but little information on French activities on the lake. After the conquest of New France, an English trader, George Cowan, known also as Jean-Baptiste Constant or Constance,²⁵⁸ settled on the southeast shore of Matchedash Bay, nine miles from Penetanguishine. According to Alexander McDonnell, who accompanied Lord Simcoe on his trip from York to Matchedash Bay in 1793, Cowan had been resident there "upwards of 15 years, without once going to Lower Canada." He made an annual voyage to Michilimackinac, picking up his supplies and forwarding his furs to Montreal.²⁵⁹

Simcoe encamped about one half mile from

Cowan's house or rather Fort, for it is a regular square enclosed with good pickets; his house is in one, his store opposite to it in another, an out-house for corn, potatoes, and &c in a third, and the gate in the fourth; he does not allow the Indians to get drunk within this Garrison.... Mr. Cowan is a decent respectable looking man and much liked by the Indians; he was taken prisoner when a boy by the French at Fort Pitt, during the war, in the year 1759; he has adopted all the customs and manners of the Canadians, and speaks French much better than he does English ... he has in general six Canadian Engagés with him, and is well known to that class of people by the name of Constant.²⁶⁰

Writing in the first decade of the 20th century, A.F. Hunte said that

Across the water of Matchedash Bay, from the village of Fesserton, or more precisely, opposite Bush's Point, are the remains of buildings known among the settlers there as "The Chimneys." On the shore at that place you could see, as the name indicates, an assemblage of old stone chimneys, which marked the dwelling place in the eighteenth century of an Indian trader and his family. About forty acres of a clearing were to be seen before the settlers came, and the stone foundations of some house, while quite near the shore were the remains of a larger building, and beside it a stone wall. It was near this trading fort - the habitation of an early trader named Cowan - that Governor Simcoe encamped when on his memorable expedition to Matchedash Bay in 1793.²⁶¹

Quetton St. George, who arrived in Canada in 1798, as early as 1802 had a post at the narrows of lakes Simcoe and Couchiching, near Atherley, which had long been an Indian rendezvous place. He was known to the Indians as Wau-be-way-quon, meaning "white hat," because he wore such a hat during the summer. It is probable that he had other trading houses, but their locations are unknown. His enterprises were so profitable that he was able to retire to France some time before 1820.²⁶²

In the period before 1821, there are no other records of individuals trading in the Lake Huron region. There were, however, sites which were much settled by free traders. Orillia was a congregating point for the Indians from the earliest times, and attracted many traders. The Hudson's Bay Company in 1862-63 established a post at Orillia, and it continued in existence for 17 years, Thomas Goffatt serving as its master.²⁶³

Another lake much frequented by traders was Lake of Bays. Alexander Sherriff, who in 1831 passed through it, calling it Trading Lake, says that it extended about 10 miles "nearly south," and was fed by waters flowing into its eastern arm. "The fine central basin which receives these rivers appears to have been long a principal station of traders. There are here vestiges of two old establishments, besides a commodious house in good repair, but deserted when we passed."²⁶⁴

The North West Company established itself before the turn of the 19th century on St. Joseph Island, where the British had built a fortification. Daniel Harmon passed the island in 1800, and has left us the following account:

Wednesday, 28. Island of St. Joseph. To this place the British troops came and built a fortification, when the Americans took possession of Michilimackinack. There are stationed here one

Captain, one Lieutenant, one Ensign, and thirty nine privates. The fort is built on a beautiful rise of ground, which is joined to the main island by a narrow neck of land. As it is not long since a settlement was made here, they have only four dwelling houses and two stores, on the other parts of the peninsula; and the inhabitants appear like exiles. The North West Company have a house and store here. In the latter, they construct canoes, for sending into the interior, and down to Montreal. Vessels, of about sixty tons burden, come here from Detroit and Mackana and Sault Ste. Maries.²⁶⁵

The other North West Company establishments on Lake Huron and in its vicinity will be discussed in a later chapter.

The Post-1821 Trade in the Ottawa River-Lake Témiscamingue
Region

Introduction

The terms of the agreement for the coalition of the Hudson's Bay and the North West Companies in 1821 divided the profits of the new company into 100 shares, 20 to the Hudson's Bay Company shareholders, 20 to the Montreal partners of the North West Company, 5 to the London agents of that company, 5 to Lord Selkirk's heirs and 40 to the chief factors and chief traders. The old Nor'Wester wintering partners predominated in filling the positions of chief factors and chief traders, numbering 15 of 25 of the former and 17 of 28 of the latter.

The Hudson's Bay Company's system of administration was retained, the country being divided into Northern and Southern departments. The region west of Albany, including Severn district and extending to the Pacific Slope, formed the Northern Department; the Southern Department comprised the region extending in the north from Albany to Eastmain and its dependencies and the Lake Superior district. The latter district was now supplied from Moose through Michipicoten. Lake Nipissing, Grand Lac, the Ottawa River posts, the king's posts, and Portneuf and Mingan seignories, being too remote to be efficiently administered and economically supplied from the bay, were placed under the supervision of the company's agents in Montreal, McGillivrays, Thain and Company, reorganized in 1822 from McTavish, McGillivrays and Company. These districts were grouped into the Montreal Department.¹ Lake Huron district was added after the 1822 outfit.

The committee warned Thomas Thain, the company's accountant, to reduce expenses and end his practice of buying out the opposition, which only encouraged new opponents to set up. The following year, the committee deprecated his methods of conducting the trade, his large expenditure upon supplies, the maintenance of three competing beer shops, and his practice of purchasing goods from petty traders. In August 1825, Thain departed for England, leaving the company's accounts in confusion. He was almost immediately placed in a lunatic asylum, beyond the reach of his creditors. William McGillivray died in October 1825. The remaining partner, Simon McGillivray, faced the impossible task of rescuing the company from bankruptcy. After the demise of the house of McGillivrays, Thain and Company, the districts under its supervision continued to be supplied from Montreal.²

Thomas Vincent, having indicated in 1820 that he soon intended to retire, was replaced after the coalition by William Williams. It is unlikely that Vincent would have been retained as superintendent because two men of greater ability, Williams, noted as a fighting governor, and George Simpson, a gifted organizer, were available. Vincent continued as a chief factor to make himself eligible for a half-share for seven years upon his retirement. As Williams and Simpson were still in the west in 1822, the London Committee sent Vincent a special commission to preside at the Southern Department's council meeting at Moose that year. Vincent was chief factor at Albany in 1823. Williams had two other chief factors under him, Joseph Beioley, a former accountant at Moose, and Angus Bethune, a Nor'Wester. The Southern Department's arrangements in 1823-24 provided for 24 posts manned by 136 men, including 13 clerks and apprentices and 11 chief traders and chief factors.³

The committee's strategy after the coalition was to use the posts in Upper and Lower Canada as a barrier against the

penetration of petty traders into the regions considered to be within the company's charter. Soon after the coalition, an Act of Parliament was passed authorizing a licence, which could be renewed in 21 years, giving the company "the sole and exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians over all the territories in British North America not included in the Company's charter." But the committee knew that the company's prosperity in the territory outside its charter would depend to a large extent upon the good will of the colonial administrations of Upper and Lower Canada. After the acquisition by Mr. Goudie of Quebec of the lease of the king's posts, formerly held by the North West Company, the committee cautioned Thain to avoid doing anything which would give Goudie cause for complaint to the colonial government, and if possible come to an arrangement with him which would preclude major disagreements.

The frontier areas to be defended against petty traders were the Ottawa River region, with its posts at Lac des Deux Montagnes, Lac des Sables and Fort Coulonge, and to a somewhat lesser extent, Lake Huron district and Lake Nipissing. Thain was ordered always to keep the Ottawa River posts well stocked with merchandise and set the tariff to return only a small profit, and if necessary, in some cases a small loss to undersell the petty traders supplied from Montreal. Cash advances were to be avoided. Alexander Fisher was appointed to replace the deceased Mr. Stewart at Lac des Deux Montagnes and organize the competition on the lower Ottawa. John McBean, considered an energetic officer, was appointed master of Lake Huron district. The company's most able men were assigned to the frontier regions. Sault Ste. Marie depot was attached to Lake Superior rather than to Lake Huron department.⁴

Before the coalition, Lake Témiscamingue's trade had been conducted very economically and had returned consider-

able profits. The committee, at the beginning of 1822, was hesitant to end its dependence upon Montreal, though it was the company's policy that as many posts as possible should be supplied from Moose, not only to save expenses but to avoid jealousies among the officers by having them all meet together and work under one system of management. The following year, the committee decided that Témiscamingue and its dependencies should receive their trading goods from Moose and their provisions from Montreal. Angus Cameron at Témiscamingue was responsible to the agent in Montreal rather than the superintendent at Moose. Abitibi was supplied from Moose to sever its connections from Canada.⁵

Williams was advised that all posts should be located as close as possible to the centre of major hunting grounds for the convenience of the hunters. This should be done slowly and with due deliberation by the council of the Southern Department. Attention should also be directed toward placing the posts in localities where gardens could flourish, reducing the need for outside provisions and giving the men remaining inland during the summer profitable work. There was no longer a need for outposts in remote regions, and additional servants could be stationed at the posts if there appeared to be any danger from the natives, as was the case at Abitibi and Frederick House in 1822.⁶

Williams, despite his reputation as a fighting governor, failed to command the respect of his subordinates. He was recalled to London in 1826, and was replaced by Simpson, who also retained his Northern Department. The two departments were merged in 1839. After 1833, Simpson made his permanent headquarters at Lachine.⁷

There is no direct information upon the extent of the competition experienced by the North West Company in the Ottawa River region from free traders. The first reference to petty traders along the river is in John McLean's account

of his experiences as a fur trader. He relates that at the time of his posting at the village of Lac des Deux Montagnes, in 1821, there were merchants residing there and competing with the Hudson's Bay Company post, and in the summer of 1822, some of them withdrew from the trade upon being given money or being guaranteed annuities by the company. From this it may be inferred that merchants had resided in the village as early as the founding of the Nor'Westers' post in 1819 and perhaps earlier. McLean relates that in April 1822 three parties, one led by himself, were sent up the Ottawa River to counter the representatives of the merchants, who had gone to intercept the hunters before they could return to their village from their hunting grounds. It is likely that this was an annual procedure in the spring.

There were petty traders wintering up the Ottawa River at least as far as Lac des Allumettes from the beginning of the Hudson's Bay Company period. In 1822-23, McLean opposed an unidentified trader at Lac des Allumettes, and later in the season founded a second post in the vicinity of the lake in opposition to Aeneas MacDonell. In the mid-1820s, there were two traders wintering from year to year on Lac des Allumettes, Day and McGillivray, and a Mr. Pillet. Day and McGillivray extended their operations to Mattawa and into Lake Nipissing. There was no Hudson's Bay Company establishment at Lac des Allumettes between the summers of 1824 and 1827, and during that time the company competed from Fort Coulonge. Day and McGillivray retired from the Ottawa River trade at the end of the 1829-30 season, after having suffered severe financial losses, and Pillet perhaps at the end of the previous year.

Lac des Sables, to the east of the Ottawa River, was also much frequented by free traders. None are identified until 1827-28, when John McLean mentions Day and McGillivray and a Mr. Stanfield. The last mentioned retired from the

Lac des Sables trade after 1828-29 and Day and McGillivray after 1829-30. The Fleurys, father and sons, competed from Rivière Désert between 1829-30 and 1831-32, and an outpost from Lac des Sables was founded by McLean in their vicinity. By 1833, Lac des Sables was free from immediate opposition.

In the 1830s, lumberers began extending their activities up the Ottawa River, and they were accompanied by settlers. As a result, the fur trade declined and by the 1840s the Hudson's Bay Company posts received the principal part of their furs from lumberers and shopkeepers who had purchased them from the Indians.

In the 1820s and 1830s, the free traders posed no threat to the Hudson's Bay Company's trade at Lake Témiscamingue. The barren nature of the country made subsistence impossible without provisions from Canada, and this added expense promised to make any competition with the company a losing venture. By the beginning of the 1840s, the lumbering industry had advanced as far north as Lake Témiscamingue. Lyman McConnell and his 11 sons were the most formidable lumberers to establish themselves on the lake, and they supplemented their lumbering industry with a trade in furs. Governor George Simpson raised the tariff for furs and united the districts of Témiscamingue and Fort Coulonge, which comprised the posts on the upper Ottawa River, in order to present a more formidable opposition against the McConnells and those who seemed intent upon penetrating into the lake. The McConnells withdrew from the lumbering industry and the fur trade on Lake Témiscamingue in 1846-47 after having suffered substantial losses.

For another decade, there was no organized opposition, but the lake's inhabitants were increasingly hired as canoe-men by the lumberers and settlers on the Ottawa River, and often disposed of their hunts at the settlements lining the river. There were also petty traders, some of whom were

connected by marriage to the Indians, in the vicinity of Lake Témiscamingue. A Mr. Bango, a petty fur trader on the Ottawa River, maintained a post on Lake Témiscamingue for two winters, 1857-58 and 1858-59. He withdrew because of the Hudson's Bay Company's formidable competition.

The Ottawa River-Lake Témiscamingue Region

When the four posts on the Ottawa River, Lac des Deux Montagnes, the Chats, Fort Coulonge and Lac des Sables, were taken over by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, it was determined that they should be supplied from Montreal, the route from Moose being judged to be too long and hazardous. The posts were placed in the Montreal Department, which was supervised by the company's agents, in Montreal, William and Simon McGillivray and Thomas Thain.

John McLean, who began his fur-trading career in 1821 in the Montreal Department, has left us valuable accounts of the trade and the establishments on the Ottawa River. His first posting was at Lac des Deux Montagnes, where, he relates, the North West Company had established itself in the spring of 1819.⁸ At the time of his arrival in 1821, the company's establishment was a "large building," under the charge of Alexander Fisher, a senior clerk. Besides McLean, Fisher had two other clerks, the same number of attachés, two interpreters and two servants. McLean says that though Fisher was vain, "he possessed those qualities which constitute a first-rate Indian trader, and he required them to fill successfully his present situation." Some petty traders resided in the Indian village, inhabited by the Iroquois and Algonkians, and joined to oppose the company.⁹

McLean relates that when the hunter returned in the spring with his pelts, he was met by representatives of both the company and the traders, and they endeavoured "to persuade

him of the superior claims each had on his love and gratitude." At length, he went to one of the establishments, where he was royally treated. Before disposing of his furs, he went from house to house, sampling the specialities of each. Usually the hunts were given to the highest bidder, which invariably was the company as it had more resources than its competitors. The hunters did not always pay their debts. The sale of liquor to the natives was prohibited by law, but the villagers paid Canadians to purchase spirits for them on the opposite side of the lake.

The hunters passed three months at the village, enjoying themselves and squandering their money. By the end of the summer, most of them had expended their money and were obliged to obtain supplies from the traders, and were again in debt. In the early 1820s the region in the vicinity of the Lac des Deux Montagnes was still rich in fur-bearing animals because the beaver had not been hunted there during the war of 1812.¹⁰

During the summer of 1821, a number of fur traders, having lost money in the spring, withdrew from the trade. Some received annuities for a stipulated time from the company, while others were given money. On receiving these settlements, they promised, under certain penalties, not to re-enter the trade for a specific period of time.

Fisher spent the ensuing winter in Montreal, leaving a Mr. Francher, the accountant, in charge during his absence. At the end of April, two canoes of the company's competitors at Lac des Deux Montagnes set off up the Ottawa River. Each was manned by eight men. A party of 24 company men, in three canoes, led by Captain Ducharme, McLean and a Mr. Lyons, followed. McLean and his men encamped at the Chats rapids "close to a cascade;" his opponents commenced building "a hut on one side of the path," while he built one on the other. Though much rum and brandy was dispensed to passing

hunters, few would part with their furs until they had reached Lac des Deux Montagnes.¹¹

After the spring trade, all but one of the company's opponents at Lac des Deux Montagnes retired, receiving money or annuities as their former colleagues had the year before. Soon after, a well-to-do merchant, Mr. St. Julien, who resided in the village, on being refused by the company £50 a year for five years, entered the trade. McLean relates:

He hired one end of an Indian house, which he fitted up as a trader's shop: Fisher hired the other end. St. Julien then removed to another: Fisher occupied the other end of that house also. St. Julien next rented a whole house: Fisher purchased a house, placed it upon rollers, and wheeled it directly in front of that of his rival, rearwards, scarcely leaving sufficient room for one person to pass between the premises. This caused great amusement to the Indians; not so to St. Julien, who had not anticipated so excessive a desire on the part of any of the Company's officers for so close an intimacy; and at the end of six weeks he took his departure without pay or pension from the Company.¹²

Alexander Fisher had been master at Lac des Deux Montagnes since 1820. He wrote, in 1826, that ever since the establishment of the company's post, the residents had manifested a desire that there should be other traders in the village. This made it necessary for him to cater to their every wish; if a hunter was refused "a few trifles," he went to another trader, and would never repay his debt, which often reached \$500 after a summer of high-living. Fisher suggested that the only remedy for this evil would be to close the store between June and August, and send the hunter's supplies to the Chats, where they would receive them.

As these advances would be made at the Chats, they would be obliged to take their furs there. In the past, Fisher had sent parties every spring to the Chats to intercept the hunters, but they invariably had declined to trade, arguing that as they had taken debt at Lac des Deux Montagnes, they were obliged to bring their furs there. Fisher's proposed strategy was designed to force the traders to support the indulgent habits of the hunters in the summer, and this expense would soon force their retirement from the trade.¹³

In the summer of 1822, McLean was appointed the master of the Chats, replacing Aeneas MacDonell. At the time of McLean's appointment, there were three men stationed at the post, including an old interpreter named Primeau. McLean passed his first winter with only the interpreter and one man. There were petty traders throughout the interior.

During the winter, a "Yankee adventurer" opened a "grog shop" within a short distance of McLean's establishment, selling whiskey for furs. In March, when one of his Indian debtors sold part of his furs to the American, McLean seized the remainder in his wigwam as payment for his debt.¹⁴

At the end of spring, McLean was transferred to Fort Coulouge, temporarily replacing Joseph Godin. The latter, McLean relates, was "a portly old gentlemen, bearing a paunch that might have done credit to an Edinburgh baillie." Though Godin had the title of master of Fort Coulouge, the affairs of the post were actually supervised by his daughter, "a stout, masculine-looking wentch, a full thirty summers blown."¹⁵ Godin was a veteran of the fur trade, and had served with distinction the North West Company in Témiscamingue Department. He subsequently was placed in command at Fort Coulouge and given a high salary. The ostensible reason for his removal was his mismanagement, "occasioned by aberration of his mental faculties." He retired and was given a pension of £100 per annum.¹⁶ All

the men at Fort Coulonge, having completed their contracts, chose to leave with Godin, and McLean was alone for much of the summer.¹⁷

John Siveright arrived in September to assume command of the establishment. By this time he had been in the fur trade 24 years, stationed much of that time at the North West Company post at Sault Ste. Marie. In the latter half of September, McLean, with four men and two canoes, followed a trader up the Ottawa River to Allumette Island. The latter occupied an "old shanty" on the island, and McLean erected "a couple of huts, a store, and dwelling-house in close promity to him."¹⁸ At the beginning of October, after completing his post, McLean visited Fort Coulonge. While he was there, Aeneas MacDonell, whom McLean had previously relieved at the Chats, was sighted ascending the Ottawa River. On being questioned by Siveright, MacDonell stated that he was going to Sault Ste. Marie. However, in November, Siveright learned from a lumberer that he had gone to winter near Lac des Allumettes. McLean, who was then at his post on Allumette Island, was given one man from Fort Coulonge and instructed to find and settle beside MacDonell. He found him on Lac des Allumettes, but does not state his exact location. McLean, who had three men, erected beside MacDonell "a small hut," which was intended to serve as a dwelling house for himself and his men, a "trading-shop, store and all."¹⁹ As the earth was already frozen and no clay was available for plastering,

the interstices between the logs were...caulked with moss; a large aperture being left in the roof to serve the double purpose of chimney and window....Stones were piled up against the logs, to protect them from the fire. The timber required for floor, door, and beds, was all prepared with the ax.²⁰

The location of the post was well chosen, being the starting place of the Algonkins for their hunting grounds.²¹

Before MacDonell received orders from his father early in the spring to abandon his post,²² he and McLean carried on a spirited competition. Liquor was liberally dispensed by both until the death of one of the natives while drinking.²³ MacDonell seems to have gotten the better of his less experienced opponent. Despite their rivalry, they were on friendly terms.

Soon after MacDonell's departure, the opponent at McLean's other post occupied "his place." This permitted McLean to concentrate all his forces against him, "so that he could not move a foot without a strong party at his heels." He did not go about in search of hunters, and McLean was content to do the same.²⁴ The trader departed in June, and after passing a few days at his lower post, left one man there and went to Montreal with his furs. The value of the furs obtained at Fort Coulonge and McLean's posts was £5,000. McLean was in charge of Fort Coulonge during the summer, and Mr. Lane, who had been with McLean this winter, resided at one of the outposts,²⁵ probably the one on the lake.

The following autumn, McLean returned to one of his posts, and so did the free trader. One day in October, McLean observed five men in two canoes landing at his opponent's house. The following day, he was informed by Primeau, now in his opponent's employ, that they were Iroquois traders who were bound for Lac de la Vieille, in the hunting grounds of the Algonkins. Upon receiving this report, Siveright instructed McLean to send one of his two men to trail the Iroquois. The man dispatched, Swanston, returned at the end of November without having learned their location.²⁶

Without asking for further instructions, McLean set off with two men. His exhausting journey was unsuccessful,²⁷ but after Christmas a native guided him to the Iroquois camp.

Siveright ordered that a post should be established in opposition. Supplies and goods were hauled on sledges.²⁸ McLean built "a temporary hut" for his own accommodation, and "a small store for the goods."²⁹ There he remained in discomfort for two months and then returned to his post, leaving one of his assistants in charge. It is unlikely that many furs were obtained because the Iroquois traders had debted the hunters before McLean's arrival, and the hunters took little notice of McLean while he was there.³⁰ The Iroquois departed in early spring with 18 packs of furs, each worth £60.

The ensuing year, McLean was master of the Chats.³¹ As his "old opponent" was still in his region, he was instructed to "send a party in opposition to him."³² His new outpost was at a distance from the trader, and he took pains to screen its existence from him. Once while going there, he feigned a sprained foot to throw his opponent off his track.³³ The individual who was originally placed in charge of it was removed by McLean when he found him, on a visit, intoxicated.³⁴ McLean does not mention the name of this outpost, but it was probably called Sandy Lake, for in July 1827, McLean wrote to Fisher from his "old station," Sandy Lake.

Two opposition parties passed the winter of 1825-26 on Lac des Allumettes. John Siveright at Fort Coulonge reported that "from the quantity of property they have brought up it would appear they are determined to extend there trade." There was no Hudson's Bay Company post there. Rather, a large number of men were stationed at Fort Coulonge, and the inland Indians were kept away from the two opposition establishments "only by fear and having men to guard when there is danger."³⁵

Fisher writes in September 1826 that McLean related to him a report current among the Indians that Day and

McGillivray were intending to establish themselves at Wiquasaiga, which belonged "to Gr. Lac or Témiscaminque department." It is not certain whether they did. The following July, McLean wrote to Fisher that the "Stanfeld concern" intended to winter at Fort de l'Isle, an important region.³⁶

The posts in the Lac des Deux Montagnes district in 1826-27 were Lac des Deux Montagnes, Rivière de Bonne Chère (Bonnechère River), Lac des Sables and the Chats. We are informed that four posts on the Lower Ottawa River were supplied from Lachine in 1827-28: the Chats, Bonne Chère, Matawashka (Madawaska), and the Tomississippi (probably the Mississippi River).³⁷

A new Hudson's Bay Company post seems to have been founded on Lac des Allumettes in the summer of 1827. Two men, one of whom was probably William F. Lane, were sent there to winter with the two men who had passed the summer. A canoe was dispatched to Lac de la Vieille on July 26, and the following day five men were dispatched with "20 pieces liquor and provisions," two of the men to remain to "take care of the Property and the others came back for men."³⁸ It is possible that Lac de la Vieille was in existence before 1827-28, for Siveright, on September 1827, says that he had sent Mr. McDougal from Lac des Allumettes to Lac de la Vieille with 72 pieces of liquor and provisions and he had "hopes they will be more successful in that quarter than last winter."³⁹

There was at least one opposition post on Lac des Allumettes in 1827-28, belonging to Day and McGillivray. At the beginning of the autumn of 1827, Mr. King replaced Mr. Monin as its master; Monin was so offended that he offered his services to Siveright, who readily engaged him. A Mr. Primeau and three men, in October, passed Fort Coulonge on their way to settle at either Rivière Dumoine or "Matawoin"

(Mattawa River), to intercept the trade of the Témiscamingue and Lake Nipissing Indians. It is very likely that they settled on the Mattawa River. By this time, Lane had placed all but one of his men at Lac de la Vieille, and no counter measures could be taken. The number of men at Lac de la Vieille is not mentioned.⁴⁰

Siveright writes about Lac des Allumettes: "Their Buildings opposite the Post of L. des A. were finished previous to M. L's departure, and they are to move over to other with their property ere the navigation closes."⁴¹

Many of the men assigned to the Ottawa River district were concentrated, during the winter, at Lac des Allumettes, where the opposition was formidable. All the opposition's men were followed as they roamed through the Lac des Allumettes region.⁴²

We learn that in the summer of 1827 Charles Thomas was appointed to take charge of Chats House and its outposts. Thomas decided that an outpost should be founded "up the Tomissisipi River" (most likely Mississippi River), in opposition to Day and McGillivray, who the previous year had made there nine packs of furs, obtained from hunters indebted to the company. The Bonne Chère Lake and Matowaska (Madawaska) establishments were "still more important" strategically, and Thomas expected that they would be subjected, in 1827-28, to formidable competition from petty traders. Madawaska may not have been open in 1826-27. Thomas believed that the establishments under his charge would not be effective without the following complement of men: Chats House, Paul Sabourin, who had been master for two years and one man; Bonne Chère Lake: two men, and one Iroquois interpreter; Matowaska River: J. McDougal in charge and two men; Tomissisipi River: Antoine Siccard in charge with two men. Mr. Pillet, a free trader who wintered at Lac des Allumettes, in August 1828 sent an outfit "for the Bonne Chère."⁴³

There were two opposition posts at Lac des Allumettes in 1828-29, Pillet's post and one belonging to Day and McGillivray. It is not certain whether Day and McGillivray had men at Lac de la Vieille. Siveright decided that if they did not send a party to Lac de la Vieille, he would not.⁴⁴

Day and McGillivray at the beginning of September, dispatched six men from Lac des Allumettes northward towards Lake Nipissing.⁴⁵ At least two men from Fort Coulonge followed them until they reached their destination, and remained with them until they began building their post. Grant, the Hudson's Bay Company master at Lake Nipissing, already had two opposition parties to watch, and asked Siveright for at least two men.⁴⁶ In the middle of October, Day and McGillivray sent a canoe load of provisions to Lake Nipissing, and Siveright instructed Sabiston and T. Brown to trail them, and remain at Lake Nipissing if requested by Grant. The latter now had only three men, one having deserted.⁴⁷ In November, however, he received a man from La Cloche and Siveright's two men subsequently returned to Fort Coulonge. Day and McGillivray had three men residing in October "near Mr. Grant's Post," but two men were sent back to Lac des Allumettes in November because there was a shortage of provisions. Grant's other two opponents were "The Negroe and Jos. Cadotte" who had "Indians of their own."⁴⁸

Siveright, in October, stationed two men at Mattawa River and two at Riviere Dumoine to supply his Indians hunting in those regions, to avoid their coming down to Lac des Allumettes until the autumn hunt was over.⁴⁹ Mattawa was given up by Day and McGillivray at the end of December, as "little was made there," and Siveright, being hard pressed for men, took the opportunity to do the same.⁵⁰

Grant received most of the furs traded at Lake Nipissing, and Day and McGillivray made only four packs, the "greater part" being "Rats". McGillivray, who probably passed part of the winter there, stopped at Mattawa on his return in May, and was kept under surveillance by some of Siveright's men.⁵¹ Day and McGillivray made a total of eight packs at their establishments. Pillet's post at Lac des Allumettes made nine.⁵²

By 1828, Day and McGillivray were in financial trouble, and were reduced to borrowing money at the "shanties". Their posts were inadequately supplied with both provisions and trading articles.⁵³

In July 1829, Pillet had five men at Lac des Allumettes and Day and McGillivray one. In September 1829, Day and McGillivray sent off a canoe loaded with 27 pieces and manned by four men for Lake Nipissing. Three of Siveright's men accompanied them, having instructions to do as Grant requested.⁵⁴ Although Grant complained that Siveright's men "spoil the Indians and are as injurious to his interest as opposition," he retained one of them, Sabiston.⁵⁵ The latter seems to have conducted the trade in opposition to Day and McGillivray, but was extravagant in his distribution of goods and was recalled by January, having received only a few furs at a cost of £52.2.⁵⁶ An opposition party went to Grand Lac by way of Lac des Sables.⁵⁷

Besides Day and McGillivray, there were again two opposition houses on Lake Nipissing. By January, Day and McGillivray had expended their liquor and almost all their merchandise. They had poor prospects for trade because the furs went to the post having the widest variety of articles.⁵⁸ No more supplies were forthcoming from Lac des Allumettes. Indeed, McGillivray and the man wintering with him at Lac des Allumettes were reduced to "begging or borrowing" provisions from shantymen. The natives in the Lac des Allumettes

region did little hunting. McGillivray stationed two men at Mattawa, as did Siveright.⁵⁹

Of Lac des Allumettes post Siveright said, "The Store is at a sufficient distance from the other Buildings to prevent risk by fire."⁶⁰ William F. Lane, its master,⁶¹ was judged by Siveright to be ill-suited for such a responsible position, having been too willing to aid the shantymen. Siveright also distrusted Lane's "Indian connections," and recommended that he should be transferred to an establishment where "it would not be necessary to trust so much property going through his hands."⁶² Lane was removed by James Keith at the end of 1828-29 outfit, and was assigned to John McLean at Lac des Sables. Siveright recommended that Mr. Brown, who had served for some time in the district and knew the natives, should be his replacement.⁶³

In the spring of 1828, Governor Simpson visited the Chats, where he found the buildings in a ruinous state. He requested Fisher to build a house "50 feet by 30 on a stone salage of 5 feet high."⁶⁴ Considering that the buildings were beyond repair, Fisher began making preparations, in the summer of 1828, for erecting new ones,⁶⁵ but work had not started by the middle of August because a mason, who was needed to make "a stone foundation," was unavailable.⁶⁶

Despite their losses in 1829-30, Day and McGillivray again contested the Ottawa River trade the following winter. Having in previous years suffered from a lack of adequate supplies, they arranged to purchase their provisions and trading goods from one supplier, a Mr. Bernard.⁶⁷ Instead of returning to Lake Nipissing, they concentrated their strength at Mattawa. At the beginning of October, three men in one canoe passed Fort Coulonge, and Siveright sent an unspecified number of men to follow them.⁶⁸ According to Siveright, the opposition at Mattawa "built, with intention to pass the winter."⁶⁹ A Hudson's Bay Company post was also constructed.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, McGillivray resided at "his old quarter," Lac des Allumettes ("The Allumettes").⁷¹ In January, a native killed a drunken lumberman, who had abused him, at the Hudson's Bay Company house.⁷² McGillivray "held a kind of an inquest" immediately after the death, and recorded the evidence of the witnesses.⁷³ The Hudson's Bay Company master was Nicholas Brown.⁷⁴ Later in the winter, Primeau, Brown's interpreter, died of apoplexy.⁷⁵

In the spring, Day and McGillivray's men at Mattawa went to Lake Nipissing. They were not followed, but Brown's men did not leave Mattawa for Fort Coulonge until they returned.⁷⁶

McGillivray apparently did not return to Lac des Allumettes in 1830-31. Nor is there any indication that any of his men wintered at Mattawa. It is likely that he abandoned the Ottawa River that year, though he did not withdraw entirely from the trade. He still retained his establishment at Lac des Sables.

A Mr. Longman, in September 1831, having a canoe loaded with 24 pieces, established himself "near" the Hudson's Bay Company post at Lac des Allumettes, ostensibly "to keep a tavern."⁷⁷

John McDougall, at Chats House, writes in February 31, "Tis said that Longmore & Thomas Knight are going to oppose us in the Bonne Chère."⁷⁸ There is no further information about this opposition. Bonne Chère post was open in 1832-33.

In 1826-27, McLean was appointed master of Lac des Sables post located within eight miles of the last rapid and portage on Rivière aux Lièvres.

On his arrival, McLean found "a comfortable dwelling-house, and a large farm with pigs, poultry, and cattle in abundance."⁷⁹ There was active opposition; McLean does not state who his rivals were or where they were located.⁸⁰ All the men at the company's establishment had deserted to

the opposition the previous winter, and McLean had only a clerk, interpreter and a labourer. He was promised three additional men, but even so he was badly outnumbered, his competitors having 22 men. However, by the end of the year, many of them had deserted and the Hudson's Bay Company was once again ascendant.⁸¹ McLean delegated the direction of the competition to his clerk, whom he calls "Mr. MacD." The latter had passed two winters at Lac des Sables. Meanwhile, McLean "remained quietly at home, having only the few Indians that wintered in the neighbourhood of the post to attend to," though he was at various times obliged "to act as trader, cook, hewer of wood, and drawer of water."⁸²

At Lac des Sables, Day and McGillivray, in the spring of 1828, mustered 14 men, including one who had deserted at Hull from Governor Simpson's canoe. This is the first time the opposition is mentioned by name. McLean again faced a numerically superior opposition. Day and McGillivray even equipped some residents of Lac des Deux Montagnes to trade with the hunters of the interior, but McLean was informed in time to counter this design.⁸³ McLean's men were of indifferent quality, and he desired to dismiss two of them, one who habitually got drunk among the Indians (Gagnon), and another who was "good for nothing."⁸⁴ Mr. Stanfield also had an establishment at Lac des Sables.

The returns, in 1828-29, from McLean's post were "miserable." The lands of the Algonkins were now "Completely ruined," though they had been fruitful only a few years before.⁸⁵ This is no doubt what influenced Mr. Stanfield's decision to abandon his post at Lac des Sables and invest his "thousands of Dollars" in more lucrative ventures. The only opposition now remaining was "the once formidable McGillivray but now faintly struggling for existence." McLean wrongly calculated that 1829-30 would be McGillivray's final year beside him. Rumours were circulating that Mr. Pillet would

try his luck at Lac des Sables, and McLean hired at least one of Stanfield's former employees in anticipation of this possibility.⁸⁶

In 1829-30, a Canadian, probably a Mr. Fleury, entered the trade and established himself "some distance inland" from Lac des Sables, apparently on Rivière Désert. He had formerly been in the company's service. Having been instructed that he should "keep him company," McLean set off in the autumn with only a guide. He was unable to spare any men from Lac des Sables, having only two at that time.⁸⁷ On the journey the guide deserted and McLean almost froze to death before finding the post, which he says was a "shanty" house. He was well treated by its inhabitants, who guided him back to Lac des Sables the following day.⁸⁸

Although he speaks no more about this rival, McLean apparently established a post near him. McLean's assistant, W.F. Lane, subsequently wintered there, and for a time it was known as "Lane's Post." It was later called Rivière Désert.

In 1830-31, the Fleurys, father and son, were still established at "Mr. Lanes Post." McLean writes about them: the Fleuries in particular have annoyed us much more than could possible be expected from such a paltry concern they are on their own accounts and urged on by self interest that powerful incentive they travel about with indefatigable activity no relaxation of exertions on their part. With determined part. The Elder Fleurie is apparently a man abandoned to every sence of rectitude provided only he obtain his end.⁸⁹

They engaged only one man, André Sabourin, hiring him by the month. McLean, on a visit to Lane's Post, found Sabourin discontented, and hinted that he probably would engage him until spring. McLean had to obtain Keith's consent before making

a formal offer. Sabourin was acquainted with the region and spoke the language of its inhabitants, and the Fleurys relied heavily on his services.⁹⁰

McLean engaged Sabourin for \$11 per month, the same terms offered by Fleury, until the end of the trading season. Fleury hired one of McLean's old winterers, but McLean, one month later, succeeded in enticing him away, though without consulting Keith. Subsequently, the Fleurys operated without hired help.⁹¹ The impoverished state of the country made their efforts less than rewarding. By February, McLean had received furs valued at £1,000.

After bringing his furs to Montreal in the summer, the younger Fleury appeared at Lac des Sables with four men, and related to McLean that he expected that his brother would bring three more. Fleury then proceeded to Rivière Désert. McLean calculated that in addition, Day and McGillivray would have three or four men at their establishment. He was assigned 14 men for Lac des Sables and its outpost, two too few, he thought.⁹² Three of them were discharged in the autumn, one, Lepine, being a "Drunken Cowardly Sot," and the other two McGean and Dupuis, worthless hands.⁹³

Lane was again at his outpost in 1831-32 in opposition to Fleury, who was offering extravagant prices.⁹⁴ McLean decided that he should personally supervise the opposition and passed most of the winter at Rivière Désert.⁹⁵

McLean reserved three of his men "against Day and McGillivrays Post for the purpose of running the Derouine occasionally and building a house, the former one being burnt to the ground last spring." He said that in former years the competition had concentrated its forces at Lac des Sables, but now they were "at so many detached points" that he needed more men, though there were fewer opponents.⁹⁶ McLean's returns were down and his expenditures were up that year; the opposition, however, did not have a good trade either.⁹⁷

Keith desired to remove Lane from his post after the end of the trading season. Lane is described by McLean as being "addicted to Liquor with hardly a prospect of remorse."⁹⁸ However, Lane seems to have remained for at least another year.

Fleury did not return by October 1832,⁹⁹ and may have retired from the trade the previous summer. McLean had received a report, in April 1832, that the "fraternal Partnership" would be dissolved at the end of the 1831-32 outfit.¹⁰⁰ Nor do Day and McGillivray appear to have contested the Lac des Sables trade in 1832-33. By the time McLean had left the Montreal Department in April 1833, all his opponents had given up the field.¹⁰¹

On his voyage up the Ottawa from Lachine bound for Lake Huron and beyond, McLean touched at Lac des Allumettes, putting ashore "merely to say bon jour to an old acquaintance."¹⁰² At the forks of Mattawin River (Mattawa River), he found "a small outpost belonging to the Fort Coulonge district, recently established for the purpose of securing the hunts of the Indians of the quarter, who were in the habit of trading with shanty men."¹⁰³

Joseph Bouchette, the surveyor, describes the Chats in his The British Dominions in North America as being one of the original North-West Posts, established on the Ottawa at the most flourishing period of that company's existence. The dwelling-house and store bear evidence of their antiquity from the dilapidated state they are in, and the soil is too poor about the point (Mondion's Point) to invite the resident agent to the culture of the farm. Mr. Thomas resides here as agent for the Hudson's Bay Company, for whom he keeps a store supplied with the articles most in demand by the Indians and other traders, such as broad cloths, blankets, beads, ammunition, spririts, & C.

The post was situated at Mondion's Post in Onslow Township, Lower Canada.¹⁰⁴

Of Lac des Sables, Bouchette writes in his Topographical Dictionary of Lower Canada, published in 1832, "here a private fur trading post is established, and at the outlet the Hudson's Bay Company have also a post."¹⁰⁵

Alexander Sherriff, in 1831, conducted an exploration and evaluation of the country lying between the Ottawa River and Penetanguishene for the purpose of settlement. While he was little concerned with the fur trade, he does give in passing a less than detailed description of some trading establishments.

On the Ontario side of the shore near the upper end of Grand Calumet Island and "a little above the division of the water," he observed "the la Bosse settlement, consisting of a narrow entrance, about a mile in length, with eight or ten huts. The poor unprogressing appearance of the place, at once marks it as a nest of old trading people - French, or Bois Brulées."¹⁰⁶

Soon after this settlement, Lake Coulonge and the hills beyond it to the northward came into view. Below the hills, on the north bank of the lake, stood Fort Coulonge, "a double row of neat white-washed buildings," contributing much to enliven the scenery. On the Ontario shore opposite it, the company possessed "a farm of sixty or seventy acres, and a little below this are two small clearances lately commenced."¹⁰⁷

On the "Upper des Allumettes," there were two trading establishments, Fort William, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, and the other to a free trader.¹⁰⁸ Sherriff did not go further north beyond the confluence of the Ottawa and Mattawa rivers, but remarks,

Northward from Lac des Ecorces a day or two's journey, is the grand reservoir of the Ottawa,

called by the traders, the Grand Lake, which, from all accounts, must be half as large as Lake Ontario. There has been a trading establishment for many years on the south coast of the Grand Lake, which is consequently well-known to many connected with the trade.¹⁰⁹

At the outlet at the first of the Peonga lakes, (which was 5 miles long) there was "a trading house belonging to the company, occupied in the hunting season."¹¹⁰

During his trip around the world, Simpson took the Ottawa River route on his way to Lake Huron and the west. At Lac des Deux Montagnes, he was saluted "by the one cannon of the fort, while Mr. MacTavish waited on the wharf to give us a hearty welcome; and, on reaching the house, we were kindly received by his lady."¹¹¹ The only other post he mentions is Fort Coulonge, where he stopped for a short time to discuss affairs with Mr. Cameron, who had come down from Lake Témiscamingue.¹¹²

By the late 1820s, the trade of the Ottawa River was declining steadily, but it was necessary to maintain the posts as a barrier against the penetration of traders into the interior. Simpson writes in 1830,

The trade of the Grand or Ottawa River I am sorry to say, continues decreasing; it is necessary however, to maintain as a protection to the interior country, as were the numerous petty traders by whom we are opposed here not kept in constant employment at home, they would penetrate to our most valuable frontier establishments, and occasion heavy losses where we are now making handsome profits. The business of the Grand River is divided into two distinct charges, that of the upper part, comprehending the Posts of Fort Coulonge, Lac des Allumettes,

and two temporary outposts, the situations of which are changed according to circumstances, is under the management of Chief Trader Sive-right. These posts are surrounded by settlers, lumbermen, and petty traders; the most conspicuous of the last are Bernard & Pilette and Day & McGillivray - all those people direct their attention to the fur trade, but none confine themselves entirely thereto. They find it answers their purposes, otherwise would not continue it, but their system of trade is totally different from ours, as, although they continue to eye out a living thereby, it is at the sacrifice of character, by descending to every species of vice, and not frequently by exposing themselves to the severest punishments of the law. The Country in this neighbourhood is becoming exhausted, and, in the course of a few years hence, the natives must relinquish the chase and turn their attention to agriculture. The Section of the District I have just noticed a profit last outfit of £1000, which is less by £600 than that of the former years; but the lower section, comprehending the Posts of the Lake of the Two Mountains, Riviere aux Lievres, Châts, and two temporary outposts, has consumed the profits on the former, there being a loss of £1000 thereon. This does not arise from want of attention to economy and management, as no one could have done its affairs greater justice in those respects than the Gentleman in charge, Chief Trader Cameron, but is owing to the heavy expenses we are compelled to incur in maintaining the Establishments, and the increasing poverty of the

country. The post of the Châts, from which I expected some advantage by combining the fur Trade and retail shop keeping business, was under the charge of Mr. Fisher, in the early part of the season, who, I am concerned to say, grossly, mis-managed its affairs by converting it into a public house of grog shop, although he knew my aversion to this disgraceful traffic, being present when I put a stop to it the former winter and I am sorry to say that, in other respects, the conduct of that gentleman was so irregular, that Mr. Chief Factor Keith found it necessary to remove him to the interior. This post I still think will, under proper management, turn to some account, and I am of opinion that it may in the course of another year make it the principal establishment in the lower section of the District, and enable us to abandon the post of the Lake of the Two Mountains, which has also been a sink of expense and a source of trouble and vexation. There is not the least prospect of this District ever yielding profits, indeed if the trade can be made to cover its expenses it is as much as can be reasonably expected; it would however be bad policy to abandon it under existing circumstances; but whatever the result may be, your Honors may rest assured that, under its present management, its best interests will be closely watched.¹¹³

In 1832-33, the posts on the Ottawa River and their masters were Fort Coulonge, John Siveright; Lac des Allumettes, Nicholas Brown; Lac des Deux Montagnes, Chief Trader Cameron assisted by Charles Thomas, clerk; Lac des Sables, John McLean; the Chats, John McDougall; Rivière

Déserte, W.F. Lane, and Bonne Chère, Antoine Sicard. While Simpson favoured the abandonment of Lac des Deux Montagnes as early as 1827 or 1828, he delayed doing so from year to year. In 1832, he decided that only a "steady man" should be left in charge of the company's building between the autumn of 1833 and 1835, when the lease expired. However, the company would not withdraw from the village until it determined "from experience" how the removal would affect the trade; it would "resume possession should it afterwards be found necessary."¹¹⁴ Traders from Rivière aux Lièvres and the Saint-Maurice, as well as from Lake Huron and the Ottawa River, endeavoured to establish themselves in the Lake Témiscamingue region in the 1820s, without success. After 1821, the posts of Abitibi, Mattagami and Flying Post were detached from Témiscamingue Department¹¹⁵ and added to the Southern Department. This enabled Témiscamingue's masters to concentrate upon the incursions of free traders into the region, which in 1830 was still rich in fur-bearing animals. In 1828-29, a profit of £4,500 was made.

Knowing that the encouragement of free traders could lead to the introduction of Iroquois, Nipissings and Algonkians into their territory, the Témiscamingue Indians in the 1820s were wary of intruders; but on the other hand they were suspicious of Englishmen, having traditionally dealt with men from Canada. Simpson endeavoured to overcome this by caring for the wants of the inhabitants, and at the same time he began to make Témiscamingue less dependent upon Montreal, supplying it from Moose.¹¹⁶

Chief Factor Joseph Beoily, who visited Témiscamingue at the end of June 1822, leaves us the following description of the post, which seems to have been in the process of being rebuilt.

1822

26 June This morning had an opportunity of viewing the different Buildings - The Store appears to be about 60 feet long, and from 24 to 30 feet wide -- it is very capacious and including a Garret of about 4 feet side wall, with projecting Cased Windows is 3 Stories High - The Ground floor is in Two Divisions, the smallest of which has Some Rolls of Bark - and Some Rundlets (Liquor or Meat Kegs apparently) in it, the other Division has in it the Corn Mill - some Bags of Corn and Pease, & c. - The first Floor is also divided into Two Parts, One of which is used as the Trading Room - the other appropriated as a kind of Store for the reception of the woods - One Corner of the latter is converted into an Office or Counting House - These Divisions have each an Outer Door before which a covered platform runs the whole length of the House, and the ascent to which is by a Staircase direct from the Yard. At the end of the Trading Room - (within doors a Staircase leads to the 3rd Storey or Garret - which is, I observe, used as a Fur Shed. The Dwelling House is a singular shape being in the form of a Cross - the middle part being raised a Storey above the rest, and pavilioned-roofed to a Point - including the Pavilioned Part it is 3 Stories high the Roofing of the projecting Arms of the Cross is merely sloped from the middle part - and covered with Tin on 3 sides - the Tin I am informed was the late Mr. McKays own property. Tho' the House has been erected several years it is still in an unfinished state - and it appears not to be the intention now to finish

it - as they are squaring and collecting Logs for building another Dwelling House, The Store and the Houses are weather boarded and roofed with Shingle - cut to 1 foot in length and about 6 or 7 inches in width - It has a very pretty appearance and will I understand last 20 years or more --- I am informed by Mr. Cameron that the American Company have established a Post this Season at a large Lake where they get abundance of Fish - and which he considers to be between Lake Nipissing and Lake Timiscaming in a S.W. Direction - about 3 days walk in the Spring of the Year and about 4 Days paddling from the latter Place. He states it is interfering with the Trade of the Posts of Timiskaming - Mattowaugumming - and Lake Nipissing - being visited he says by Indians belonging to all those places.¹¹⁷

Thomas Fraser, in his report on the Témiscamingue district in 1823, wrote about Témiscamingue:

The extent of Ground under Cultivation is about 9 or 10 acres - The following Buildings are erected at Temiscamingue visit a Store, a Stable or Byre, a Barn and Two Dwelling Houses. The Store in perhaps in size and strength not inferior to any in the Country. The Stable, Barn and one of the Dwelling Houses are in very good condition, but the principal Dwelling House has no accommodation whatever.

Seventy-five Indian hunters were attached to it, existing on fish during the winter, there being few hares. The soil was sandy and unfavourable for cultivation, although an average of 300 bushels of potatoes was annually raised. Of the nine men employed at the post, six seem to have been French Canadians. As fish were scarce during the summer, each man received one quart of corn during that season.¹¹⁸

Some Indians, who were dissatisfied with the treatment accorded them at Témiscamingue and Mattagami during the winter of 1821-22, gave their furs to traders in the vicinity of Témiscamingue. Thinking that they were free traders, Alexander Christie, the master of Abitibi River district, opened an outpost from Abitibi at Wanabatchabing Lake. When Christie learned that they were Hudson's Bay Company employees sent from Lake Huron district by John McBean's predecessor and had been withdrawn in the spring of 1822, he ordered the evacuation of Wanabatchabing Lake when the navigation season opened.¹¹⁹

In the 1830s, all the attempts by petty traders to penetrate into the Lake Témiscamingue region failed. The barren nature of the country made subsistence impossible without provisions from Canada, which added considerably to the expense of competing with the company. The latter was so well supplied with provisions and goods that an effective rivalry was beyond their means. Indeed, Témiscamingue's principal competition came from the company's own posts at Lake Nipissing and Lac des Sables. However, this problem could not easily be remedied, because all discussions among the masters involved resulted in "such endless...recriminations" that the real nature of the problem was never exposed. Simpson considered that the only effective solution would be to dismiss the persons in charge, but this would be neither wise nor convenient.¹²⁰

Nevertheless petty traders, as we have seen, were active at Lake Nipissing. In 1834, the post of Temagaming (Timagami) was established to collect the furs hunted in that part of the country by the Lake Nipissing Indians who, without it, were "in danger of falling into the hands of the opposition" at Lake Nipissing. In 1836, Simpson reported to the Committee in London that the post had served its purpose well. Lake Nipissing post was subsequently removed from

Lake Huron district and attached to Lake Témiscamingue district because it had become "as troublesome and injurious as an opposition to Témiscamingue...and was a source of eternal jealousy and bad feeling between the gentlemen of both Districts."¹²¹

The importation of provisions from Great Britain through Moose reduced the cost of maintaining Témiscamingue,¹²² but the reluctance of the natives to carry the supplies over the difficult water route from the bay led to the abandonment of the practice by the end of the 1830s.¹²³ By 1837, the Indians turned their attention to martens rather than beaver. Each native had his hunting grounds well defined and respected.¹²⁴

The following arrangements were made for Témiscamingue district in 1837; Témiscamingue Lake, Chief Trader Aecheas Cameron, district master, and John McKay, clerk; Timagami, George Taylor, postmaster; Grand Lac, A.M.K. Hay, clerk; Trout Lake, Kenneth McAulay, clerk; Lake Nipissing, Roderick McKenzie, clerk.¹²⁵

A new and far more dangerous threat to Témiscamingue than petty traders appeared in the latter part of the 1830s. Lumbering companies by 1836 had advanced up the Ottawa River to the entrance of Lake Témiscamingue.¹²⁶ To forestall the exploitation of Lake Témiscamingue's forests, Simpson hoped that he could obtain from the government a title deed to the pasture land situated at the upper end of the lake, the only pasture land in the region. Because no hay could be gotten by the lumberers for their oxen, which were indispensable in hauling the lumber, they would be forced to withdraw.¹²⁷

It is probable that Simpson could not get the lease; if he did, the measure was not effective in excluding lumbering interests. The principal lumberer, a Mr. Lyman McConnell, who had 11 sons, also competed in the fur trade as early as

1839. In 1842-43, he succeeded in collecting "a good many skins," but they were purchased at great expense. These expenses and the losses which he sustained in the lumbering industry reduced him almost to bankruptcy. As the tariff on Canadian timber had been unfavourably altered in England, Simpson expected that McConnell would relinquish the lumbering industry; but rather than leave Lake Témiscamingue, he would persevere a year or two more in the fur trade. Consequently, Simpson judged that it was expedient to reinforce Témiscamingue and require McConnell to pay higher prices, thereby forcing him out of the trade. However, Cameron's retirement this year meant the loss of a man of experience. His replacement was Chief Factor Fraser of Abitibi.¹²⁸

The McConnells, however, received financial support from the United States, and in 1843-44 were more formidable than ever. They relied heavily upon the sale of liquor, which the company could not practice without a "compromise of Character."¹²⁹

Simpson, the spring of 1843, toured the posts on the Ottawa River. He found that the Lac des Deux Montagnes district, which included Lac des Deux Montagnes, Lac des Sables and an unidentified outpost from the latter post, probably Rivière Désert, were not productive and barely covered expenses. The only reason why he continued to maintain this district was because it checked the extension of petty traders into richer areas in the interior. Chief Factor McTavish was the district master.¹³⁰

The Fort Coulonge district, comprising Fort Coulonge, Lac des Allumettes and two "temporary outposts, moveable from time to time" as circumstances rendered necessary, was administered by Chief Factor Siveright. Though relatively unproductive in furs, the district made a profit in a retail trade with the lumbermen. It also served as "a link" in the chain of communications with the interior: brigades voyaging

into Lake Huron and beyond obtained provisions from the posts. In 1843, the alteration in the import duties in England on Canadian timber forced the withdrawal of nine-tenths of those engaged in the lumbering industry; and the company was deprived of this lucrative trade.¹³¹ The decline in the lumbering business was only temporary as the tariff was soon readjusted.

For the protection of the trade in the Lake Témiscamingue-Ottawa River region, the two districts of Fort Coulonge and Témiscamingue were united in 1843-44. Fraser passed the summer of 1843 at Témiscamingue and failed to impress Simpson, who doubted his ability to organize an effective opposition.¹³² Siveright at Fort Coulonge was selected as his replacement, and was ordered to proceed to Témiscamingue. The posts in the new district included Fort Coulonge, Nicholas Brown, clerk; Lac des Allumettes, G.G. Sharpe, clerk; Timiscaming House, Chief Trader Siveright, J.W. Simpson, clerk, I. Watt, apprentice clerk, and J. McKay; Desert Post, no master listed; Grand Lac, I. Cameron, clerk; Trout Lake, C. Stuart, interpreter; Camisicomica, S. St. Denis, interpreter, and Lake Nipissing, R. McKenzie, clerk. Fraser returned to Abitibi.¹³³ Though the two districts were united, separate accounts were kept, because Témiscamingue was still attached to the Southern Department and Fort Coulonge to the Montreal Department.¹³⁴ Indeed, every aspect of the trade except the management was continued as heretofore.¹³⁵

As the Lake Huron district was beset by an increased opposition in 1843, Simpson was anxious that an arrangement should be reached with McConnell, thereby permitting reinforcements to be sent to Lake Huron from Témiscamingue.¹³⁶ The negotiations were unproductive. The McConnells requested a loan of £500 in return for their withdrawal from the fur trade. Simpson considered this "extravagant," and he believed

that if he agreed, it would encourage other interests to come into Lake Témiscamingue, with the intention of being bought off in the same manner.¹³⁷

The location of the McConnells on Lake Témiscamingue is not mentioned. Robert McConnell was at Seven League Lake, and Simpson instructed Siveright that "an active runner" should always be beside him. The other McConnells should also be watched by men who were not only "viligant and active but perfectly confidential and ambitious to distinguish themselves." The Indians should also be under surveillance, so that the McConnells could not purchase their services and even a canoe except at an "extravagant price."¹³⁸ They should be undersold in all articles; Simpson was reluctant to distribute liquor, but thought that it was imperative to adopt the trading practices of his competitors.¹³⁹ The McConnells lived in "shanties."¹⁴⁰

In 1844-45, the posts in Témiscamingue district were Timiscaming House, John Siveright, district master; Timagami, which seems to have closed for a few years before 1844, under Alexander McDonell, interpreter; Desert Post, Louis Desert, interpreter; Mattawa, J.S. Hunter, interpreter; Grand Lac, J. Cameron, clerk; Trout Lake, C. Stuart, postmaster; Camisicomica, Sasard St. Denis, interpreter; and Lake Nipissing, R. McKenzie Jr., clerk.¹⁴¹

As a result of Simpson's measures, the value of the furs collected by the McConnells in 1843-44 did not exceed £500.¹⁴² Nevertheless, the expanding market for Canadian timber in Great Britain encouraged the McConnells to increase their forces on Lake Témiscamingue. The Hudson's Bay Company, which had three years before entered on a small scale the lumbering industry on the lake, sold its timber for £4,000 in 1843-44. Though this represented a loss, Simpson looked upon it as a potentially profitable industry, and its prosecution guaranteed that there would be a large

body of men at Lake Témiscamingue, which if necessary could be employed to protect the fur trade. Siveright was instructed that the industry should be prosecuted for another year.¹⁴³ Simpson recommended that in order to conduct it more economically, it should be supervised in 1844-45 by a Mr. Willment, who was familiar with it, and had formerly been in the company's employ. Willment would be given a part of the profits.¹⁴⁴

Willment, however, demanded that he be salaried. But salaried employees in the past had not shown much initiative, and Simpson judged that Willment would have little incentive to forward the company's interests. Rather than suffer another loss, Simpson decided to abandon the industry.¹⁴⁵ He had also changed his opinion on the advisability of assigning additional men to protect the fur trade. He estimated that besides the McConnells two or three hundred people would be engaged in Témiscamingue district's timber industry, against whom "the few additional hands" which the company "in a single shanty, could employ, would afford little or no protection."¹⁴⁶

The rise in the price of timber encouraged the lumberers to concentrate more upon lumbering. Mr. Egan, the supplier of a number of lumberers, including the McConnells, assured Simpson that he had given "positive instructions" to all of those he had outfitted to discourage the visits of Indians, and he added that the McConnells had indicated that they would terminate their participation in the fur trade.¹⁴⁷ Simpson concluded an agreement with Routh and Company, the principal outfitters in the Témiscamingue region, stipulating that they would not permit any of their clients to deal with the natives.¹⁴⁸

In the autumn of 1843, "two houses" were "erected as a trading post by some petty dealer (supposed to have come from Pentanguishine) on the French River two or three miles

(on the right hand side) below the portage leading from Lake Nipissingue." Roderick McKenzie at Lake Nipissing was instructed to closely watch the trader's movements, and use his discretion on what measures should be taken for the protection of the trade.¹⁴⁹

The growing impoverishment of the lands in the vicinity of Lac des Sables and Rivière Désert posts necessitated new measures to increase their revenues. Simpson advised Thomas Taylor, in February 1844, that the farm at Lac des Sables should be enlarged to yield a greater harvest of oats, which along with the surplus hay, could be disposed of at a tidy profit. The five acres in cultivation should ultimately be expanded to twenty-five. If this could be done, Lac des Sables could eventually supply the district with provisions. The natives unable to cover their debts could be employed in collecting hay.¹⁵⁰

Soon after writing this letter, Simpson visited Lac des Sables, Rivière Désert, Fort Coulonge and Lac des Allumettes. Furs were scarce and lumberers, shopkeepers and pedlars from the United States were offering "extravagant" prices. Simpson thought that it was feasible to reduce the number of individuals employed at Lac des Sables and Rivière Désert and increase the quantity of goods for sale to the lumberers and settlers, giving the two posts a chance to at least meet their expenses.¹⁵¹ However, these measures were not sufficient for Fort Coulonge and Lac des Allumettes, which together had a complement of 3 officers and 22 men. Simpson preferred that the former post should be closed and the latter be maintained with a staff reduced to one officer and 13 men.¹⁵² Fort Coulonge had lost a large number of its hunters, many of whom had gone to Lac des Allumettes, only 30 miles away, because the lumbering industry was not as active about Fort Coulonge as in former years.¹⁵³ Simpson desired to sell it at a fair price to settlers or lumberers.

He was reluctant to abandon it, because the timber in its immediate vicinity, would be cut down and the land would be settled by settlers, whom it might be difficult to dislodge.¹⁵⁴

After discussing the district's affairs with Siveright at Mattawa in April 1844, Simpson "made arrangements" for the abandonment of Fort Coulonge.¹⁵⁵ Siveright, on examining the accounts of its master, George G. Sharpe, discovered that it had been mismanaged and Sharpe had consumed a sizeable proportion of the provisions in feeding his large family. Sharpe was dismissed from the company's service.¹⁵⁶ In the summer, the farm at Fort Coulonge was sold to a Mr. Brizart for £1,000. The buildings of the post were retained.¹⁵⁷ Brizart desired to purchase them, but Simpson, not knowing their value, deferred making a decision.¹⁵⁸ By the end of August, Simpson had resolved that Fort Coulonge should be occupied another winter on a "small scale" as an experiment. A "little sale shop" was to be conducted by Mr. McIntyre,¹⁵⁹ but the latter was urgently needed in the king's posts, and Fort Coulonge was probably closed for part of 1844-45.¹⁶⁰

Brown, who drank immoderately and had been "very irregular" in his accounts and cash transactions,¹⁶¹ was removed from Lac des Allumettes in November 1844. Mr. Watt was immediately summoned from Moose Fort by Simpson, and placed in charge of the cash and accounts of both Lac des Allumettes and Fort Coulonge. He was instructed to concentrate on the retail shop at Fort Coulonge.¹⁶² Watt was replaced, in the autumn of 1845, by Hector McKenzie from Fort William on Lake Superior.¹⁶³

Brown's replacement at Fort Coulonge, Mr. Moore, was removed within a year. Moore had absented himself without permission for a considerable time and he was suspected by Simpson of robbing his own post.¹⁶⁴

In order to be competitive with the merchants along the Ottawa River, Simpson introduced a few cheaper articles in 1845. He regarded this as an experiment, which if successful, would be conducted in subsequent years on a larger scale.¹⁶⁵

The men employed at the Ottawa River posts, until 1844, were either Canadians or half-Indians of "French Extraction," who earned considerably more than the Orkneymen and were less governable. In 1844, Simpson requested of the London Committee six Orkneymen, each having a contract for five years, to be employed at Lac des Allumettes and Lac des Sables.¹⁶⁶

Both Lac des Deux Montagnes and Lac des Sables faced competition from "every publican and shopkeeper," who sold their returns to furriers at prices as high as could be obtained on the London market.¹⁶⁷ Although this competition made the upkeep of Lac des Deux Montagnes expensive, Simpson in the early 1840s gave no thought to its abandonment. He wrote in 1844,

This establishment is of little or no value in point of returns, but affords us an influence over the numerous Iroquois, Algonquin, and Nipissingue population at that village who, unless in a certain degree under our control, might become very troublesome to the surrounding districts.¹⁶⁸

In 1844, Simpson ordered that the "posts" on Rivière aux Lièvres should form a separate district from Lac des Deux Montagnes because it was easier to conduct their affairs from Lac des Sables.¹⁶⁹

Simpson, in 1847, decided that the declining returns at Lac des Deux Montagnes made the upkeep of a "regular" establishment there too costly. As it was desirable that the company should retain its influence over the inhabitants,

whose services as voyageurs were needed, he stationed an interpreter in the village. A house, serving as his residence, was rented. Henceforth, a clerk travelled there once or twice a month picking up any furs available, and paying for them only in cash or goods. No further credit was extended. This course, Simpson reasoned, would relieve the company of its obligations to supply provisions to the village's "half-starved" population.¹⁷⁰

Of the company's quarters in Lachine, Simpson writes in 1831,

The Establishment of Lachine is in such a dilapidated state and being a wooden house is so cold in winter as to be scarcely habitable. I have therefore suggested to Mr. Keith the expediency of purchasing on account of the Company a house in Lachine (within half a mile of the present Establishment) belonging, to the Heirs of McDougald, attached to which there is a farm of from 2 to 300 acres of land. The house in its present state is not sufficiently large for our business, but with the addition of a wing would answer our purpose. This property as it now stands is worth about £ 1200 Cy., and with an outlay of about £ 800 more would make the whole cost £ 2000 Hx Cy.

Simpson preferred renting the house to buying it. There was no other house in Lachine suitable for his offices, and no "situation sufficiently convenient for the Canal river and road vacant to enable us to build." A number of his colleagues suggested that Montreal was preferable to Lachine, but he was not receptive; he believed that if the offices were situated in Montreal it would be impossible to keep out of society, expenses would increase, and it would "be exceedingly inconvenient in many points of view."¹⁷¹

The Hudson's Bay Company in 1833 purchased from William Gordon of Lachine a house of 60 feet by 50, the most attractive and spacious structure at Lachine. It served as Simpson's headquarters.¹⁷² Fourteen years later, Simpson contemplated removing his headquarters from Lachine, considering it to be "on a larger and more expensive scale than the altered condition of the business of the department seems to justify." Montreal was a more attractive location. Previously, brigades of canoes had departed from Lachine into the interior, but now steamship transportation from Montreal, which was cheaper, could be used. Simpson intended to dispose of the establishment if he got "a fair offer."¹⁷³ However, he passed his remaining years at Lachine, dying there in 1860.

In 1845, Roderick McKenzie, the clerk at Lake Nipissing who had the previous year been tried and acquitted of murder, was removed from his post because of negligence and incompetence.¹⁷⁴

In the latter part of 1846 or early part of 1846, Simpson toured Lac des Sables, Fort Coulonge and Lac des Allumettes. He found that the prospects for trade were not encouraging, as extravagant prices were being paid for furs. A retail store at Lac des Allumettes, he thought, could be kept up by the company because there was a demand for low-priced merchandise,¹⁷⁵ but Lac des Sables he regarded "only as a haunt for idle, useless Indians, who are a constant drain on our provisions and supplies." Lac des Sables had a complement of seven men, including a master and one or two assistants. While he was at Buckingham, situated at the mouth of the Rivière aux Lièvres, he made arrangements for the construction of a house. He considered it a better location than Lac des Sables, for it gave better opportunities of viewing the Indians coming down the Ottawa, Gatineau and Blanche rivers. From Buckingham, visits could periodically

be made during the winter to collect furs from the lumberers and settlers. The number of men needed at Buckingham would be less than the seven now at Lac des Sables.¹⁷⁶ Finally, the transactions with the natives would be in cash, which meant that they would be obliged to supply their own clothing and provisions, hitherto provided to them by the company "at a loss instead of a gain."¹⁷⁷ The profits from a small retail store could cover the post's expenses. Rivière Désert, although operated at a loss, was retained for the protection of the interior country.¹⁷⁸

Simpson deferred the removal from Lac des Sables for at least one year in the hope that it could be sold to lumberers in the vicinity. No purchaser was found, hardships were encountered by the lumbering industry in 1846-47 and money was scarce.¹⁷⁹ It was probably closed in 1848-49 and a post was opened at Buckingham.

In addition to Lac des Sables, there was an establishment, in 1847, "on the branch of the Gatineau" River. Although unproductive, it was maintained as a means of facilitating the communication with Grand Lac, whose supplies were transported up the Ottawa River. The inhabitants of Grand Lac were so much accustomed to imported provisions, that Simpson feared that if these supplies were withheld, they would withdraw to the Lièvres and Gatineau rivers and become "hangers-on" at the various shanties there, and the trade of that "still valuable post" would be lost.¹⁸⁰

Further up the Ottawa, at Fort Coulonge and Lac des Allumettes, furs were purchased, in 1845-46, at prices nearly equal to what they brought on the London market. Itinerant traders and shopkeepers in the vicinity, thinking that furs would have as high a value in London and New York as in the previous year, paid extravagant prices. When the market value dropped in 1845-46, many of them sold their furs to the Hudson's Bay Company at losses of 30 to 40 per cent.

These heavy losses eliminated some of the competition. However no general improvement could be expected because of the advance of settlers and lumbering companies up the Ottawa River.¹⁸¹ The posts were surrounded by villages, farms and lumbering shanties, giving the natives a convenient market for their furs.¹⁸² As a result of their contact with the settlers, the Indians were becoming less honest.¹⁸³

More attention was given after the mid-1840s to retail shopkeeping, which promised to return a fair profit, but as the deficit in the fur trade was steadily mounting, Simpson thought the company would do well if it could "escape without loss."¹⁸⁴ The posts could not be abandoned because they were part of the chain of communications between Lachine and Témiscamingue and the other inland districts.¹⁸⁵

A temporary post was established in 1846-47 at Rivière Dumoine. The supervisor of the district this year was H. McKenzie, whose management, Simpson wrote, was "characterized by zeal, steadiness and economy."¹⁸⁶

The profits derived from Témiscamingue district in 1845-46 were greater than those in the previous winter. The numerous parties in the district concentrated more upon lumbering, but the lumbering industry was unproductive, and some interests withdrew. Expecting the McConnells to persevere, Simpson took the same precautions as formerly, although they were costly. The great demand for grain and other provisions made supplies expensive.¹⁸⁷

The McConnells however, withdrew from the fur trade in 1846-47, after having suffered heavy losses. There was now no "regular opposition," but the constant contact of the inhabitants with the lumberers and settlers, who extended up the Ottawa River almost as far as Lake Témiscamingue, diverted their attention from the hunt. Six establishments were maintained, at a heavy expense, in Témiscamingue district: Timiscaming, Hunters Lodge, Grand Lac, Camisicomica,

Lake Nipissing and Mattawa.¹⁸⁸ The profit derived from the district in 1846-47 was £3,932, as opposed to £3,362 the year before.¹⁸⁹ By 1846-47 Témiscamingue district had been separated from Ottawa River district.

The natives earned so much money as canoemen in the transportation from the bay that they were becoming less dependent on hunting for their livelihood. The liquor trade was countenanced by Simpson only because he believed that if its use was discontinued, liquor-peddling traders would flock to the district. Simpson welcomed the annual visits of missionary priests, observing that they encouraged the hunters to trade honestly.¹⁹⁰

As the fur trade at Lake Témiscamingue was so much at the mercy of the inhabitants of the Ottawa River, the Témiscamingue and Ottawa River districts were again united in 1851. Chief Trader Hector McKenzie, residing at Lac des Allumettes, was placed in charge and he was assisted by Chief Trader J.W. Simpson at Témiscamingue. Retail sales shops were now open at Fort Coulonge, Fort William (Lac des Allumettes), Joachim and Mattawa, selling goods to settlers and lumbermen who paid in furs, provisions and money. This business was now more remunerative at these posts than the Indian trade.¹⁹¹

Although the company, by 1851, no longer had to contend with the opposition of the McConnells in Témiscamingue district, there were numerous petty traders from the Ottawa River and lake Huron engaged in the trade. Some of them were connected by marriage with the Indians. Most of them were also engaged in the lumbering industry or were conducting fisheries. Because the district's inhabitants often were employed by the lumberers as canoemen, it was difficult to prevent them from disposing of their hunts at the settlements on the Ottawa River. Simpson despaired that Témiscamingue district in future would be productive; he

thought that within a few years the principal object in maintaining it would be to arrest the penetration of traders into the more remote regions.¹⁹² The posts in operation in 1850-51 were Timiscaming House, Hunter's Lodge, Grand Lac, Trout Lake, Kakibaãgino, Timagamingue and Lake Nipissing. They had a complement of six officers and twenty-one men.¹⁹³ Provisions, tobacco, and various other bulky supplies were purchased in Canada and brought by winter transport up the Ottawa River to Mattawa. From there they were taken by canoes, manned by natives, to the district's posts. British manufactured goods were imported through Moose.

In the 1850s, the number of lumbering interests operating in Témiscamingue district mushroomed. While the number of furs purchased by the company remained unaltered, the price paid for them sharply increased.¹⁹⁴ Simpson wrote in 1854:

The tariff now in use is so high that the trade is by no means profitable; we have no alternative, however, but to give higher prices than our opponents, who unless rigorously opposed here, would extend their operations across the frontier of the Honable Company's Territory.

Six settlements were kept up in 1854, Timiscaming House, Lake Nipissing, Grand Lac, Kakabaãgano, Timiscaming (Timagamingue) and Hunters Lodge. The latter two were in charge of the same person. The district was under the supervision of Chief Trader John W. Simpson.¹⁹⁵

Because of the presence of lumbering companies, by 1853 the posts no longer gave credits to the hunters. Simpson endeavoured to take advantage of the altered state of the trade, sending to the posts an assortment of goods specifically designed to meet the tastes of the lumbermen. These articles were sold for either cash or furs, but under no circumstance was J.W. Simpson permitted to advance credit.

The cash sale prices were set high enough to yield "a moderate profit," although reasonable enough not to hamper sales.¹⁹⁶ Some men deserted to the lumberers, but Simpson could find no remedy for desertion.¹⁹⁷

In 1853-54, the following appointments were made for Témiscamingue district: Timiscaming House, John W. Simpson with a clerk; Grand Lac, Charles Stewart; Cawasicomica, S. St. Denis; Hunters Lodge, J.S. Hunter; and an "outpost occupied last year by Lawatlie [?]," by either Philip Moar or Mr. McBride.¹⁹⁸

In the autumn of 1857, a Mr. Bango, a petty fur trader on the Ottawa River, proceeded with five or six men to Lake Témiscamingue,¹⁹⁹ and settled 28 miles below Timiscaming House. This was the first organized fur-trading opposition the company had experienced at Lake Témiscamingue "for several years,"²⁰⁰ probably the first since the McConnells had abandoned the trade. On learning at the end of October about Bango's intentions, Simpson consulted with Hector McKenzie. A party, consisting of a clerk, an assistant and six men, was assembled on the Ottawa River and was well supplied with goods, provisions and money.²⁰¹ Some of these men were engaged in Ottawa.²⁰² Chief Factor McKenzie, the master of Lac des Allumettes (Fort William),²⁰³ commanded the party, and settled "alongside" Bango. He left a Mr. Taylor and seven men and returned to his establishment. By the end of December, Bango had returned to his residence on the lower Ottawa River, leaving one man and an Indian. It was no longer necessary to maintain such a large party to watch Bango's post, and Simpson discharged four of his men.²⁰⁴ The man left by Bango was still at Lake Témiscamingue in January, but no serious injury to the trade was expected.²⁰⁵

The ensuing year, Bango again wintered on Lake Témiscamingue. Mr. Batson, a clerk at Lac des Allumettes and "a

very active, efficient officer," was selected by Simpson to oppose him.²⁰⁶

Mr. McBride was in charge of Grand Lac until the autumn of 1858. John W. Simpson did not consider him competent, and replaced him with Mr. C. Stuart.²⁰⁷ Soon after, William Polson, formerly a postmaster in the company's service, settled with McBride, his son-in-law, and other family relations at the head of Lake Témiscamingue.²⁰⁸ Fearing that Polson would enter the fur trade, Simpson granted him a "pension or allowance" of £35 per annum; in return, Polson was expected "to render any service in his power to the Company."²⁰⁹

Mattawa was attached to Fort Coulonge district in 1848 because, being a supply depot, it was dependent to a large extent upon Lac des Allumettes, and was too distant to be run efficiently from Témiscamingue.²¹⁰ After James Cameron's death at the beginning of 1851, Simpson placed Témiscamingue district under the management of Hector McKenzie, who also retained Fort Coulonge district. Separate accounts were kept for each district, because Témiscamingue was still part of the Southern Department.²¹¹

In 1851, the company's "agent" on the Rivière aux Lièvres was a Mr. Taylor,²¹² who was master of Buckingham.²¹³

C. Rankin was postmaster until 1852 at Mattawa. Mr. St. Denis was at Kakabãagano.²¹⁴ After Rankin was transferred to Lake Nipissing, Mattawa may have been without a master for a short period. The company did not have a title deed to the land at Fort William (Lac des Allumettes) in 1852, and Simpson was prepared to purchase one from the government.²¹⁵

In the summer of 1853, Simpson visited Fort Coulonge and Fort William, and found that their trade "was in a regular state and as prosperous as the competition in every

branch of the trade in that quarter will permit."²¹⁶ Early in 1855, he decided, after discussions with Hector McKenzie, that at the end of the 1854-55 outfit Fort Coulonge should be closed. It had not been productive for several years, principally because of the increased settlement in its vicinity. Simpson believed that the furs obtained there could be collected at Fort William, the distance between the two establishments being only 27 miles. Its abandonment would save the wages of a clerk and three or four men.²¹⁷ Thomas Taylor, in March, offered to purchase it and Hector McKenzie was instructed by Simpson to negotiate a fair price for the buildings, stocks and implements.²¹⁸ Taylor had retired as master of Fort Coulonge, after a long service with the company; he was in bad health and had a large family and but "very moderate means."²¹⁹ Richard Hardisty, who also desired to retire with his family in Canada, had been informed the previous October about the intended sale, but he did not communicate his acceptance of the company's offer until the beginning of April, a few days after its purchase by Taylor.²²⁰

At the beginning of 1857, Simpson arranged with McKenzie that supplies destined for Témiscamingue should be brought by Iroquois Indians to Mattawa; John W. Simpson would then send his Indians down to Mattawa to convey the articles to Lake Témiscamingue.²²¹

The abandonment of Fort Coulonge did not injure the Ottawa River district's receipts. The economy was so depressed in 1857-58 that few individuals had the resources to compete. Taking advantage of this, the company's establishments on the Ottawa River reduced by 10 to 50 per cent the rates paid for all furs.²²²

A. McNaughton was master of Buckingham in 1857-58,²²³ and in charge of Lac des Sables district.²²⁴ Buckingham was in operation in 1860, and H. McKenzie was still master

of the Ottawa River district. Goods of English manufacture were brought to Timiscaming from Moose. Canadian produce was brought from Montreal.²²⁵

While there was no annual increase in the returns from Ottawa River and Lake Témiscamingue districts in the 1850s, by 1860 the cost of maintaining the posts was spiralling and could not be controlled. The consumption of flour was annually going up, and this augured badly for the districts' future prospects.²²⁶ In 1860, the price paid for martens and other furs on the Gulf of St. Lawrence was more than double that on the Ottawa River, and a substantial number of furs which would have been collected on the Ottawa River ended up on the Gulf of St. Lawrence.²²⁷ Simpson castigated Benjamin Batson at Bersimis for not distinguishing between furs hunted below Quebec and those hunted as far west as the Ottawa River.²²⁸

After visiting Fort William in the latter part of 1863, A.G. Dallas recommended that it should be closed and sold.²²⁹ He planned to make Joachim, located at "the head of steamboat navigation," the depot for supplying Timiscaming. Hitherto, the outfit was hauled in winter to Timiscaming on sledges, but supplying it by steamboat promised to reduce costs.²³⁰ In 1863, Mattawa, at the outlet of the Mattawa River, served "as a trading station and a depot" for Timiscaming. Dallas thought that Chief Factor McKenzie imprudently had spent too much money on constructing buildings there, and he feared that the investment would not yield a commensurate return.²³¹ The company's establishments on the Ottawa River in 1863 were Forts William, Joachim, Mattawa, Buckingham and Rivière Désert.²³² It is not certain whether Fort William was abandoned in 1863, but it was before 1871. In the latter year, it was re-established under the name of New Post, further down the river.²³³

The Districts of Lake Huron, Kinoogumisee and Moose After
1821

Introduction

As a result of the coalition of 1821, a substantial number of employees of the North West Company in the Lake Huron region was discharged. Soon after, traders from Newmarket, Penetanguishene and York, having this reservoir of manpower, entered the field, obliquing the Hudson's Bay Company to maintain eight posts, at a large expense, to compete and protect the region beyond Lake Nipissing. The activities of these traders were seldom attended with success because of the extensive resources of the company, and one by one the principal merchants and traders withdrew after suffering severe losses. In the 1840s, some of the company's former servants from time to time resided on Lake Nipissing, and British and American shopkeepers sent men to the Indian encampments.

Sault Ste. Marie was placed in Lake Huron district in 1844-45, and became the headquarters of Chief Trader John Ballenden, the district master, in 1846. In the early 1840s, explorations for minerals began on the American side of Lake Huron and by the mid-1840s, it had spread to Canada. The mines opened in the mid-1840s on the southern shores of Lake Huron attracted settlers to the American side of the Sault Ste. Marie. While the fur trade declined at the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Sault Ste. Marie, a bonded warehouse was opened, selling goods imported from England in bond to the Americans. The operation was not effeciently conducted, and was not as profitable as had been anticipated.

The mining speculation subsided on the Canadian side of Lake Huron in the latter part of the 1840s, but revived in the early 1850s. By 1854, Bruce Mine, owned by the Montreal Mining Company and located near the post of Mississauque, was in operation. Miners and settlers began moving into Lake Huron district in force in the mid-1850s, and settlements began to dot the lake's shores. By the latter part of the decade, the district was extensively frequented by petty fur traders, many of whom were employed by Montreal and New York fur dealers. This competition drove up the prices paid for furs.

In the post-1821 period, there were only two posts in Kinooquimissie district, Mattagami and Kuckatoosh (Flving Post). The district recovered from the pre-1821 overhunting, and until the 1840s was relatively profitable. The barren nature of the region discouraged the penetration of free traders, and the company never experienced any organized opposition. A decline in the trade began at the beginning of the 1840s, and the district steadily became more impoverished. The Indians found it difficult to pay for the extensive imported provisions required to sustain themselves, and many left the Lake Huron district. But in 1850-51, there were still too many hunters to exploit the district's declining resources, and many were removed to other districts. By the end of the decade, the district's operations were carried on on such a small scale that its receipts no longer materially affected the profit of the Southern Department.

Moose district, throughout the post 1821 period (1821-70), was a profitable district. The post of Abitibi was particularly productive, its returns increasing each year. The district reached the height of its prosperity in the 1840s. Until the end of that decade, the company succeeded in excluding its hunters from Canadian influence, but subsequently Lake Abitibi's inhabitants began to clan-

destinely convey some of their furs down the Ottawa River to petty traders. The district's establishments, Moose Factory, New Brunswick and Abitibi, were still regarded in the mid-1850s as valuable posts.

Lake Huron District

Before the coalition of the Hudson's Bay and North West companies in 1821, the former had never settled on Lake Huron or in the region immediately north of it. As a result of the coalition, the number of Canadians employed by the Lake Huron posts was reduced.

Before its surrender to the Americans at the end of 1828, a number of traders and a substantial number of half-Indian families descended from early traders resided on Drummond Island. As early as 1816 some of the voyageurs traded at Penetanguishene. However, it was not before 1825 that the first permanent settler, a Scottish trader from Drummond Island named Gordon, established himself at Gordon's Point. When the British garrison removed to Penetanguishene in 1828, about 75 families of voyageurs accompanied it.¹ Free traders from Drummond Island and elsewhere were attracted to Penetanguishene by this reservoir of experienced fur traders. Newmarket and York merchants were also active in Lake Huron district by the early 1820s.

The principal North West Company post on Lake Huron prior to 1821 was La Cloche. There is little information on La Cloche before 1821, as its journals for this period have not survived. It is not listed in a 1806 inventory of supplies for the North West Company's principal posts in British North America.² Lake Nipissing, in 1805, is listed as a department. On the union of the two companies, there were four posts in Lake Huron district: Lac Cloche, Mississaugue, Inland Post (Villemeure) and South East Lake

(Matchidas).³ Lake Nipissing is not mentioned in the 1821 enumeration of posts in either the Lake Huron or Ottawa River districts. Ottawa River district was comprised of Fort Coulonge, Sandy Lake and Round Lake.⁴ Mississaugue was in existence in 1817; Peter Spence of the Hudson's Bay Company writes in that year that he "encamped at a trading post at the mouth of Miss'aso'qee River."⁵ It was still located at the mouth of the river in 1856.⁶

John J. Bigsby in 1823 saw an "old trading post" called Bourassa Post on an island in Parry's Sound. It consisted of "two long, low, barn-like huts, among sand-hills, mounds, and dwarf cedars."⁷ He also mentions the post of La Ronde, located near the Shamenega (Shawanaga) River, "a melancholy-looking log-house, with a cluster of out-houses, sunk for protection behind some sand-heaps and rocks." There were other traders wintering on "the west side of a low promontory, from ten to thirteen miles long," a short distance from Muskokony River.⁸

It is apparent in Bigsby's narrative that he made at least three voyages through Lake Huron, between about 1820 and 1850, and he often omits relating the date when he observed the posts, making it difficult to date several of them. He says that a trader named La Morandière had "long resided" in Collins Sound. As shall be seen, a trader of that name opposed the Hudson's Bay Company in Lake Huron district in the 1820s and 1830s. A half-mile from Point Colles, Bigsby, on one of his voyages, passed a "ruined fort."⁹ He says that a Mr. McBean had been for "many years" at the mouth of the Little Sagamuc River, and had given his name to the spot.¹⁰

In the period immediately after the coalition of 1821, the competition from free traders was more intense in the Lake Huron district than in any other district in the Southern Department. The Robertsons of Newmarket, as early

as 1825, had a post at Lake Nipissing where the most northerly outpost from La Cloche was located. Lake Nipissing was only 50 miles from Lake Témiscamingue, and Governor Simpson concluded that their principal objective was probably to penetrate into the Témiscamingue region. Nevertheless, their trade was not profitable, and they did not make a significant impression on the natives, not having goods equal in quality to those of the company. According to Simpson, there were seven Hudson's Bay Company posts besides La Cloche in 1827-28, each having two oppositions.¹¹ They were Isle au Sables, Saguingue, Lake Nipissing, Whitefish Lake, Green Lake, Grand Lake and French River (also called the Guard House). There were in fact eight, the eighth being Mississaugue. It was necessary to maintain so many establishments in order to protect Timiscaming. Only La Cloche was retained during the summer.

The opposition, before 1829, came from Drummond Island, Sault Ste. Marie and Newmarket, and consisted mainly of discharged clerks and interpreters of the North West Company and the American Fur Company. They usually managed to survive a year or two; but no sooner did one retire than another one took his place.¹²

No fixed course of trade could be pursued by the company in Lake Huron district. Prices varied with the demand, the goods varied according to "fancy", and novelties were always popular. The Indians, Simpson wrote in 1830, were no longer the simple hunters of the past; they were "crafty and vicious having imbibed all the bad habits which they have so long witnessed." The desertion of clerks and labourers to the American Fur Company and petty traders, who promised high wages, was common. The American border being close, the men not infrequently crossed it and entered the employ of the American Fur Company. The vacancies created had to be filled from the inhabitants of the region, and the replacements were

not always men of good quality. In 1830, the district did no more than cover its expenses, and its declining fur-bearing animal population presented a bleak outlook for the future.¹³

One advantage in favour of the company was the scarcity of country provisions. The traders were required to provide the hunters with large amounts of grain and Indian corn; otherwise the natives would have to concentrate on fishing. After distributing these provisions in addition to liquor and manufactured articles, the petty traders rarely could derive a profit.¹⁴

As has been seen, the La Cloche journals before 1827-28 have not survived, and consequently there is little information on the competition with the free traders before this period. We find on a map in Governor George Simpson's papers in the Hudson's Bay Company's archives a house placed on the east side of Wanabiti Lake. The following is written: "Here Mr. Robins wintered 1822/23." Wanabiti Lake is in the Kukagami Lake region.¹⁵ Allan McDonnell at Timiscaming wrote in August 1827 that a negro appeared at his post requesting employment. He had been left in charge of a post at Lake Nipissing while his unnamed employer was absent at Newmarket, but he had abandoned it and had left his provisions and goods with Francis Grant, the Hudson's Bay Company master at Lake Nipissing. McDonnell refused to hire him because he had betrayed his master.¹⁶

We learn, in the first La Cloche journal (1827-28), that La Cloche had eight dependencies: Mississaugue, Green Lake, Whitefish Lake, French River, Lake Nipissing, Sheshawinaga (Shawinagaw), Isle aux Sables and Saguingue.¹⁷ Alexander McKay and three men were at Saguingue, Henry Sayer, an interpreter and three men at Isle aux Sables, and a Mr. Belanger at Mississaugue. McKay had an opponent "about 3 days march from his place" who received a substantial amount

of furs before he was aware of his being there. At Mississaugue, Belanger was opposed by two men sent by Andrew Mitchel of Drummond Island; they had "an assortment of Goods, Provisions, liquor and Ammunition."¹⁸

There were probably two posts in opposition to Francis Grant at Lake Nipissing. Chief Factor John McBean, the master at La Cloche, writes in his journal for 31 October 1827:

It appears that Roland had gone to Lake Nipissing with two canoes loaded with Provisions etc. he had with him Black formerly a Clerk for the N.W. Co. who is to winter at Lake Nipissing but Mr. Grant having had information of their expected arrival, had equipped all his Indians and sent them Inland.

Early in Septr. a clerk for Mr. Robertson at Newmarket passed on his way also to Lake Nipissing with a Boat Loaded with property from Mr. Robertson's post at that place.

A Mr. Vasseur, from Newmarket, and at least two men were opposed to Mr. Cowie at Grand Lac (Big Lake).¹⁹ Robertson probably had houses at French River and Shawinagaw.

The following winter, Joseph Cadotte, formerly in Robertson's service, was in charge of Bolland's post at Lake Nipissing,²⁰ and Mr. Day from Montreal (most likely Day and McGillivray) was established on the same island as Grant. Bolland's men at Shawinagaw were starving during the winter.²¹ Vasseur was again at Grand Lac and Cowie represented the Hudson's Bay Company. There were two free traders at "Sheboananing" (also spelled Shibahananing and Shebohananning), Lamarandière (La Morandière) equipped by Mitchell, and Lovison Cadotte, who previously had been at Sheboananing, supplied by Bolland.²² By the beginning of January, Cadotte had already expended his liquor, goods and provisions, but had received few furs. Both free traders sent men

to trade with the Indians who frequented La Cloche.²³ Bolland had a house at French River as did Lamarandière and Rousseau.²⁴ Mitchell and "two others of the Drummond Island" were wintering at Point Pallandeu.²⁵ This winter Robinson withdrew from the Lake Huron trade; however, several of his clerks bought up his property and tried their fortunes in the region.²⁶

Eight outposts from La Cloche were again open in 1829-30. At Mississaugue, William Cowie was in charge and had five men, one of whom, Seton McFarlane, was stationed at Green Lake. Edward McKay, at Shawanaga, had five men; one of these men, Jean Bte. Chevallier, resided at Isle au Sable. Francis Grant and three men were at Lake Nipissing, a Mr. Rastoule and one man at French River, Henry Sayer with two men at Whitefish Lake, and Alexander William McKay at Saguingue. John McBean had six men at La Cloche.²⁷ Isle au Sable was given up at the end of the winter.²⁸

In 1829-30, the free traders reached their houses well before McBean's men. They liberally dispensed liquor,²⁹ but in doing so hurt themselves more than the company. E. McKay's opponent at Shawanaga, Bolland, was inadequately provided with goods,³⁰ and in the course of the winter had to purchase additional supplies.³¹ This severely strained his resources and McBean was optimistic that McKay, by his careful management would soon force Bolland to retire or render him powerless to injure his trade.³²

There were two opposition posts at Sheboananing: Lamarandière had five men and "Goodings people" were six men, including the master. During the early autumn, the Indians were encamped near them and were constantly drinking.³³

During the summer of 1829, Mitchell stationed at Mississaugue one clerk and four men, who constructed a "House and Stores for the purpose of trade."³⁴ It was well supplied with goods and liquor.³⁵ Cowie arrived one month

later, and consequently lost part of his trade.³⁶ McBean's man also arrived late at Green Lake, and many of the hunters of that lake traded with Mitchell's establishment at Mississaugue.³⁷ Grant at Lake Nipissing had three opponents: Joseph Cadotte, William Starkweather from Newmarket, and Bolland, representing Day and McGillivray of the Ottawa River. All three were poorly supplied, and by the end of January were on the verge of starving and were "doing very little."³⁸

The opposition was not as active in 1830-31. Day and McGillivray of the Grand River had abandoned the contest at Lake Nipissing. Bolland and Rae of Newmarket, who usually occupied ten posts, had only two, and they were "very sparingly supplied." Andrew Mitchell, now a resident at Penetanguishene, was the only individual who conducted a spirited competition.³⁹

Bolland's posts were at Shawanaga (called Grand Lac) and the French River. Neither had collected many furs by the beginning of May, when Bolland expressed to his neighbour, Edward McKay, his desire to enter the Hudson's Bay Company's service. McBean was hesitant because Bolland had a penchant for liquor.⁴⁰ Bolland stated that he would burn all his buildings when he abandoned the trade.⁴¹

Mitchell had nine posts "well supplied in every article of trade and well man'd."⁴² His system of trade, according to McBean, was "very extravagant."⁴³ McBean does not indicate where each post was located.

That winter, Grant had three opponents at Lake Nipissing, a trader from Newmarket⁴⁴ called Black Bill, Joseph Cadotte of Penetanguishene and William Starkweather. By the end of the winter, the latter, having lost £400 of his own money and borrowed nearly as much, abandoned the trade.⁴⁵ There may have been only one free trader at Whitefish Lake opposed to A. McKay, Joseph Vasseur,⁴⁶ who

was killed in March in Penetanguishene.⁴⁷ A Mr. Goulet went to Mississaugue with four men and "a large Boat well laden."⁴⁸ At the end of January, Cowie reported that the opposition at Mississaugue "look rather blue on account of the little they make."⁴⁹ Both Goulet and Cowie had run short of provisions by spring.⁵⁰ There were four traders opposed to Wallace at Saquinque;⁵¹ one of them was Sayer, Mr. Sayer, a former employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was supplied by Mitchell but was in business for himself.⁵² Early in the year, the Indians at Saquinque were converted to Christianity by a Methodist preacher, and subsequently showed little inclination to hunt.⁵³

There was at least one free trader at Whitefish Lake; he had a large outfit and four men,⁵⁴ but he was no match for Alexander William McKay.⁵⁵ Borland was competing with E. McKay at Shawanga, but by the end of May, Borland had done very little, having gotten only 164 pounds of furs.⁵⁶ One of Mitchell's traders was at Shibahananing.⁵⁷ There was a new village at Maitland River, and the opposition there was "numerous and strong."⁵⁸

In 1831-32, William Cowie was in charge of Mississaugue and Green Lake, and he was assisted by Peter McFarlane, who conducted the trade at Green Lake. Cowie had four men. Michel Roustal was at French River, Alexander William McKay and three men were at Whitefish Lake and Saquinque was under Mr. Mansfield, having three men.⁵⁹ There was also an outpost at Shibahananing.

Lamarandière was at Shibahananing, and in the summer of 1831 sent one of his men and his wife "into the interior of Mississaugue with a good supply of goods etc."⁶⁰ A Mr. Rousseau was also at Shibahananing,⁶¹ and there was probably another free trader there as well, a Mr. Dumat.⁶² Mr. Goulet and four men were at Mississaugue in opposition to Cowie.⁶³ One of Lamarandière's men was opposed to

McFarlane at Green Lake.⁶⁴ The Indians did little hunting there and what was done was evenly divided between the two posts.⁶⁵

At Lake Nipissing, Grant had three opponents.⁶⁶ One was outfitted by "Messrs Harris and Peck," who in August 1831 offered to sell everything they possessed at "cost & charges," and desired employment in the company's service. Believing that this would encourage others to come into the Lake Huron region, McBean did not accept the offer.⁶⁷ The three opposition houses, short of ammunition, provisions and liquor, were handicapped in their competition with Grant.⁶⁸ William Starkweather, who had abandoned his house at Lake Nipissing the previous year, was hired as an interpreter and dispatched to aid Grant.⁶⁹ Joseph Cadotte, one of Grant's opponents, retired from the trade at the end of the spring.⁷⁰

Wallace at Saquingue had four opponents: Gooding, McGregor, Benton and Sayer. All except Saver were well provided with goods and men. Although Wallace's returns were not as good as McBean had anticipated, they had improved over the previous year.⁷¹

There were free traders at Shawanga, but we are not told how many. Because supplies were late in arriving at the company's establishment, many of the hunters went to the Canadians. However, many of the hunters were ill throughout the winter, and the opposition's returns, though superior to McKay's, were not considerable.⁷² McKay had only 268 pounds of furs, for which he had expended his entire outfit.⁷³

Three free traders, Borland and Joseph Germain from Penetanguishene and Joseph Cadotte, left the trade at the end of 1831-32, but were immediately replaced by three others.⁷⁴ The Hudson's Bay Company's post at Saquingue was relinquished. It had been kept up principally to procure parchment deerskins; La Cloche, however, was now amply

supplied from Moose in this commodity, and the trade in furs could not cover the post's expenses.⁷⁵ Simpson desired that the number of establishments should be further reduced, but McBean argued that it was necessary that all should be retained so that no debts would be lost to the Canadians.⁷⁶ In 1832-33, the establishments in Lake Huron district included La Cloche, Mississaugue, Green Lake, Whitefish Lake, Nipissing, Shawanaga (Grand Lac) and the "Guard House" at French River.⁷⁷

Andrew Mitchell had a post at every outpost from La Cloche, and two other unspecified ones in the district.⁷⁸ A. McKay and three men at Whitefish Lake had only one competitor, Mitchell's trader, who also had three men.⁷⁹ McKay, by May, had made 12 packs, the best returns from there for a considerable number of years. His opponent had received only between 180 and 200 pounds of furs, barely enough to cover his expenses. The Canadian may have been in distress during the winter because of the failure of the fishery.⁸⁰

Mitchell's trader at Lake Nipissing, probably Grant's only competitor, was well supplied and active. He reached Lake Nipissing in the middle of June, and during the summer sent his men throughout the Lake Témiscamingue region, and received a substantial amount of furs. Grant was alone in the summer and was unable to follow his opponents. His men and the trading goods did not arrive until September.⁸¹

Joseph Rae wintered at Compement d'Aurs.⁸² He was probably there the previous winter, for McBean writes in his journal for 8 June 1832, "Joseph Rae oppositon of Compement d'Aurs passed here on his way back to Penetangoushin."⁸³ There seems to have been only one Canadian at both Green Lake and Mississaugue. McBean writes for 2 June 1832, "Dumat is to pass the summer at Mississaugue & winter for Andrew Mitchell at Green Lake."⁸⁴ It is probable that Lamarandière

again represented Mitchell at Mississaugue; there is a reference in the La Cloche journal to competition there, but no trader is named.⁸⁵ At Shibahananing, Mitchell's post was likely the only opposition.⁸⁶ Mitchell also outfitted John McFarlane, and sent him to pass the winter at Sault Ste. Marie and to commence a trade with the hunters in its vicinity.⁸⁷

Lake Nipissing post, used by McBean to impede the penetration of traders into the Lake Témiscamingue region,⁸⁸ was transferred in 1833-34 to Lake Témiscamingue district, though the two men who maintained it were supplied from La Cloche.⁸⁹ This proved to be an unwise decision, for Peck and Harris soon settled at Temahgamingue (Timagami), in the vicinity of Témiscamingue, with a large outfit.⁹⁰

Grant, in 1833-34, wintered at Shawanaga and also supervised French River post. McKay was at Whitefish Lake and Pierre Belanger at Green Lake.⁹¹ McBean also maintained the post at Mississaugue,⁹² the master being Mr. Anderson.⁹³

In 1833-34, Mitchell retired from active participation in the trade, but he continued to supply a number of his former employees.⁹⁴ Roderick Morrison wintered at Shawanaga, Rousseau at French River, Goulet at Lake Nipissing, "Old Lamarandière" at Shibahananing, the latter's son at Whitefish Lake, "Roy" (Rae) Dumat at Green Lake and Sayer at Mississaugue. At the latter place, an epidemic of measles killed some of the Indians, and consequently the returns of the Hudson's Bay Company post were poor, and Sayer received even less.⁹⁵ Grant received Shawanaga before his opponent, Morrison, and debted all the hunters.⁹⁶ Dumat, at Green Lake, by February had expended most of his provisions and dispatched his men to Mississaugue, where they were to remain until March.⁹⁷ Two of "Old" Lamarandière's men were stationed at Shishiguaning for the spring.⁹⁸

Sayer, with three men, was again at Mississaugue in 1834-35. When he passed La Cloche in late summer, he informed McBean that Peck would be at Lake Nipissing with five men, "Old" Lamarandière with five at Shibahananing, his son at Whitefish Lake with four, Roderick Morrison, with five and a clerk at Shawanaga and French River, and Rousseau at Grand Lac with three. The outfit dispatched to Lake Nipissing was at the expense and responsibility of Mitchell, as Peck had refused to compete there any longer.⁹⁹ The outposts from La Cloche included Mississaugue and Green Lake under the charge of Cowie assisted by Wallace and five men; Shawanaga, Francis Grant, master, and two men; French River, Michel Rastoul, master, with one man; and Whitefish Lake. Lake Nipissing was outfitted from La Cloche but was within Témiscamingue district; Charles Harris, who was most likely the Harris with Peck the previous year at Timagami, was entrusted by Allan McDonnell at Timiscaming with the command of Lake Nipissing. McBean did not think that this appointment was prudent.¹⁰⁰

At Whitefish Lake, McKay's opponent, who was salaried, was extravagant, giving three times as much for furs as McKay.¹⁰¹ McKay's returns were not as good as in the previous winter, but he still got almost twice as much as his opponent, 520 pounds to 280 pounds. The latter, however, had expended enough goods to have made three times that quantity.¹⁰² The only Hudson's Bay Company post to show a substantial decline was Wallace's at Green Lake, but it was caused by the illness of many of the Indians. Wallace's opponent received "nothing to brag of."¹⁰³

The free traders at Lake Nipissing and Timagami hurt Témiscamingue district, drawing away from both houses upwards of 1,000 pounds of furs. This is surprising, because the Hudson's Bay Company's posts at Nipissing and Timagami had two clerks, two interpreters and nine men, and were main-

tained at much expense.¹⁰⁴ McDonnell had made some agreement with Peck and Harris the previous year,¹⁰⁵ but it seems to have worked to the advantage of Peck. The name of the trader at Timagami is not stated.

Harris was removed from Lake Nipissing in 1835-36;¹⁰⁶ the name of his replacement is not known. All the outposts from La Cloche were retained. The masters were the same except at Green Lake, where John O'Brien replaced Wallace.¹⁰⁷ McBean complained that Lake Huron district had been so reduced in manpower, there being only one officer and four clerks for six posts, that "in many circumstances the Company's interest have much suffered and our opponents have benefitted by it."¹⁰⁸ Only one opposition house is mentioned in the La Cloche journal: Sayer was at Mississaugue opposed to Cowie, who was drowned in April.¹⁰⁹ There may have been another free-trader house at Point aux Erables.¹¹⁰

The La Cloche journals in the Hudson's Bay Company archives end in 1835-36. After this winter, we must rely upon Governor Simpson's correspondence for references to free traders in Lake Huron district, and these references are unfortunately only occasional.

John McLean, on his voyage to the Northern Department in the spring of 1832, went through Lake Nipissing, and does not mention seeing a post. He stopped at La Cloche for two hours, visiting Mr. McBean, and the following day he was at Mississaugue post.¹¹¹ This establishment, he remarks,

appeared to possess but few attractions as a place of residence; consisting of a few miserable log buildings, surrounded by a number of pine-bark wigwams, the temporary residence of the natives; several of whom come reeling into the house after our arrival, there being an opposition party there.¹¹²

Those who patronized it were "the most uncouth, savage-looking

beings" McLean had ever seen, "mouth from ear to ear, cheek-bones remarkably high, low projecting forehead, hair like a horse's mane, and eyes red and swollen by continual intoxication. American whisky had no doubt contributed to increase their natural deformity."¹¹³

At Sault Ste. Marie, there was "a large depôt of provisions for the purpose of supplying the canoes passing to and from the interior and the surrounding districts."¹¹⁴ He stopped at Michipicoten and the Pic, where he dined with Mr. McMurray.¹¹⁵

The struggle against the traders was weakened in 1835-36 by the death of Cowie, the ill-health of Grant, and the defection of Alexander William McKay, whom Simpson considered an able clerk, to the opposition.¹¹⁶

For 1836-37, the posts and masters in Lake Huron district were La Cloche, John McBean; Mississauga, James Anderson; Green Lake, John O'Brien; Whitefish Lake, no master listed; Shawanaga, Francis Grant; French River, Michel Rastoul. The district, exclusive of the masters, had a complement of 16 men. The outfit consisted of 95 pieces from Moose and Montreal and 676 pieces of provision and tobacco from Sault Ste. Marie. Although it was in Témiscamingue district, Lake Nipissing was still supplied from La Cloche.¹¹⁷

Lake Huron district's receipts increased in 1836-37. McKay, after only one year on his own, re-entered the company's service and Mitchell, long the principal competitor in the Lake Huron trade but now insolvent, retired. Chief Factor Angus Bethune replaced McBean in 1837-38. Though there was now less opposition, Simpson did not anticipate a resuscitation of the trade. The country was exhausted, the government and religious institutions were encouraging the Indians to farm the land, and the new settlers were giving the latter employment. These factors combined to lure the

Indians away from the hunt, and Simpson concluded that within a few years the district's trade would not be worth pursuing.¹¹⁸ The number of men and the outfit assigned to the district was the same as in the previous year.¹¹⁹

In the journal of a government-sponsored survey conducted in the Muskoka region in 1836-37, we read that the surveyors travelled along a river flowing into Lake Nipissing, "observed towards the mouth of the river...one or two old trading posts, now deserted and covered with brushwood."¹²⁰

By September 1840, Bethune had been replaced by Chief Factor John Dugald Cameron. Sayer was still active at Mississaugue in 1839-40, and was considered the "most formidable of the Petty Traders" operating in the district. He attracted to his post some hunters attached to Flying Post. Cameron was instructed by Simpson to send his most active trader and some of his best hands to oppose him "vigorously" at Mississaugue and endeavour to buy over a confidential Indian in his service. No other petty traders are mentioned by Simpson.¹²¹

Cameron and Bethune did not prove as capable as McBean, and between 1837 and 1843, the district's returns sharply declined. In the latter part of 1843, Simpson wrote to Cameron that he thought that it was in the best interests of the company that he should be transferred to another district in the spring.¹²² Chief Trader John Ballenden was selected as his replacement. In 1844-45 he had five men at La Cloche. The other posts in the district and their masters were: Whitefish Lake, L. Delaronder, clerk, and three men; Guard House, L. St. Cyr, interpreter, and two men; Mississaugue, A.W. Buchanan, and three men; Green Lake, M. Frichette, interpreter, and three men; French River, M. Rastoul St., and two men; Shawanaga, William Grand, and two men, and Sault Ste. Marie, G.G. Sharpe, clerk, and two men.¹²³ Sault Ste. Marie had been placed in Lake Huron district in

1844-45 because there was a paucity of officers in the Southern Department. Ballenden resided at La Cloche for the winter, and Sault Ste. Marie in summer, when he was not needed at La Cloche.¹²⁴

In 1843, Simpson wrote that the Lake Huron district was infested "by a number of worthless characters" employed by both British and American shopkeepers. These men followed the Indians to their encampments and used liquor and other "disgraceful means" to obtain their hunts. The company disdained this mode of trade, considering it disreputable, and would not compete with the shopkeepers in this manner. It paid "extravagant prices" for furs and consequently little profit could be made. It obtained most of the few furs now hunted in the district.¹²⁵

A new opponent named Johnston from Goderich backed by some merchants of Toronto, entered the trade in 1844-45. Simpson writes,

This person has taken measures to form establishments at L. Nepissingue, with a view of attracting the Temiscamingue Indians, and at White Fish Lake and Nipissingue. At L. Nipissingue we shall be well prepared for the contest; and from the opposition he is likely to meet with from ourselves and two petty traders, McKay and Sayer at the other places, I have no doubt the attempts of Johnston will be attended with so little success as to discourage a renewal of them.

Simpson thought that Ballenden was adequately supplied with men and goods to counter the petty traders.¹²⁶

Sault Ste. Marie, in 1844-45, served principally as a provision depot, and possessed a small retail shop, which had been established there some years before. However, the retail merchants on the American side, who were able to

transport goods from the Atlantic ports at a low cost, undersold the company's store in most of the goods in demand. The company, therefore, now kept there no more goods than were required to satisfy the demands of its servants, and to purchase the few furs which were available.¹²⁷ The other posts in the district were La Cloche, with a temporary guard-house about 20 miles distant, Mississaugue, Green Lake, Whitefish Lake and French River.

Under John Ballenden's able management, the district showed a substantial gain in 1844-45 over the previous outfit, which had manifested a small loss. Nevertheless, Simpson did not expect any decided amelioration in the future, as the district was overrun by petty traders, and the company was now required to pay duty, about five per cent, on all products imported into Upper Canada via Hudson Bay.¹²⁸

A petty trader from Penetanguishene name Ducase, in 1845-46, was established at the head of French River. Simpson writes in 1854,

He was last year unopposed by any of the Company's people, and I understand was thereby enabled to collect a good many skins, this man was formerly in the Company's employ and is well spoken of. It may, therefore, be advisable to secure his services by engaging him as a Postmaster at £35 e £40 p.^r ann., putting him in charge at Lake Nipissingue. If he cannot be prevailed upon to enter the Company's service, it will be necessary to place a couple of active men alongside him, with instructions to watch the trade and to give such prices for skins as may prevent their falling into his hands.¹²⁹

The recovery of the Lake Huron trade in 1844-45, as Simpson had predicted, was not long lasting. A profit of

only £50 was made the ensuing winter. The natives were rapidly losing their interest in hunting, the country being exhausted of fur-bearing animals. Some had turned to farming on Manitoulin Island; others were working as "beasts of burden" for the settlers at Mackinac, St. Joseph and other "white" communities. But Simpson thought the district was still too valuable to abandon; so long as the receipts covered the expenditure, he thought that all the posts should be retained, thereby maintaining the chain of communication with Canada and protecting the interior.¹³⁰

By 1846, Sault Ste. Marie had become the headquarters of the district's master, John Ballenden, and served as the depot of the districts of Lake Huron and Lake Superior. While it was unproductive, it was valuable as a depot. In 1846, Sault Ste. Marie was surveyed and "laid out as a town," but Simpson expected that it would be occupied by only a half-Indian population until mining was begun on a large scale.¹³¹ There was much mining activity in the early 1840s on the American side of Lakes Huron and Superior, and by the mid-1840s mining speculation had spread to the Canadian side. As the company was unable to check this speculation, Simpson, apparently using his personal finances, invested in the most influential mining company. This course, he thought, would enable him to prevent the interference by the mining companies in the fur trade. He was assured by the principal companies that they would not introduce liquor to the natives and would abstain from trading with them.¹³²

It is not certain whether the promises were kept. Mining, however, attracted shopkeepers, who were ever anxious to purchase furs. By 1854, Bruce Mine, owned by the Montreal Mining Company, was in operation. It was located about 40 miles east of Sault Ste. Marie and near the post of Mississaugue. There was a large population, a custom house

and a post office. Competition on Lake Huron was as intense as on the Ottawa River. The bulk of the furs was no longer collected from the natives, but from the shopkeepers who, needing ready cash, sold them at a little below the price current on the New York and Montreal markets. Though the company's profit margin was small, this trade tended to check the encroachments of petty traders into the richer regions further north.¹³³

In 1847-48, there were six posts in Lake Huron district: Sault Ste. Marie, La Cloche, Mississaugue, Green Lake, Whitefish Lake and French River.¹³⁴ By 1854, French River was no longer open.¹³⁵

The North West Company's establishment at Sault Ste. Marie had been located at the lower end of the portage. When the American government, in the early 1820s, built Fort Brady on the opposite side of the river, the British government decided to erect a military post on the site of the fur-trading establishment. The Hudson's Bay Company's agents in Montreal, McGillivray, Thain and Company, sold the post but never received payment for it. A new one was founded about a quarter of a mile away, "on the lower bank of a small creek falling into the river below the portage."

No military post was erected opposite Fort Brady, and the site remained unoccupied for some time. Finding the new location to be "exceedingly unhealthy and the situation very inconvenient," the company reoccupied the old post where it was still located in the 1840s.¹³⁶

Before purchasing the company's post at Sault Ste. Marie, the government sent Lieutenant Balton Roy to survey the buildings. The following is his report.¹³⁷

No. 1	A clapboarded and framed building
Sault Ste. Marie's	with shingled roof - this mill is in excellent repair, and the
Saw Mill	machinery appears complete and in good order.

- No. 2
Boat Shed A rough framed building for the purpose of securing boats whilst building from the weather, new and extremely well adapted for the purpose for which it was erected.
- No. 3
Carpenter,
Shop An old log building, not worth repair, and ought to be condemned.
- No. 4
Root House A stone building in good order, the rafters which support the roof are slightly affected by the damp, but will last many years.
- No. 5
Magazine A stone building, the roof and door of which is covered with Sheet Iron, and locks hinges too are also of iron. This building has been used by the N.W. Company as a magazine. It is dry and in very good order.
- No. 6
Stone House
Stores High A log building two stories high, not stone foundation - the logs are very wide apart, and roof covered with cedar bark which requires repair - the lower floor requires repairs. The upper floor consists of Fir Plank not fastened down, the building is generally in very good repair.
- No. 7
Ground
Store A log building clapboarded and raised on Piles about seven feet from the ground in good order - the roof is covered with cedar bark, and which requires repair - the Ladders and railway of this store are decayed.
- No. 8
Dwelling
House A log building 30 x 22: 6 feet clapboarded and plastered inside, divided formerly into two large rooms and a passage in the center of about 10 feet wide, at present two small closets have been taken of the East

- room of about 7 feet in width - the roof is covered with cedar bark. This building not being on a stone foundation, the lower timbers are beginning to decay, and that no tolerable good order requires a general repair.
- No. 9
Kitchen
A log building clapboarded and plastered inside. There is no ceilings but the roof is lined with pine plank and covered with cedar bark - the building serves as a kitchen to the dwelling house above described, and not being on a stone foundation, its lower timbers are in similar state.
- No. 10
Stable
Weather
Boarded
A framed building divided into three compartments - one of which is filled up for seven horses, another for cows, and the third appears as if intended for sleighs, or carriages; this building is not on a stone foundation and is in very good order - the roof is covered with cedar bark, and requires some slight repairs.
- No. 11
Barn
An old log building irreparable.
- No. 12
Dwelling
House
A log building clapboarded and lined inside. Consisting of one sitting room 15.9 x 14 feet, 2 small bedrooms, a kitchen and a good attic. This is a new building in very good repair, is on a stone foundation.
- No. 13
Canteen
Shop
and Store
A framed building raised from the ground on logs - the roof is covered with cedar Bark. This building is in tolerable good order, but appears not quite perpendicular, tho' I could not discover the reason, and it is also I think older than any of the Store Houses above described.

- No. 14 A small log building in good repair.
Blacksmith
Shop
- No. 15 An old log building irreparable and might
be condemned.
- No. 16 The wharf S.E. requires some slight re-
Wharf S.E. pairs, but is generally in good order.
- No. 17 An oven built of stone in good order.
Oven
- No. 18 The Wharf S.W. is in good order, but is
Wharf S.W. reserved by the Company.
- No. 19 A log building in good repair. Roof
Store at covered with cedar bark. Reserved by the
S.W. Company.

As the government had reneged on its promise to pay for the post, the company, in 1825, petitioned Lord Bathurst for a grant of 1,200 acres of land contiguous to the new one. The colonial secretary ordered the lieutenant governor to make the grant, but the "Letters Intent" were never issued.¹³⁸

Early in 1846, Ballenden cut a large number of trees on this land. The government accused him of cutting timber on crown lands without a licence, and demanded the payment of a duty on the wood. Ballenden refused, claiming that the land belonged to the company.¹³⁹ The outcome of this dispute is not known.

Mining speculation began on the Canadian sides of Lakes Huron and Superior in 1845. The following year, the government announced that it would sell "mining locations," measuring two miles in frontage and five in depth, at four shillings per acre. Many individuals registered claims.¹⁴⁰ Fearing that speculators could claim the lands on which the company's posts were located, Simpson, in 1846, requested land grants for La Cloche, Mississaugaue, and Sault Ste. Marie

on Lake Huron, and Bachewana, Michipicoten, Pic and Fort William on Lake Superior. Lake Nipigon was omitted because Simpson believed that it was beyond the range of mining exploration, but it was subsequently added. The area requested for each post was the same as a mining location, two miles in frontage by five miles in depth.¹⁴¹

The government did not act on the requests, and as the mining ventures were not successful and were almost completely abandoned in the late 1840s, Simpson did not press his application. However, in the early 1850s there were some mineral discoveries, and Simpson renewed his application, employing Stewart Derbishire, the Queen's Printer, to present his case before the government.¹⁴² In September 1854, the government sent surveyors to the posts,¹⁴³ and promised Simpson that the grant at Sault Ste. Marie would be 1,200 acres contiguous to the company's establishment; the other seven establishments would receive land grants of two miles frontage by five in depth.¹⁴⁴

The land granted to the company at Mississaugue River was on the south side of the river. The government considered that the area requested by Simpson would interfere with the Indian reserve on the other side of the river.¹⁴⁵

In 1857-58, the Hudson's Bay Company posts on Lake Huron were La Cloche, Mississaugue, Sault Ste. Marie, and Lake Nipissing.¹⁴⁶ The company was given by the government 1,200 acres at Sault Ste. Marie. This land was swampy and not suitable for cultivation, and fires had destroyed most of the timber.¹⁴⁷

As Lake Nipissing post was "out of the way for the inland Indians" and its immediate vicinity was denuded of wood for firewood, it was rebuilt in August 1848, a little less than two miles away. The land belonged to the Indian chief in the neighbourhood, who gave it to the company.¹⁴⁸ It was "one of the smallest class," manned by a postmaster and two or three men.¹⁴⁹

A rival trader, Michel Aigle, seems to have been settled close to it. In 1856, he sent a petition to the government alleging that he had been prevented by the company's postmaster from harvesting cranberries one-half mile from the company's post. A Mr. Thompson of Penetanguishene, who signed the "certificate," had been engaged in the fur trade in the Lake Huron region for a considerable time. Hector McKenzie, at Fort William (Lac des Allumettes), wrote to Simpson that this was one of the many tricks Thompson had been using over the years to secure for himself the Lake Huron trade, having found it too difficult to compete honestly. McKenzie noted that the company's people had maintained friendly relations with Aigle; however, he was a rival, and therefore he was prevailed upon by Thompson and Allan McDonald, who was also ill-disposed toward the company, to draw up the petition.¹⁵⁰

Although Sault Ste. Marie collected few furs by the middle of the 1840s, Simpson, in 1847, considered its maintenance as a provision depot "absolutely necessary." The town was growing because of its proximity to some mines and now had a post office as well as a branch of the Bank of British North America. The post office had been established chiefly because Simpson had promised that his agent in the town would superintend the delivery and forwarding of the mail. Chief Trader Ballenden also conducted the bank's affairs. The influx of new inhabitants into Sault Ste. Marie gave promise of greater revenues for the sales shop, which Simpson thought could be conducted without any substantial increase in expenses.¹⁵¹

Simpson received permission from the government, in 1852, to make one of the stores at Sault Ste. Marie into a bonded warehouse, permitting the company to import goods from England for sale in bond to the Americans. There was a demand in the United States for woollens, cutlery, wine,

cigars and other articles. A small trade in these articles was conducted at the sales shop, the duty being paid as the goods were transferred from the bonded warehouse. The receipts, however, still barely covered the expenses. There was but a trifling trade in furs;¹⁵² it was confined to purchases for cash from petty traders in the vicinity.¹⁵³

Chief Trader Buchanan was master at La Cloche in 1847-48,¹⁵⁴ having succeeded Ballenden. Buchanan, in turn, was succeeded, in 1851, by Chief Factor Hargrave. The posts, in 1851, were Sault Ste. Marie, La Cloche, Mississaugue, Whitefish Lake and Green Lake. The latter four had a complement of two clerks, two interpreters and fifteen men.¹⁵⁵

Because of the frequent replacement of masters at Sault Ste. Marie in the late 1840s, the sales shop was not efficiently run. Chief Trader Ermatinger, on investigating, during the summer of 1851, its operation, found that the goods were priced so high that they could not be sold. When the sales shop had been opened in 1845 or 1846, Simpson had left the fixing of prices to Ballenden's discretion. Simpson now desired that more emphasis should be placed on the wholesale aspect of the store, selling "by the package," as there were customers readily available on the American side.¹⁵⁶

Despite Simpson's strict orders in the 1840s against dispensing liquor to the natives, the company's servants in the Lake Huron district did so from time to time. Wemyss Simpson was summoned before the magistrate at Manitowaning, on Manitoulin Island, and on the testimony of a priest, was fined \$10. This priest also informed against "several other parties." Simpson was surprised by these revelations, and reiterated his order against the sale of spirits.¹⁵⁷

A Mr. Wilson was appointed master of Lake Nipissing in July 1852.¹⁵⁸ In May 1855, G.S. McTavish replaced Wemyss Simpson at La Cloche.¹⁵⁹ Simpson was transferred to Sault Ste. Marie, replacing Hargrave, who was on leave of absence.

Under Hargrave's lax management in 1854-55, Sault Ste. Marie had suffered considerably from American competition, and Simpson was selected because a man of proven ability was needed there. The completion of the canal at Sault Ste. Marie meant that more steamers and other ships would frequent Lakes Huron and Superior, bringing settlers. This would result in increased competition in the fur trade, and hence greater attention had to be given to the sales shop.¹⁶⁰

The government, after the Indian treaty of 1836, began encouraging the Indians to become farmers on Manitoulin Island, which would end their dependence on the vicissitudes of the hunt. Before 1856, there were three resident traders permitted on Manitoulin Island, one at Wikwemikong, another at Manitowaning and another at Mitch-i-ki-wet-i-nong (West Bay). In 1856, there were five transient traders at the village of Wikwemikong, despite the law which barred all non-resident traders from Manitoulin Island.

Governor Simpson, on 23 August 1855, applied for permission to erect a post on Manitoulin Island. In a reply written in the autumn of 1856, the governor general in council stated that he had "no objection" to its establishment at Little Current, and authorized him "to take possession of the necessary land for the creation of a dwelling house and store, on the understanding that this permission conveys no title to the land and may be terminated at pleasure." Orders were immediately given by Simpson to commence the construction of the buildings.¹⁶¹

In the summer of 1857, Messrs. Worthington and Talfour, the commissioners of Indian affairs, visited Manitoulin Island, and ordered the company to suspend construction, "as a preliminary step to being ordered to withdraw from thence." Simpson protested in vain that the post had been requested by the Indians, who found La Cloche inconveniently situated, and that permission had already been granted by the Indian

Department.¹⁶² The government of Canada subsequently took possession of the partially completed establishment. One building, a combination master's residence and store-house, had been raised, and a wharf had been almost completed.¹⁶³

In the latter part of the 1850s, Lake Huron district was extensively frequented by petty fur dealers, many of whom were employed by Montreal and New York furriers.¹⁶⁴ Settlements dotted the shores of Lake Huron, and the government was surveying and laying out for sale all the fertile land. The barter trade was "almost extinct" by 1857. The prices paid for furs were high, because of the intense competition. Lake Huron district was transferred to the Montreal Department in 1857-58, as communication by railroad and steamboat with Montreal was now more convenient than by canoe with Moose Factory. The supplies and money were brought from Lachine; the returns, however, were still sent to Moose.¹⁶⁵ Under W. Simpson, returns from Sault Ste. Marie improved.¹⁶⁶ He was still at Sault Ste. Marie in 1857-58,¹⁶⁷ when G.S. McTavish was at La Cloche.¹⁶⁸

By 1857-58, Sault Ste. Marie had been detached from Lake Huron district, for McTavish is listed as master of the district.¹⁶⁹ Chief Factor Robert S. Miles was in charge of La Cloche in 1858-59.¹⁷⁰ He retired in the spring of 1861, and Lake Huron district was entrusted to W. Simpson, who remained at Sault Ste. Marie.¹⁷¹ In August, however, Governor Simpson, thinking that W. Simpson would be too busy to make regular visits to La Cloche, placed the district under Chief Trader Watt's command.¹⁷²

In 1859, supplies from Lachine were conveyed by the Grand Trunk Railway to Saint Paul, Lake Huron, Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Superior.¹⁷³ The ensuing year, boat transportation between Lake Superior and Moose Factory was discontinued, and subsequently the returns from Lake Huron,

Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Superior were shipped to England through Montreal.¹⁷⁴

Bruce Mine, near Mississaugue, had a considerable population by 1863, and attracted many of the hunting Indians. A clerk from Mississaugue was frequently dispatched there in winter to collect furs, and this trade enabled the post to cover its expenses. George McKenzie was the clerk in charge in 1863. Only one man was left there in summer, his duty being to care for the buildings. A.G. Dallas, in 1863, considered it "a small station," which was "not likely to become a place of any importance."¹⁷⁵ Peter W. Bell, a clerk, was in charge of La Cloche. Dallas says that it was still "convenient for the fur trade and is the depot of the district." Transactions were conducted either in goods or in cash, and no credit was given. Flour was purchased from the mills at Collingwood.¹⁷⁶

Lake Nipissing, in 1863-64, was transferred from Témiscamingue to Lake Huron district whence it was easier to supply. Dallas writes about Lake Nipissing:

Nipisingue is attached by opposition from Penetanguishine, too far from Timiscamingue for effective supervision, there being communication only twice in the year. The tariff is obsolete, and a good deal of the trade has passed from our hands from want of energy, and supervision by superior authority.¹⁷⁷

By the early 1860s, Sault Ste. Marie was "almost deserted," and was infrequently visited by either natives or settlers. The American town had shared the same fate because of the completion of a canal linking Lakes Huron and Superior. A.G. Dallas wrote after his visit there in 1863, "With the utmost economy the post cannot be made to cover its expenses, and there is no prospect of being able to better the state of matters." He desired that the property

at Sault Ste. Marie should be sold, but apparently the company had still not been given the right to transfer its lands in Canada.¹⁷⁸

Kinoogumisee District

In the inventory of posts conducted by the Hudson's Bay Company after the coalition of 1821, three posts are listed in "Kinoogumisee district:" Kenogamissi, James Kellock, master; its outpost Frederick House, H. Lawson, master; and Wowiashkash, Joseph Turnor, master.¹⁷⁹ Thomas Vincent, in his report for the Southern Department, mentions the same three establishments.¹⁸⁰ Six posts were in the North West Company's Témiscamingue department: Lake Témiscamingue, Abitibi, Waswanipi, Grand Lac, Mattagami and Flying Post, also called Kuckatoosh.¹⁸¹

All three Hudson's Bay Company establishments were abandoned, and Flying Post was placed in Kinoogumisee district. It is not certain whether Mattagami was also transferred or was closed. It was not in operation in 1822-23, for Donald McIntosh wrote to John Clarke on 28 June 1823,

The consequence of abolishing the post of Matagami is that the Indians of that place has abandoned their lands and gone of [sic] in a band with their winters hunts to some of our Establishments in Temiscaming Department. This I foresaw would be the result of such injudicious measures.¹⁸²

It was reopened by 1825-26.

During the first two decades of the 19th century, the intense rivalry in Kinoogumisee district between the Hudson's Bay and North West companies had accelerated the tempo of hunting, and by 1821 the district was exhausted. After the

coalition, the pace of hunting was reduced, and the fur-bearing animal population was given an opportunity to recover.

Between 1821 and 1828, there were a few petty traders from Lake Huron in the district, perhaps at Whitefish and Green lakes, but they were not troublesome. The natives were not anxious to encourage the formation of oppositions, knowing that if the tempo of hunting accelerated, their land would soon again become exhausted. Simpson, in 1828, wrote that if petty traders could be kept out, the district would continue to yield "handsome profits." The profit in 1827-28 was almost £1,000, principally from small furs. Beaver hunting was discouraged to help preserve that animal. Chief Trader Hugh Farries was master of the district in 1828-29.¹⁸³

Chief Factor Alexander Christie, in his report for Kinoogumisee district for 6 June 1826 says about Mattagami, The buildings consist of two dwelling houses, one store and trading room, one canoe store, a hay barn and cowhouse, together with a Potatoe vault and provision room, the whole of which, have boarded roofs, - with the exception of the Masters Dwelling which is beginning to decay in the foundation, the buildings are in good repair. Three acres were under cultivation and there were three cattle.¹⁸⁴

Flying Post was 60 to 80 miles to the southeast, but by canoe route it was almost 100 miles. It was not effective in preventing the natives from going to Lake Huron.¹⁸⁵

An opposition post seems to have been opened at Langue de Terre, half way between Témiscamingue and Mattagami, in the mid-1820s, but it did not endure for more than one winter.¹⁸⁶

The same two posts, Mattagami and Kuckatoosh, were in Kinoogumisee district in 1830-31. Hugh Farries writes,

The buildings at both establishments I found on my arrival here old & much out of repair, therefore got good substantial ones, erected at both places - & got the Garden considerably enlarged, which I may say has been the means of enabling me to save some poor creatures of Natives from a miserable exit.¹⁸⁷

The district's returns fell off in 1830-31 because many of the Indians had had insufficient provisions during the winter. While the district was accessible to the merchants of Lake Huron, its poverty discouraged any from settling there. It was operated at a "very moderate expense" and returned "respectable profits."¹⁸⁸

In 1832-33, a threat came from Mr. McKay, the company's clerk at Kuckatoosh, who seemed intent upon entering the trade on his own. Simpson authorized Farries to make a generous offer to dissuade him.¹⁸⁹ It is not certain whether McKay subsequently did oppose the company.

The winter arrangements for Kinoogumisee district in 1836-37 were Chief Trader Hugh Farries at Mattagami and an interpreter at Kuckatoosh. Besides the two masters, there were eight servants and about 150 pieces of provisions and merchandise.¹⁹⁰

A Mr. Vasseur proceeded with a small outfit and a few men in the late autumn of 1838 to Lake Kickaguning (probably modern Kukagami Lake), intending to intercept some Indians on the outskirts of Témiscamingue, Kinoogumisee and Lake Huron districts. Simpson instructed in March 1838 that the masters of the three districts should pool their resources and that Farries should proceed with five or six men to Vasseur's wintering post and settle so close to him that his men could not emerge without being seen.¹⁹¹ It is not certain whether this was done or if Vasseur returned the following year.

The returns began to decline in the 1840s, the region steadily becoming more impoverished. In 1842-43, the expenses were considerably reduced. The trade fell off £300, but because of the increased economy, the decrease in profits was small. Simpson did not expect any amelioration. The district was still free from incursions by free traders, the want of country provisions and the well-conducted posts combining to keep them out.¹⁹²

Until 1843-44, supplies were conveyed from Moose to the Long Portage by servants from Moose and from thence to Kinoogumisee district by the district's own servants and Indians. Subsequently, the latter conducted the entire transport from Moose. This saved money and made the Indians more dependent on the company.¹⁹³

The arrangements for 1844-45 were: Mattagami, Chief Trader Richard Hardisty, and Kuckatoosh, Donald Grant, post-master.¹⁹⁴ Grant is described by Simpson as "a steady active man."¹⁹⁵

Receipts again declined sharply in 1843-44, and therefore the next outfit was considerably reduced.¹⁹⁶ For 1844-45, the returns showed an improvement of upwards of £1,000, but there was an unusually large amount of rabbit skins, with which the company was overstocked. Simpson did not favour an extensive rabbit hunt; however, Kinoogumisee district's inhabitants insisted upon conducting it, as rabbits supplied an adequate food source in this barren region.

Simpson writes in 1845 that for "several years past," traders from Lake Huron had interfered with the district's trade, but does not mention where they had settled. In 1844-45, however, the company did not suffer "any material loss or inconvenience" from these traders because of either a decline in their activity or "an increased vigilance at the company's posts on that frontier."¹⁹⁷

No opposition appeared in 1845-46, and the returns from the two posts were about the same as in the previous year. Of the district's master, Chief Trader Richard Hardisty, Simpson remarks: "Mr. C.T. Hardisty's management is exceedingly steady and economical, and so quiet is the business of the district conducted that, although within a fortnights' journey of Montreal, we scarcely hear of it, except when regular periodical communications are made."¹⁹⁸

In 1846-47, the trade declined £350, with Kuckatoosh being the principal post affected. Simpson now questioned Hardisty's conduct, but he was aware that the district was entering another and a more enduring period of decline.¹⁹⁹ The returns showed no improvement in 1848-49, and therefore, Colin Campbell, Hardisty's successor, was advised by Simpson to reduce the 1849-50 outfit, although it was "absolutely necessary" to have sufficient quantities of all essential articles to supply the needs of the natives.²⁰⁰

Donald Grant was in charge of Kuckatoosh in 1850-51. He indicated his desire to withdraw from the service,²⁰¹ apparently after an Indian had made an attempt on his life.²⁰² However, he accepted a transfer to Waswanipi in 1850-51, and was replaced by William Clark, the master of Trout Lake in Témiscamingue district.²⁰³

Having suffered three successive bad years, Colin Campbell reduced his 1850-51 outfit to only 70 pieces. Even the usually frugal Simpson considered this too small, recognizing that the natives must be given sufficient provisions to encourage them to hunt fur-bearing animals. Excessive frugality would undoubtedly drive them to the Lake Huron posts, where the tariff was higher. The Southern Council provided for another 30 pieces for 1851-52.²⁰⁴

The council resolved in 1851 that no liquor should be issued from Moose Factory. As Kinoogumisee district received all of its supplies from there, the liquor trade was

in effect prohibited. The cash prices paid to the company's servants for the furs they trapped was fixed above the Indian tariff.²⁰⁵

By 1850-51, the opposition on the shores of Lake Huron had attracted many of Kinoogumisee district's natives. Those who remained found it difficult to pay for the extensive imported provisions required to sustain themselves. Because of the district's barrenness, Simpson did not envision any prospect for an amelioration in the trade.²⁰⁶ He blamed the district's misfortune partly on Campbell's indolence and poor management. Nevertheless, a more resourceful man could not restore it to its former productivity. There were too many hunters, and in 1851-52 many of them were removed to other districts.²⁰⁷ Simpson writes in 1855 that Kinoogumisee district was hunted by a "few" Indian families, and its expenses were now so small that it produced "a fair percentage of profit on the amount of the trade."²⁰⁸

Kinoogumisee district was under the supervision of Chief Factor Robert S. Miles in 1853-54.²⁰⁹ After 1855 it began another period of decline,²¹⁰ though it recovered temporarily in 1858-59.²¹¹ Its operations by then were on so small a scale that its trade no longer materially affected the profit of the Southern Department.²¹²

Moose District

According to Joseph Beioley's report for 1818-19, the only posts in Moose district were Moose Factory and Hannah Bay.²¹³ Moose Factory is listed in the inventory of posts in 1821 as the principal establishment in Moose district. The other posts in the district were New Brunswick House, with its outposts at Missinaibi, Kabinakagami, Waupitsakeau and Waushogummy; Kinogamissi, with its outposts at Frederick House and Wowiashkash, and Michipicoten.²¹⁴ Moose Factory,

New Brunswick and Kabinakagami were retained after 1821, and placed in Moose district. Hannah Bay is not listed in the 1821 inventory, but it also was in Moose district.

In 1823-24, New Brunswick was transferred to Lake Superior district. Its master was George Gladman.²¹⁵ Kabinakagami, on the recommendation of Thomas Vincent, the master of the Southern Department, was abandoned at the end of 1823-24.²¹⁶

Abitibi House was in the North West Company's Témiscamingue district.²¹⁷ After the union of 1821, the Abitibi River district was created, with Abitibi House being apparently its only post. Chief Factor Alexander Christie was appointed in 1822 as head of the district,²¹⁸ and John McRae succeeded him the following year. McRae says in his report for 1823:

The Buildings at Abilitie consist of a Store-House A Stable, or Cow Byre a Barn or hay shade a potatoe vault and 2 dwelling houses. The later are in every respect unfit for accommodation of their respective inmates. But the occupiers of the principal house may now be greatly benefited by a Judicious use, of an assortment of board and plank recently prepared for the occasion.

The Store-house and Byre are well enough; and will last several years if kept in Repair.

The whole is covered with Cedar Bark.²¹⁹

Thomas Fraser reported in 1826 that the post consisted of "a Store, a Stable or Byre, a Barn or Hay shed & Five [?] Dwelling Houses all covered with Cedar Bark." Seven or eight acres were cultivated, but the soil was poor.²²⁰

By 1827-28, Abitibi House had been placed in Moose district. Until 1827-28, Abitibi seems to have been at least partly supplied from Canada. Simpson intended that in 1828-29

it should be completely outfitted from Moose, reducing its cost and precluding its hunters from coming into contact with Canadians. Before 1828, the Iroquois and Algonkins of the Ottawa River ventured into the Abitibi region to hunt. In 1828, Lord Dalhousie ordered them to remain on their own lands,²²¹ and subsequently, Abitibi was cut off from Canada and was free from Canadian opposition. Sometime after 1827-28, New Brunswick House was added to Moose district.

Chief Factor John George McTavish was in charge of Moose district in 1830-31. There was no report of opposition. Some repairs were begun on the buildings at Moose and two or three new ones were to be constructed.²²²

In the early 1830s, Abitibi was as rich in beaver as it had been 20 years before. The Abitibi region was extensive and thinly populated. By shifting their hunting grounds every third year (they never hunted any area more than two years in succession), the natives were able to preserve the beaver.²²³

In 1831-32, the master of Hannah Bay, William Corrigan, "a very respectable and old servant," was visited by a family of Rupert River Indians numbering 17 people. They passed a few days with the residents, Corrigan, the only European, his wife, and 12 men, women and children, waiting for a favourable opportunity to plunder the post. While two of Corrigan's young men were working outside the post, they attacked those inside with guns, hatchets and knives, murdering 10 of them. The two young men fled to Moose, followed by a wounded old Indian. McTavish at Moose Factory immediately dispatched an armed body, but by the time it arrived, the murderers had left Hannah Bay House, having looted it before departing. In the latter part of March, two of the murderers confessed. Four men and two young men were conveyed to Moose Factory, where McTavish "inflicted the punishment of death upon them, the only

punishment which could serve the ends of justice, and deter others from the like crimes." Much of the stolen property was recovered. The women and children were not punished, and were given adequate supplies for the remainder of the winter.²²⁴

For the winter of 1836-37, Chief Factor George Keith, Alexander Simpson, clerk, Richard Good, clerk, John Rae, clerk and surgeon, John Simpson, clerk and William Swanson, sloop and postmaster, were at Moose Factory. Chief Trader Thomas Fraser was at Abitibi. Chief Factor Colin Robertson, and Peter McKenzie, clerk, were at New Brunswick. Exclusive of the officers and clerks mentioned above, the district had a complement of 24 men. The outfit consisted of 240 pieces of merchandise and provisions.²²⁵

Moose district, in 1836-37, showed a profit of about £700, an increase of about £1,100. Moose Factory had a profit of £2,400, a decrease of £200 from the previous winter. Abitibi's profit was about £5,300, an increase of about £1,000, and New Brunswick £1,900, an increase of about £300. Abitibi was the most profitable establishment "connected with the Fur Trade."²²⁶ Although it had been hunted for more than a century, the Abitibi region had shown improving returns for two decades. According to Simpson, this was principally because of the recognition of hunting grounds as private property. Each native felt that it was within his interest to protect and improve his hunting ground. This system was encouraged by the traders, whose good management at Abitibi had helped to perpetuate it.²²⁷

New Brunswick was detached from Moose district in 1837-38 and made "into a district and independent charge for the accommodation of Chief Factor Robertson, to whom it will be a sinecure, as he has been provided with a Postmaster to transact the business for him." Colin Robertson was at New Brunswick for a total of two years, ending there his stormy

and notable career. Simpson was glad to be rid of him, considering him a vainglorious, boastful and inefficient servant.²²⁸

Fraser, apparently, was not at Abitibi in 1842-43, and his absence was felt, as the post's receipts declined. Simpson encouraged the establishment of a Roman Catholic mission on Lake Abitibi, but objected to its location in any other part of the district.²²⁹

The arrangements for 1844-45 were Moose Factory, Chief Factor Robert S. Miles, George Ross, clerk, James E. Clouston, apprentice clerk, James S. Watt, apprentice clerk, William Lane, apprentice postmaster, and William Swanson, sloopmaster; Abitibi, Chief Trader Thomas Fraser, and William Polson, postmaster; New Brunswick, Chief Trader P. McKenzie.²³⁰

The returns from the three posts increased 25 per cent in 1844-45. The value of the furs was about £5,000, while the expenses amounted to only one-third of this. Simpson wrote that the district showed "a greater degree of prosperity than usual in the Indian trade of the present day, even in parts of the country where we are entirely undisturbed by opposition."²³¹ While the district was still free from opposition, Simpson expected that within a few years New Brunswick House would be subjected to competition from Sault Ste. Marie and Lake Huron traders. Hunting only a short distance from Lake Témiscamingue, the Abitibi Indians could be attracted by the rival traders who were establishing themselves there. Simpson expected that Thomas Fraser, who had been in the district "since the oldest hunters were boys" and who was "exceedingly popular" among them, could restrain them from going there for at least a few years.²³²

Chief Factor Miles conducted the business of the district and the depot at Moose Factory with "much system and regularity."²³³ There was an increase in returns in 1845-46 in the district, as there was in most other districts in the Southern Department.²³⁴

Hannah Bay, which had not been occupied since the murders of 1830, was re-established in 1848-49. Simpson wrote to Robert S. Miles in 1848,

On consideration of the subject of establishing a small temporary post at Hannah Bay, with the additional information given in your private letter of 17 August, I think it may be advisable to carry out that measure, but on as moderate a scale of expenditure as possible. It is not necessary to place a clerk or postmaster in charge, a steady, trustworthy man would answer the purpose, with one assistant, to be provisioned from the factory as might occasionally be required; he should have a few goods to encourage the natives in marten and fox-hunting. From this sketch of my views you will perceive that I wish this little outpost to be conducted in the most economical manner possible.²³⁵

The new outpost was found to be useful in supplying some of the Moose Fort Indians, saving them the time formerly consumed in journeying to Moose Factory. The receipts from the company's servants' trappings completely defrayed the cost of maintaining Hannah Bay.²³⁶

In 1846-47, the district's receipts declined principally because New Brunswick's new master had little influence among his Indians. Moose Fort showed an increase of £260.²³⁷

By 1846-47, Chief Trader Fraser had resided at Abitibi for nearly 40 years. Simpson says that under his management it had returned for the past 20 years larger profits than any other fur-trading post. Fraser was now ailing, and Simpson thought he might have to be replaced. Fraser's Indians had some dealings with Lake Témiscamingue, but not enough to hurt his trade.²³⁸

Fraser was unwell in 1847-48, and the management of Abitibi was conducted by William Polson, whom Simpson described in 1848 as "a sober, steady man," who had "always been faithful to the interest of his employers." Simpson gave Fraser permission to leave if his health did not ameliorate.²³⁹ Fraser retired at the end of the 1848-49 winter.²⁴⁰

His absence was immediately felt. The Abitibi natives had acquired, by the early 1850s, a "taste for dress and finery," including "fair white shirts, superfine frock coats, straw bonnets for the women," and were dissatisfied with more practical clothing. These articles were too costly for the company to grant on credit, and hence the hunters began to clandestinely convey some of their furs down the Ottawa River, where prices were higher. Simpson judged that Abitibi's master, whose name is not mentioned, had manifested a want of vigilance and activity, and replaced him with Robert Hamilton, formerly of Mingan. Hamilton was "a very active & efficient clerk."²⁴¹

More emphasis was placed in 1850-51 at New Brunswick upon agriculture and cattle raising, which increased its profits.²⁴²

The Moose Factory region, in the early 1850s, was abundant in fur-bearing animals. The Indians were employed during the summer months in transporting supplies inland, earning for themselves enough clothing and provisions for the winter, when they concentrated completely on hunting. There was no opposition, and the hunts were very productive.²⁴³

The three establishments constituting Moose district in 1853-54, Moose Factory, New Brunswick and Abitibi, were considered to be "valuable posts." Under the management of Chief Factor Miles, the trade continued to be conducted "with the strict attention to economy and regularity."²⁴⁴

The same establishments formed Moose district in 1856-57, and their returns exceeded those of every other district in the Southern Department.²⁴⁵

Until 1856, Abitibi's and Timiscaming's supplies were conveyed from Fort William on the Ottawa River, in both summer and winter, at a heavy cost. Simpson writes in 1856 that henceforth they would be brought by steamboat to Joachim, whence they would be taken by canoe by men from Timiscaming. Two or three trips were to be made each year.²⁴⁶

John McKenzie was master at Moose Factory in 1859-60.²⁴⁷

SECTION II

The Nipigon Region, Including the
Territory Between Lake Nipigon and Lake
Winnipeg Northward to Hudson Bay

The Early History of the Nipigon Region

Introduction

The establishment of Albany permitted the Hudson's Bay Company to tap the resources of the country known to the French as the "Petit Nord", and later to the North West Company as the "Nipigon region". The system of waterways in the Nipigon region connected Albany with Lake Winnipeg to the southwest and Lake Superior to the south. Pierre de Troyes captured Albany in 1686, but it was soon retaken by the English, and was never relinquished again.

The French neglected the Nipigon region in favour of the richer regions beyond Lake Winnipeg. They did establish a post at Lake Nipigon as early as 1684, but the advent of the second Iroquois war forced its abandonment. After 1710, posts were founded at Michipicoten and Kaministikwia, which were subsequently used principally as supply bases for Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye's penetration into the Prairies. It was not until 1742 that traders from Michipicoten ventured down the Albany River toward Albany. This incursion resulted in the establishment, in 1743, of Henley House, the Hudson's Bay Company's first inland post. The French subsequently made occasional appearances as far down the Albany River as Henley, and in the early 1750s settled on Lac à la Carpe (possibly Trout Lake) or Ogoki Lake at the headwaters of Albany River. They also had settlements either on Lake Nipigon or Nipigon River, and at Lake Minnitaki. There were also coureurs de bois active in the Nipigon region, especially after 1730.

Between 1761 and 1766, Albany was free from competition and Indians came from as far west as Lake Winnipeg. However, in 1766-67, both Canadians and Englishmen made their appearance on Lake Winnipeg and the rivers leading to it, and impeded the flow of trade toward Albany. These free traders were poorly supplied with provisions and death by starvation was not uncommon among them in this barren country, where country provisions were limited almost entirely to fish. One of the principal routes used to penetrate the Nipigon region was up the Pays Plat River, through Lake Nipigon, northward to Osnaburgh Lake and then into Cat Lake and beyond. A more southerly route, the one taken by Edward Umfreville in 1784, was through Lake Nipigon to Wabinoosh Lake, then on to Sturgeon Lake, Minnitaki Lake and Lac Seul. From Lac Seul, the trader could travel into the Red Lake region or go, as Umfreville did, through Ball Lake and Umfreville Lake into Lake Winnipeg.

A post was founded by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1759 on Severn River to attract the Severn River and Lake Winnipeg trade. But by the middle of the 1760s free traders had entered these regions and made extensive inroads into Severn's trade. No inland outposts from Severn were founded to check the Canadians until the first decade of the 19th century.

Despite the alarming decline in Albany's receipts after 1766, it was not until 1774 that the London Committee requested that the region above Henley should be explored. Indeed it is obvious that the committee possessed an imperfect knowledge of the topography and Canadian trade in the Nipigon region until the 1790s, and the founding of the early posts inland of Albany were done on the initiative of the officers in the field. Edward Jarvis failed to proceed beyond Henley in 1775, but the following June he journeyed as far as the Canadian settlements at Michipicoten. In the

summer of 1777, John Kipling founded Gloucester House on Upashewa Lake, and in 1777-78, George Sutherland wintered with some Indians about 50 miles from Lake Winnipeg. On his voyage inland, Sutherland passed through Pashkokogan Lake and Eagle Lake and proceeded down English River.

One year after Sutherland's return, July 1779, Germain Maugenest, a trader in the Nipigon region, appeared at Albany and offered his services to the company. He was sent to England to present his proposals to the London Committee. Meanwhile, George Sutherland went inland with Maugenest's clerk, Thomas Coates, and seven men, and seven men, and spent a trying winter on Sturgeon Lake. On his return, Sutherland recommended against the establishment of posts beyond Gloucester.

In London Maugenest was successful in presenting his arguments for additional inland posts, and returned to Albany with the title of "Factor Inland" and was assigned 13 men. During his two years of association with Albany, he did not proceed beyond Martin Fall, and was transferred to Moose Fort. Until 1785, Gloucester House remained Albany's furthest inland outpost.

The Founding of Albany

Albany was the second post established on Hudson Bay by the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1674, the French built a house "not above 8 days Journey" up Rupert River from Charles Fort. This fact and the constant threat of a conflict with the Nodwayes (Cree) Indians led Governor Charles Bayly to recommend the removal of Charles Fort to another location on the bay. But Bayly's council cautioned that this could be dangerous. A compromise was reached, whereby a group of men would explore and trade along the shore of the bay

during the summer, after the Nodways had completed their trade at Charles Fort and had returned inland.¹

Bayly himself undertook a two months' voyage at the end of June. On 16 July, he sailed from Moose River, arriving at Schettawa River (Albany River) on 18 July, where he stayed three days, "but could meet with little or no Beaver."² He left John Bridger to construct a settlement.

In his dig in 1970 at the south bank of Fishing Creek, "directly opposite the dock of the Radar Base on Anderson Island,³" Walter Kenyon uncovered

A house of some strength (?)... on the south bank of the Albany, and surrounded, presumably by a palisade and a shallow moat. The house, 23' x 33' with a central hearth, was built of squared timbers with half-lap joints. The floor of the structure was paved with slender logs - 58 of them with an average diameter of 7". Mostly they were left in the round, but a few of them towards the west end of the house had been adzed roughly flat. According to Kenyon, this house was not built before 1675, but was in use by 1679. From a handle of a spoon, at the end of which occur the initials J.B., which he discovered on the site, Kenyon concludes that the house was the first Albany fort, constructed by John Bridger.⁴ It was visited by Jolliet in 1679, and is marked on his map.⁵

Before 1684, it was decided to enlarge the settlement, and four bastions were built. Kenyon says,

They then carried in clean earth and raised the ground-level between the house and the palisade and bastion complex. Meanwhile, they simply let their garbage accumulate on the floor of the house. When the whole area around the house had been raised about one foot the original building was removed, and a new and larger complex was built.⁶

Between 1960 and 1964, Kenyon excavated this old fort, which he found to be

a well-designed structure consisting of four flankers or bastions, connected on the east and west sides by curtain-walls of upright poles. The north and south perimeters consisted mainly of the outer walls of two large buildings; these were linked to the flankers by short curtains. The entire fort measured only 100 feet wide by 85 feet deep, and because of its shape, every inch of its outer walls could be covered by musket-fire from within.⁷

Reconstruction in the "Beaver"

Henry Sergeant, who was selected as governor of the posts on the bay in 1683, was instructed to make his principal residence at "Chychevan river that being the place of greatest trade and resort of the Indians." Chychevan River post was renamed Albany, in honour "of his Royall Highness our present Governor."⁸

After capturing Charles Fort at the beginning of July 1686, Pierre de Troyes advanced upon Albany, called by the French "Quichichouan." Troyes wrote in his journal that he experienced difficulty in finding the mouth of Albany River, but the English unwittingly gave their position away when they fired six or seven cannon shots one night while he was near the river.⁹ The following morning, Ste. Helene surveyed the fort, and the next day Troyes moored his canoes "à l'entrée de la rivière", and led his men to a place where he intended to erect his battery.¹⁰ Governor Sergeant, cognizant of de Troyes' presence, fired a cannon shot.¹¹

According to Oldmixon, Governor Sergeant was alerted beforehand of Troyes' advance, and therefore his fort could not be taken by surprise. In order to prevail upon the garrison to resist the French, Sergeant was required to give them presents of "Cloaths, and other Necessaries," and promised that the company would recompense them and their relatives if they were injured or killed. But a day or two later the men mutinied, and their leader, Elias Turner, the gunner, asked Sergeant for permission to surrender himself to the enemy. On being threatened by Sergeant with death, Turner went back to his post and the men ended their mutiny.

While they were raising a bank of earth to secure themselves from the fire from the fort, the French shot only with smallarms, and only when they observed the Englishmen on the flankers. The English fired their guns so long as they perceived the enemy in the bushes, forcing them to retire under their bank. By doing this, however, the English expended most of their ammunition. Meanwhile, the French were preparing a battery behind their bank, which induced Sergeant to despatch two men to spy upon their activities and strength. These two men returned with the melancholy news that the battery had been completed. This so unnerved the defenders, that they begged Sergeant to accept the best surrender terms offered; they declined to continue their resistance. When the French opened their fire upon the flankers, which damaged the houses, the men deserted their posts. On the advice of John Bridgar and Captain John Outlaw, Sergeant capitulated. The fort was delivered up with all the goods, and Sergeant and his garrison were permitted to return to England.¹²

Troyes gives the following description of Albany:
 Le fort de quichichouan est situé dans un terrain fort mareageux [sic], en sorte que quand les meiges viennent à fondre, l'eau monte jusques au

premier etage. Voicy comme il est composé. Il y a un grand corps de logis construit de pieces sur pieces, qui forme la plus grande partie de la courtine, qui fait face à la riviere; il est destiné pour l'appartement des domestiques, aiant a chaque bout une vingt.e de palisades qui achevent de faire la courtine de chaque costé, et la joignant aux bastions, dont elle est flanquée. Celle qui regarde le bois, de la meme maniere, y aiant aussi un grant bastiment qui sert de logement au gouverneur, et de magasin, aussi bien que quelques bastions dont le dessous sert a cet usage. Les deux autres courtines servent de grosses palisades, bien jointes ensemble, traversées par dessus par une pièce de bois garnie de pointes de fer ainsi que sont toutes celles qui font l'enceinte de cette place, dont les courtines ont chacune une porte deffendue en dedans par deux pièces de canon, pointées directement devant chaque porte pour arrester sur le ciel ceux qui les avoient enfonchez. Les quatre bastions dont le fort est deffendu, sont de pièces sur pieces avec une platte forme dessus, comme un cavallier; ou il y a, sur chaque, quatre pieces de canon, outre celles qui paroisoient dans les flancs etage par etage. Il paroît encore du bois, un costé de palisade de la longueur, de la courtine qui la couvroit, qu'ils abatirent de crainte que cela ne facilitast nos approches du fort, au bout duquel est une petite cuisine. Voila la situation et la construction de cette place qui est environ quarente pas de la riviere, et neantmoins entourée de viels fossez

presque comblez, ou il y a de l'eau en quelques endroits seulement.¹³

Twenty-six Frenchmen garrisoned Albany, but the threat of starvation forced the evacuation of all but six of them to Canada. In 1692, James Knight, with three ships, sailed to recapture the fort, but he started too late to attempt a surprise attack that year. When he finally did appear before Albany, the garrison surrendered.¹⁴ Albany, after the Treaty of Ryswick (1697), was the only post on the Bay in the possession of the English.

By 1701, Albany had a good herd of sheep and goats, and plans were made to send bulls and cows there. During the summer there was some cultivation, which was not too successful. Good men were difficult to recruit, and after 1701 Governor John Fullartine's garrison was reduced to 40 men, and there was a shortage of food and powder¹⁵ as the ships did not arrive regularly each year.¹⁶ Despite these problems, Fullartine, in 1709, repulsed a force of 100 Canadians, which had ascended the Ottawa River.¹⁷

A new fort, of four flankers, having both inner and outer stockades, was raised on Bayly's Island, now called Albany Island, in the spring and summer of 1721. By September the garrison had been transferred to this new fort, though at least one dwelling house had not been completed.

Andrew Graham, in his "Observations on Hudson's Bay," says,

Albany Fort (i.e. Keshichewannock Whiskihiggan) is much such a building as York Fort. It is situated on the south shore of Albany River (Kesichewan Sepee), about four miles from its entrance, in fifty-two degrees ten minutes North latitude and eighty-three degrees West longitude from London. It has cannon, and other implements

for its defence, within the Fort. The river is wide, but so shoal and full of sand banks, that a ship cannot approach nigher than five leagues, and is obliged to ride in the open sea; where she is unloaded and receives her homeward-bound cargo by a large sloop.

...The complement of men is about forty; and the trade is annually inferior to York Fort, and provisions are not so plentiful, particularly deer are scarce.¹⁸

Philip Turnor is as unilluminating as Graham in his comments upon Albany. On his arrival at Albany on 23 December 1779, he notes in his journal,

23rd Thursday arrived at Albany Fort found all well. A person could hardly suppose this place and Moose Fort has the same owners here everything seems in good Repair a Sufficient stock of Firewood and Timber on the Plantation and business seems to go on smooth and even. Upon consulting Mr. Thos Hutchins he seems of opinion that it would be best for me to proceed Inland from this place first in which opinion I intirely acquiesce as Albany is most capable of giving me assistance Moose Fort Inland Settlements being more nominal than real.¹⁹

Albany, he relates in a subsequent entry in his journal, carried on its inland business

in a different manner to what it is at York Fort, here the Inland settlements must have everything sent to them and a good quantity of provisions to enable them to keep the House as this Country will not afford provisions, on

the contrary the York Fort Settlements maintain their own men and send them to the Factory once a Year for their own Goods which eases the Factory of a very great Burthen.²⁰

Sault Ste Marie

The first European to reach the Sault Ste. Marie was probably Etienne Brulé in 1622.²¹ Fathers Isaac Jogues and Charles Raymbault, in 1641, named the rapids Sault de Sainte Marie. Radisson and des Groseilliers, on their journey into Lake Superior in the summer of 1659, stopped and constructed shelters at the Sault.²²

The first permanent mission at the Sault was founded by fathers Claude Doblou and Jacques Marquette in 1669, and within a short time there were 25 voyageurs resident there.²³ In 1671, Intendant Jean Talon du Quesnoy sent Simon-Francois Daumont de Saint-Lusson to take formal possession, in the name of the king of France, of the Sault and the territory to the westward of it to the Western Sea.²⁴ Sault Ste. Marie subsequently was frequented by such explorers as Louis Jolliet and Daniel Greysolon Dulhut.²⁵ The mission was abandoned in 1689, during the second Iroquois war.

Governor Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de la Jonquière, in 1750, dispatched Chevalier de Repentigny to Sault Ste. Marie to establish a post at his own expense and build a stockade fort there, in order to stop the savages of the northern posts who go and come to and from the English, to break off the trade they carry on with them to stop and forestall the consequences of the messages and presents that the English send to those nations that they may corrupt and win them completely over to their interests

and inspire them with feelings of hatred and aversion to the French.²⁶

The fort was also designed to give refuge to French voyageurs, a number of whom had been maltreated in 1748 by the Indians at the Sault.²⁷ Repentigny arrived too late in the year to properly fortify himself, but he constructed "a kind of fort large enough to hold the traders of Missilimakinac."²⁸

The following year, Repentigny and Captain Louis de Bonne were granted a seignory 18 miles square on the south bank of the St. Mary's River. Jean Baptiste Cadotte was employed by Repentigny to conduct his dealings with the Chippewa at the Sault, and succeeded in persuading them to pledge their allegiance to the French king.²⁹

De Bougainville writes in 1757 about Sault Ste. Marie: Sault de Sainte-Marie, fort de pieux, situé dans le détroit de communication du lac Supérieur avec le lac Huron établi en 1750. La traite en fut accordée gratis au commandant pour faciliter l'établissement. Le Roi donne cinq cents francs de gratification pris sur Michilimakinac, dont ce poste dépend. Les Sauvages qui y font la traite sont les Saulteux. Il en sort annuellement cent paquets. Le sieur DeBonne, le sieur de Repentigny l'ont par concession, comme seigneurie héréditaire.³⁰

Alexander Henry the Elder, who was at Sault Ste. Marie in 1762, says that there was a fort "seated on a beautiful plain, of about two miles in circumference, and covered with luxuriant grass; and, within sight, are the rapids in the strait, distant half a mile." Under the French regime there was kept a small garrison, commanded by an officer, who was called the

governor, but was in fact a clerk, who managed the Indian trade here, on government account. The houses were four in number; of which the first was the governor's, the second the interpreter's and the other two, which were the smallest, had been used for barracks. The only family was that of M. Cadotte, the interpreter, whose wife was a chipeway.³¹

The palisade was 110 feet long by the same wide, one house was 30 by 20 feet, two houses 25 by 20 feet, and the redoubt was of oak, 12 feet square.³²

After the English conquest, Sault Ste. Marie was garrisoned by a small British detachment until 1762, when fire consumed the fort. Alexander Henry, who was present at the time of the fire, says that a part of the stockades, and all of the buildings except Cadotte's house were destroyed. The troops' provisions and most of the gunpowder were lost. The garrison subsequently removed to Michilimackinac.³³

After its formation, the North West Company maintained a post at the Sault. John MacDonell, who passed the Sault on his voyage to the west in 1793, says that the "only settlements are on the South shore of the straits...Mr. Nolin who transacts the North West Company's business here has much the best improvements of any of those settled here."³⁴ A few years later, the North West Company removed to the Canadian side of the rapids and constructed locks, permitting canoes to pass into Lake Superior without a portage. A saw-mill was built, which supplied timber for Grand Portage,³⁵ and a road was also constructed.

Daniel Harmon visited the Company's establishment in 1800 while it still was being constructed. He has left the following description:

Friday 30. Sault St. Maries. Here the North West Company have another establishment on the north side of the Rapid; and on the opposite shore, there are a few Americans, Scotch and Canadians, who carry on a small traffic with the Natives, and also till the ground a little. The soil about Lake Huron, which we have just passed, appears to be good, and the face of the country is low and level.--Here the North West Company have built locks, in order to take up loaded canoes, that they may not be under the necessity of carrying them by land, to the head of the Rapid; for the current is too strong to be stemmed by any craft. The Company are likewise building a saw mill, at the foot of the Rapid, to furnish boards, &c. for the Grand Portage, &c. Here is the outlet of Lake Superiour, by which its waters pass into Lake Huron. On each of these lakes, the North West Company have a vessel. One goes to the Grand Portage, and the other to Detroit, &c.³⁶

John Johnston, who lived at the Sault, wrote in 1809 that "On the farthest stream, on the north side, the North-West Company have a fine saw mill, and also several houses and stores for the reception of their goods from Montreal, their vessels coming to anchor within three hundred yards of the quai."³⁷

As residents of Sault Ste. Marie had taken part in the capture of Fort MacKinac, the Americans, in retaliation, in 1814 destroyed the locks and burned the furs of the North West Company, as well as the furs of Mr. Ermatinger at the Sault.³⁸ The North West Company soon restored its establishment.

The French and English in the Lake Nipigon Region Before
1763

The area between Lakes Nipigon and Winnipeg and northward toward Hudson Bay was one of the last fur-bearing regions penetrated by the trader. As has been seen in the first chapter of Section I, Father Claude Allouez visited Lake Nipigon (also called Alimibegon, Alempigon and Aminipigon) in 1668. In 1684, Claude Greysolon de la Tourette, sent to the west by his brother Daniel Greysolon Dulhut, established a trading post on Lake Nipigon. He wrote in September 1684 to Governor Joseph-Antoine Le Febvre de la Barre, his sponsor:

As I was leaving the Lake of Almepigon [Nipigon] I made, in June, all the presents necessary to prevent the savages from further carrying their beaver to the English... The Klistinos [Cree], the Assenepolacs [Assiniboine] the people from the Sapinière, the Openens, Dachiling, the Outoubouhys and Tabitibis, which comprise all the nations which are to the west of the Northern Sea, have promised to be, next spring, at the fort which I have constructed near the River à la Maune, at the bottom of Lake Alemepigon; and next summer I will construct one in the country of the Klistinos which will be an effectual barrier.³⁹

The post La Tourette promised to establish was at Kaministikwia on Lake Superior, and was in operation by the winter of 1685-86. Although Intendant Jacques de Meulles protested to the crown that the posts were intended solely to further Dulhut's interests, La Tourette continued to supervise the two posts until they were abandoned in the early 1690s.

Lake Nipigon post is placed, on Jaillot's 1700 map, on the north shore of Lake Nipigon. It was called both Fort Latourette and Fort la Maune.⁴⁰ A map in Louis-Armand de Lom D'Arce de Lahontan's New Voyages to North America shows a fort named Kamanistigoyon on the Lemipissaki River, but no settlement on Lake Nipigon.⁴¹ Voorhis calls it Fort Camanistigoyan and states that it was founded in 1678 by Charles, Sieur de Tourette (Claude Greysolon de la Tourette).⁴² He cites no source for this statement.

A French post, called "the Nipigon," was in existence in 1728-29, when Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye was stationed there.⁴³ Its location is not certain. La Vérendrye wrote in 1737, "On the 28th thirty men arrived from Lake Nipigon, M. de la Valtrie's post, to join the warriors against the Sioux."⁴⁴ From this statement, it can be inferred that the establishment was on Lake Nipigon. However, Alexander Henry the Elder writes in his Travels and Adventures,

The Pays Plat is intersected by several large rivers, and particularly the Nipigon, so called after Lake Nipigon, of which it is the discharge. By this river, the French carried on a considerable trade with the Northern Indians. They had a fort or trading-house at its mouth, and annually drew from it a hundred packs of beaver, of a quality more in esteem than that from the North-west.⁴⁵

This would indicate that the post was on Lake Superior. Edward Umfreville, in the journal of his 1784 voyage, relates that an "Old French house" had existed on Lake Nipigon. When he passed, there were "no traces...except the wood being cut away." It was three miles west by north from Champlain Point. Umfreville does not make it clear whether it dated from the French régime or the post-1763 period.⁴⁶

Lake Nipigon was farmed out, as were all the major posts in the 18th century. De Bougainville writes about Lake Nipigon,

Les Nepignons, poste établi au nord du lac Supérieur; le commandant en est le fermier et le prix de la ferme est d'environ quatre mille francs; il comprend le lac à la Carpe situé....Les Sauvages qui y traitent sont les Saulteaux; cette nation, une de plus nombreuses de ces contrées, est errante, ne sème rien, ne vit que de chasse et de pêche. Il en sort communément chaque année quatre-vingts à cent paquets en.⁴⁷

In the 1710s, the attention of the French turned westward, and posts were built at Michipicoten and Kaministikwia. They were used as bases by La Vérendrye in his explorations into The Prairies. La Vérendrye followed the portage route, and made no attempt to move northward, where the system of waterways was irregular.

Duncan Cameron says, in his history of the Nipigon, that the inhabitants of this region did not recall any Canadians penetrating northward of Lake Nipigon in the pre-1760 period. The Indians traded with the French posts at Lake Nipigon or Monontagué (Minnitaki Lake), or journeyed to the English posts on Hudson Bay.⁴⁸ However, we do possess a few references to wintering posts in the interior before the English conquest, and there is no doubt that others existed, but records of them either were lost or not kept.

The earliest known Frenchman to trade at Ball Lake was a Mr. Burdino. James Sutherland of Albany writes in his journal for Escabitchewan for 19 December 1792:

Self took a walk along shoar and had the good luck to find the antient remains of an old French House. The Indians told me in the Fall

of one being here abouts but of out of their Memory except Nacanaps mother a woman apparently about fourscore years of age who remember'd a House here when she was a young woman. The corners of the House by which its dimensions may be known is still standing, but on the slightest touch moulders into dust, I carried a pice of one log home and tied it to the [] of my House as fare pice of antiquity in this wild country where History is unpreserv'd.

Burdino died in 1780 at Grand Portage, "a very aged man." Sutherland estimated that he had wintered on the lake 60 years before,⁴⁹ hence in the 1730s. His post was not too far distant from Sutherland's.

Joseph Isbister, the master at Albany, received intelligence, in May 1743, that three Frenchmen were about 60 miles inland from Albany, intercepting the trade going down to the bay.⁵⁰ Isbister, with eight hands, ascended the Albany River in June,⁵¹ and on 15 June cleared a site on the north side of the river, which was the most convenient location for building materials. The new post, which was named Henley House, had four flankers, surrounded by palisades.⁵² Henley's occupants were killed in 1756 by three Indians, a father and two sons, who were imprudently permitted to sleep there; in the morning they murdered the master, and shot and killed his three men as they returned from hunting. Joseph Isbister hung the murderers.⁵³ The London Committee could not condone these hangings, and consequently Isbister was dismissed from the service.⁵⁴

In order to prevent the French from using Henley, Isbister requested some Indians to burn it. However, they did not do so, and the following winter, a number of Frenchmen settled there. They departed in the spring,⁵⁵

burning the post to the ground and taking all the iron utensils they could carry.⁵⁶ They promised the Indians that they would return the following winter, but they did not.⁵⁷

Not until the summer of 1759 was a group of men, whose leader was named Clarke, dispatched to restore Henley. When Clarke reached the site of Henley House, he saw "nothing remaining except some of the Palisadoes."⁵⁸ He had been instructed to build upon a "Mor Convenient Place" above the former site, but he found that while there was sufficient timber on an island about a mile above, there was "no proper place" for the house because of the lowness of the banks and the threat of floods. Consequently, he decided upon the site of the former settlement, and in July dug out the foundation of "the House and Cellar," and laid the foundation logs of the house.⁵⁹ The post was apparently built on the same plan as the previous one, composed of two storied flankers and having a square house.⁶⁰ By 23 August he had completed "most of the heavy work belonging to the Square House." He then sent four men back to Albany to conserve provisions and assist in conveying up additional supplies in the autumn.⁶¹

The last entry in the Henley journal for 1759 was on 1 September. It is likely that the men remaining at Henley were attacked by Indians. Andrew Graham, in his "Observations" written in 1771, states, "The upland Indians when at war do not face one another like civilized Nations, but by ambushments, and taking every cowardly advantage they can think of, examples of which they practised on our unfortunate country men, Anno Domini 1755 and 1760."⁶² Henley was not open in 1760, and Graham probably meant 1759.

Further on in his "Observations," Graham narrates an incident at Henley, but does not indicate when it occurred. The date was undoubtedly 1759. Graham states that a band of Indians one night hid under the river bank, and when the

master emerged from the post for his usual morning walk, shot and killed him and wounded another man in the thigh. The wounded man was able to reach the post and lock the gate, and he and two companions manned the windows in the upper storey and throughout the day engaged the Indians, who were firing from under the bank. In the evening, two men went out through "the back window," while the other remained to draw the Indians' attention, but he soon followed. The three men travelled three days before reaching the tent of an Albany Indian. The following day, a boat from Albany arrived at the Indian's tent, and the commander, after learning about the attack, returned with the three men to Albany instead of proceeding to Henley with the provisions. This was a prudent decision, for the Indians were lying in ambush for the boat.

Some time later, some Englishmen were dispatched to see whether Henley was still standing. They found the burned remains of Henley House and the body of the master, scalped and naked, was lying on "the plantation."⁶³

During the 1745-46 winter, French coureurs de bois, supplied well enough to meet all the needs of the "Cat Indians" who usually frequented Albany, entered Sturgeon Lake.⁶⁴ In 1751-52, Joseph Isbister wrote in his journal that the coureurs de bois were swarming "up in ye country" and most of the Albany Indians had traded with them.⁶⁵ Isbister does not give any indication where they had settled. He remarks that a French "Captain with six canoes went towards Moose Fort."⁶⁶ In May 1756, Isbister was informed by some Indians coming from the interior, who were poorly supplied, that the French were located on "the north branch of this river as far above Henley as Henley is from this Fort."⁶⁷ Ten Canadians and a similar number of Indians in their employ were on the Albany River in the first half on 1760, and apparently killed some Indians who

were favourable to the English.⁶⁸

A Frenchman named Pierre-Marie-Joseph Raimbeau de Simblin, a second lieutenant, was requested by the Indians of Lac de la Carpe, who frequented the English on Hudson Bay but found the voyage difficult, to reside among them.⁶⁹ Simblin, who had been stationed at other posts in the "pays d'en haut" including Lake Nipigon, erected a wintering post in 1750-51 on Lac de la Carpe, which he says was situated sur le Bord d'une grand Rivière qui va a la Baye Dudson, le quel Lac dis-je est au dessous de trois fourches, c'est a dire trois bras de rivière, qui vienent de la partie du Sud et du Nord dans lesquelles quantité de Nations Sauvages, dont certaines sont encore a connoistre le français....Le dit Lac de la Carpe...est a peu pres entre la Baye Dudson et le Nepigon.

He notes that there were more than 30 portages to cross on the way to Hudson Bay. The Indians of the region were afraid to enter Lake Nipigon because they were feuding with its inhabitants.⁷⁰

When he returned with his furs to Lake Nipigon post, Simblin petitioned the crown for a year's lease, beginning in 1752, for the exclusive possession of Lac de la Carpe, and promised to build a fort of stone.⁷¹ Governor La Jonquière, thinking that such an establishment would attract much of the English trade, in the autumn of 1751 permitted him to return and construct a more permanent post.⁷² In a memoir dated 4 October 1751, La Jonquière states that he had determined to grant Simblin a lease for six years beginning in 1752.⁷³ There is no indication whether Simblin did receive the lease, but Lac de la Carpe is mentioned by the Bougainville in his memoir of 1757 as a fur-trading post farmed out to the fermier of Lake Nipigon.⁷⁴

There is little doubt from Simblin's description of the position of Lac de la Carpe that the great river is the Albany River. On one of Peter Pond's maps, a "Lac du Carpe" is placed to the west of "Lake Alone" (Lac Seul). It is possible that Lac de la Carpe is the modern Trout Lake. Another possible, and more likely, location is Ogoki Lake, which is below the three branches of the Albany referred to by Simblin and easier to reach from Lake Nipigon than Trout Lake.

Albany and the Canadians, 1763-1780

Henley was restored in the summer of 1766 by William Richards. After viewing the region around the old site, he remarked in his journal,

There was no timber to build a Defencible place, Neither was that that was built last Defencible, the foundation Loggs being no more than seven Inches thro' []: therefore I came to the Resolution which I hope will mete with your Hons Aprobation of building the Fort upon an Island where the boats are at now, it's a very pleasant situation, separated from the North Main by a Small Creek about Twenty Yards over a Very Shoull, this Island is about halfe in breadth has very fine View up and down the river, and very fine timber on it.⁷⁵

Philip Turnor, who visited Henley during his survey of the area between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay, gives the following description:

Henley House stands upon an Island on North side the River a small branch of about 70 or 80 yards wide running round the North

side of the Island and a small creek falling into it on the North side (called chickney creek) the Island is about 3/4 Mile long near 1/4 Mile wide the House stands about 150 Yards from the west or uper end of the Island and the ground which the House stands upon is about 3 Feet below the Level of the ground about 100 Yards to Eastward or lower down the Island and I think Henley House the worst building I have seen the Country both as to Convenience and Workmanship the Flankers all given way from the sheds that both Flankers and Sheds are obliged to be shored the platforms of Sheds and tops of the Flankers all rotten the Flankers neither Wind nor Water tight and was a Person to begin to Repair it I am of Opinion he would find more Labour than in Building a Substantial good new House which I should think the complement of Hands at Henley with the assistance of two House Carpenters very Sufficient to compleat in little time as Timber may be easily procured at a little distance up the River, and with Submission to Your Honors Superior Judgement I should suppose a House built upon the Plan of Severn House would be more Substantial, Defensible and Convenient than a House upon the plan of the present Henley House and with Submission to Your Honours I should think it would be much better to build a House upon the heighest ground as it would not be subject to damage by deluges and in that case I should think it most prudent to let the

present House stand untill the new one is tenatable as I should not think any of the materials of the present House worth puting into a new one except the Brickwork which would soon be removed and should suppose Albany might be able to spare her.⁷⁶

The masters at Albany were instructed by the London Committee that Henley should be supplied with a poor assortment of merchandise in order to dissuade the interior hunters from trading there.⁷⁷ This practice, according to Graham, was not successful. He says that the home guard Indians, after taking debts at Albany, went into the interior to hunt, and

as soon as they trap a few Martens they run into Henley House and trades them for brandy and other goods, and harbours about there expending their time in idleness. In the spring of the year the Home-guard Indians draws into Albany to kill geese, and tells the Factor a false story, as they have been starved all winter, and such like falsities, and the Nakawawuck Indians will perhaps come down in the summer with barley as much rubbish of damaged beaver as pays their debt, and some of them does not come down that summer, which makes a large debt book at the Fort.⁷⁸

For five years, 1761-66, Albany experienced no competition and Indians came from as far as the "Great Lake" (Lake Winnipeg). But in 1766-67, both Canadians and Englishmen established themselves on Lake Winnipeg and on the rivers leading to it, stopping many of the hunters going northward to the bay. These free traders were telling the Indians that Henley would soon be destroyed, and

consequently many of them were disinclined to go there for fear they would be massacred with the garrison. The pedlars were inciting those natives who were unfavourable to the English to drive them again from Henley.⁷⁹

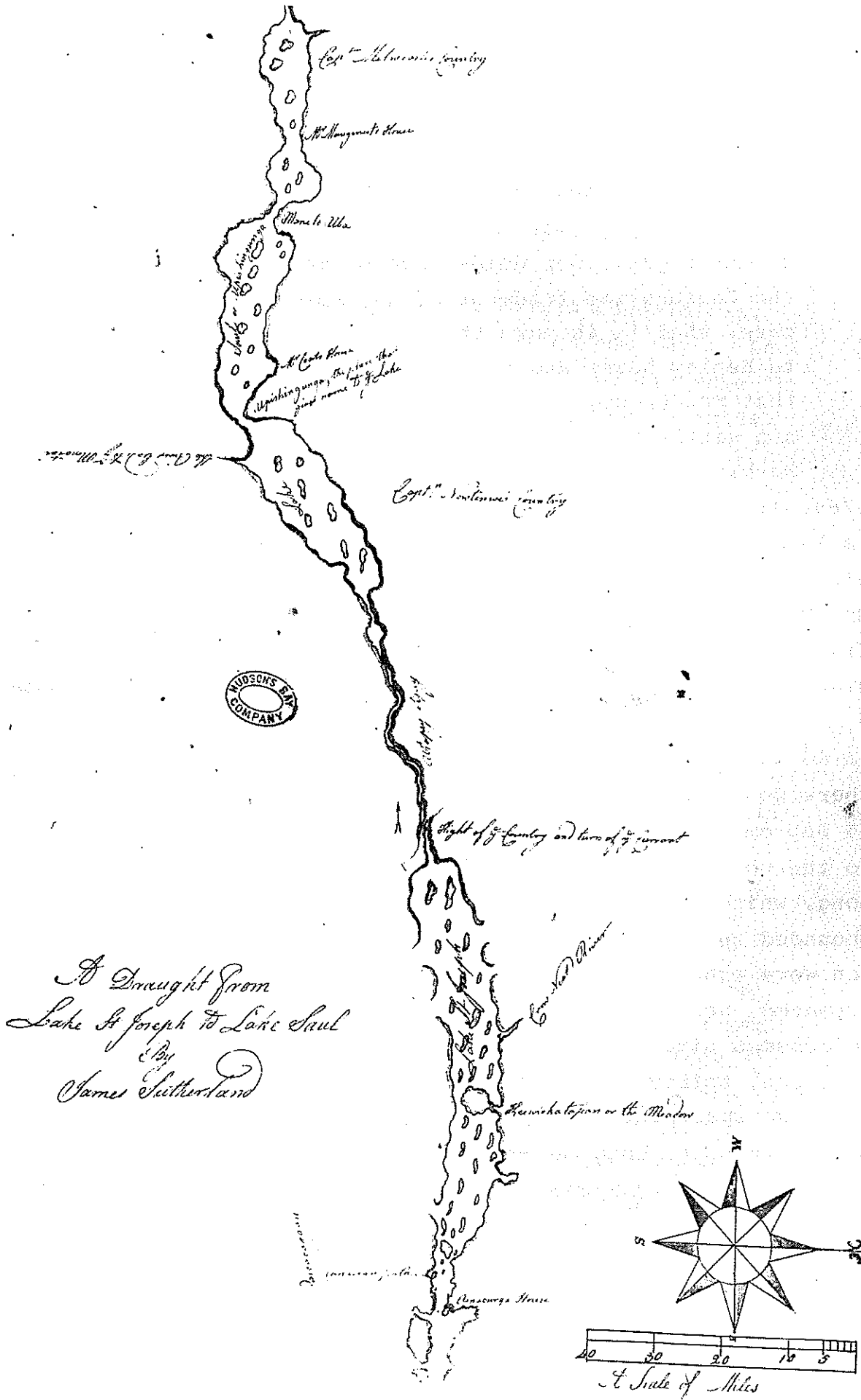
According to Duncan Cameron, a Monsieur Clause wintered on Nid du Corbeau (Crow Nest Lake, most likely Long Lake) in 1767, but he and his men almost starved and were required to eat several packs of furs to stay alive. A few years later, other traders reached Lac la Savanne (either modern Savant Lake or a small lake immediately east of Pic River), Nid de Corbeau and Lac du Pichou (to the east of Pic River), but they not infrequently died of starvation, including four of eight men residing one year at Lac la Savanne.⁸⁰

The hardships encountered by the traders, Cameron says, gave the country such a bad name that men could not be had at any price to bring in goods for half the demand, and what little they did bring was of bad quality and the men themselves neither clever nor energetic and persevering, so that the Indians continued going down to Hudson's Bay, where they received much more attention and got better goods for their furs.⁸¹

Daniel Harmon noted in 1807 that more traders had died of hunger in the Nipigon country than in "all the rest of the Indian country."⁸²

John Long and Edward Umfreville mention a few posts which were in existence in the 20 years after the English conquest. The earliest one on Lake Seul of which we have a record is Lyons' post, which is noted by Umfreville in the journal of his voyage from Lake Nipigon to Lake Winnipeg in 1784. Umfreville writes that he passed Roche de Diable, "a sandy point which has a round stone on it." He continues:

- 4 "A Draught from Lake St. Joseph to Lake Saul by James Sutherland." (Hudson's Bay Company, B.78/a/14.)



*A Draught from
Lake St Joseph to Lake Saul
By
James Sutherland*

Passing the point, which is about 1 mile from roche de Diable went W.N.W. 2 1/2 miles to a point on right, an excellent fishing place, a bay on right, spacious lac on left. In this course passed by an old settlement of Mr. Lyons on the right...Our guide informs me that all the Indians who trade at Albany Fort, pass by here, that is is more than three days paddling to Henley house and five to Albany Fort and that Mr. Lyons, made 36 packs one year at his settlement.⁸³

On his voyage of exploration in the early summer of 1786, James Sutherland of Albany, while crossing Lake Seul, on 26 June passed a "place where Mr. Coats [James Coates] wintered one year."⁸⁴ On 2 July, he passed "a House of Mr. Maugenests [Germain Maugenest] situated on an excellent fishing place," where, he was informed, Maugenest had wintered for two years.⁸⁵

John Long, in the summer of 1775, left la Grade Côte de la Roche, passed through Lake Alemipigon (Nipigon), and from there went through "Lac Eturgeon, or Sturgeon Lake."⁸⁶ On 25 September, he reached Lac la Mort or Dead Lake, "situated to the north-east of Lake Alemipigon," a lake, according to Long, which was about 60 miles in circumference⁸⁷ and abounded in fish (possibly modern Esnagami Lake). As his men were exhausted from their long voyage and the season was advanced, he decided to reside the winter there. He selected a site "close to the lake side" and erected "a loghouse, thirty feet long, and twenty feet wide, divided into two apartments."⁸⁸

Initially, Long obtained abundant provisions, but by January he had only some "spawn of fish" left.⁸⁹ At the end of the month he left for Mr. Shaw's post at Lake Manotoye (Minnitaki Lake) where the natives harvested wild

rice.⁹⁰ After travelling for four days, he entered Sturgeon Lake, where he rested for three days.⁹¹ On approaching Lake Minnitaki, he encountered some Indians who informed him that three of their tribe had been killed by Hudson's Bay Company Indians, who also intended to kill Shaw.⁹²

Long relates that he approached Shaw's house alone. Long convinced the besiegers that he was on his way to Lac le Rouge, and did not intend to interfere, and was able to slip unnoticed into Shaw's establishment, which he notes, "might very properly be styled a fort, being secured by high pickets, which made it difficult for the Indians to approach it." Shaw had fastened the outer gate as well as the door.⁹³ The latter, called by the natives "The Cat" because of his weak voice, had only one man, a Canadian, with him. The other men were off foraging for provisions.

The natives demanded more rum, and on Long's advice, Shaw complied.⁹⁴ They retired to drink for the night in their huts, and returned the following dawn asking for more. During the night, the Canadian had fled, and Shaw and Long were now alone. Expecting an attack, Long opened a barrel of gunpowder. When one of the attackers broke into the house, Long pointed a gun at the barrel and threatened to blow it up. The natives fled to an island opposite the house, and departed from the lake later the same day.⁹⁵ Long remained with Shaw until his men returned. When he reached his house on Lac la Mort, Long found that his men had been supplied with ample provisions by the natives.⁹⁶

This winter, James Clarke, who was employed by the same company as Long, "had five men starved at Lake Savan, a bad lake for fish," which was about 350 miles from Long's post.⁹⁷ Lake Caribou (either modern Lake Caribou or a lake east of Pic River), Long says, was about 30 miles long.

"Some years ago a French trader settled here, but of late it has been deserted."⁹⁸

In the journal of his voyage from Lake Nipigon to Lake Winnipeg in 1784, Umfreville does not mention any posts on Lake Minnitaki.⁹⁹

There is no further record of a post on Ball Lake after Burdino's until Jacques Santeron, a Canadian, wintered there in 1777-78.

Santeron, believing that he was not sufficiently rewarded by his employer, whose name is not stated but may have been Ezekial Solomon, left his post in the middle of April, and apparently sold his furs to the Hudson's Bay Company. When John Long settled on this lake, which he calls "Lake Schabeechevan," the following year, he found no trace of Santeron's post, and surmised that Santeron had been "so elated that he made a feu de joye on the prospect of being his own Master."¹⁰⁰ Long does not give the location of his house. It was "fifty feet long, and twenty feet wide, divided into two separate apartments, one for merchandise, and the other for common use."¹⁰¹

For this winter, Long had a complement of 17 men. He was unable to find provisions for so many, and was reduced to eating tripe de roche. He left in the spring, and never returned.¹⁰² On his voyage from Lake Nipigon to Lake Winnipeg, Umfreville passed through Ball Lake, but did not see this post. According to James Sutherland, a Mr. George Knowles "once wintered" at the falls at the end of the lake.¹⁰³

In 1778-79, a Canadian, Joseph la Forme, had a house on a lake called by John Long, "Lac le Sel." In the course of the winter, an Indian of bad character, who apparently had previously attempted to kill Long, entered La Forme's post and requested to trade. La Forme, noticing that he had no furs, became suspicious. The Indian asked for credit, but

was refused, and was told that he was not only a bad hunter, but that he had a "heart of lead." This comment incensed the native, who observing that La Forme's men were absent from the house, shot him through the head as he stopped to light his pipe and plundered the house of some goods.¹⁰⁴

After learning about this murder, Long sent six Indians to bring to his post at Ball Lake the furs, merchandise and La Forme's men. Six weeks later, the murderer was killed by a member of his own tribe, who cut off his head and presented it to Long.¹⁰⁵

In an unsigned report for Berens River district for 1815 we are told that the earliest reference in "the old journals," presumably those of either Albany or York, to the presence of Canadians on Lake Seul was in 1784; but the author continues that his company was ignorant of the date of the first Canadian presence there.¹⁰⁶

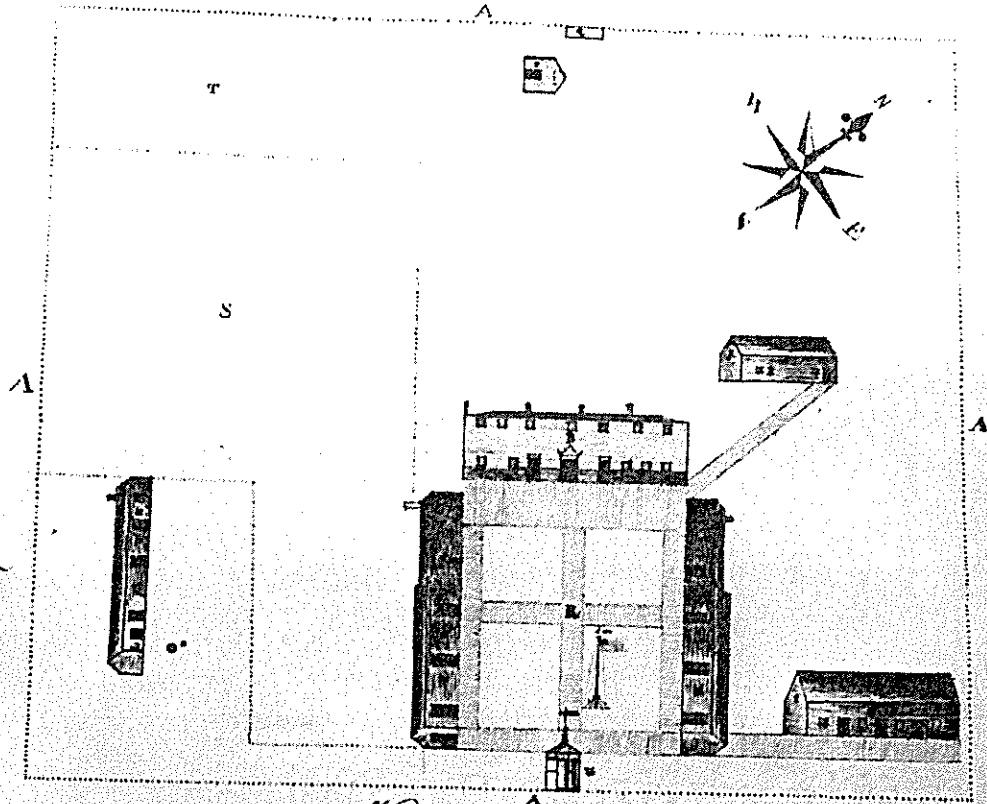
Severn and the Canadians to 1780

Fort Churchill, on New Severn River (Severn River), was founded in 1685-86 by Samuel Missenden, on the instructions of Governor George Geyer at Port Nelson.¹⁰⁷ Missenden deserted his post in 1687, and returned to England to testify in support of Radisson's accusations of private trading against Geyer.¹⁰⁸ Thomas Walsh replaced Missenden, and he succeeded in reanimating Fort Churchill's sagging trade. In 1690, Walsh burnt his post on being warned that Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville was advancing to attack him, though the beaver fell into Iberville's hands.¹⁰⁹ Fort Churchill was never considered a major post.

The French, having heard rumours that the English intended to settle on Severn River, in 1700 established Fort

- 5 "Plan of Severn Fort, 1823." (Hudson's Bay Company,
B.198/e/6/70.19-1823.)

Plan of *Fort Mifflin* 1778



References

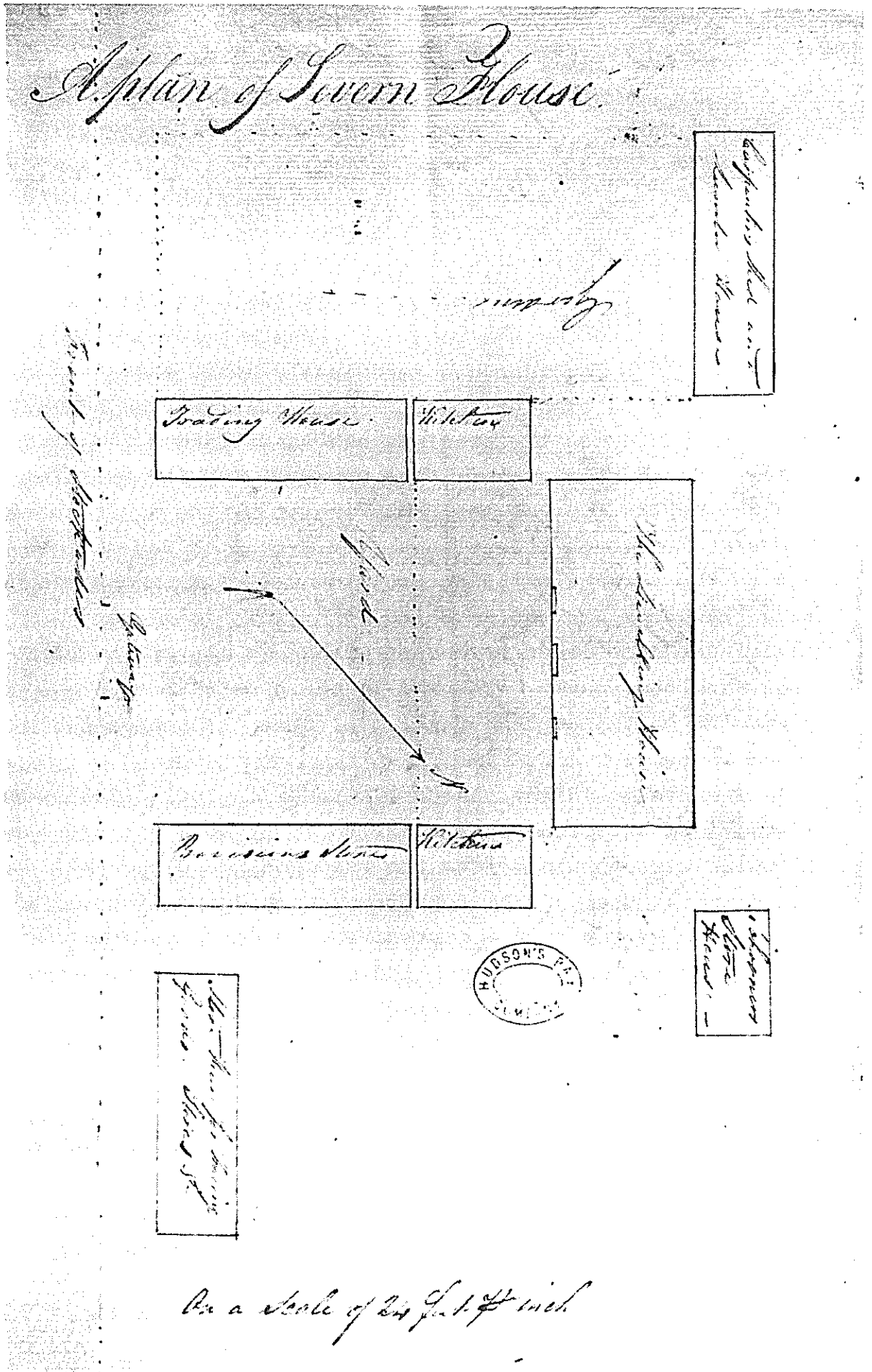
- A Stockhaus 291 x 248
- B Factory — 72 x 52
- C Kitchen & Cook room & Bake Oven
- D Water cistern
- E Prison & Soldiers hall
- F Old Indian shop now Indian store
- G New Indian shop & Leather Depot
- H Mess Room & Kitchen & Bake Oven
- I Carpenters shop
- K Store
- L Stable
- M Gun shop
- N Blacksmiths shop
- O Blewing Copper
- P Powder Magazine
- Q Water Clock
- R Platforms
- S Prison
- T Unaccused Quarters
- U Gate & Bell House



The fort with the Platforms to be done in summer by *George Clayton Smith*

- 6 "A plan of Severn House." (Hudson's Bay Company, B1198/
B1198/e/70 9d.)

A plan of Severn House.



On a scale of 2 1/2 feet to 1 inch

Phéliepeaux on Severn River as an outpost from Fort Bourbon.¹¹⁰ Fort Phéliepeaux was pillaged by Indians in 1712, and was surrendered to the English by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.¹¹¹

The Hudson's Bay Company did not re-establish itself on Severn River until 1759. At the beginning of September 1759, Humphrey Martin left York Factory by ship bound for Severn River, where he arrived at the end of the month.¹¹² The site he selected for the post was three miles below "Old Severn."¹¹³ A log tent was immediately built and subsequently "a kind of House."¹¹⁴ Either another house was constructed or the previous one was enlarged the next winter, for Martin writes: "The Front of the new Building is a high, as the tops of the Doors are to be the sides nearly the same, the back 3 feet above the Ground, I was obliged to add to the present Building as I found it was impossible to stow the goods without so doing."¹¹⁵ This "temporary house" was demolished by Andrew Graham in the spring of 1762, and its boards were used in the construction of permanent buildings.¹¹⁶ Until 1761 the post was called James Fort.

The new buildings, begun by Graham in April 1762, were in the form of a flanker system, built of both bricks, many of which were obtained from the ruins of Old Severn,¹¹⁷ and timber. Each of the four flankers had three stories, for Graham writes in his journal for 12 July that the carpenter had "finished the Middle floor." Partitions were made in the flankers to create "cabins" for the men.¹¹⁸ The flankers were covered with lead.¹¹⁹ A beacon was raised.¹²⁰

Before he began the construction of the flankers, Graham estimated the area around the house from "under the shore to the island abreast the house" to be 423 yards, the breadth of the island being 329 yards. This distance from the island to the south shore was 484 yards and from the

south shore to the woods' edge 800 yards.¹²¹ In his Observations, composed ten years after he came to Severn, Graham noted about his house,

Severn Fort (Washeo Whiskiheggan). It lies in fifty-six degrees ten minutes North latitude, and eighty-eight degrees West Longitude from London. It is pleasantly situated on the north shore of New Severn River (Washeo Sepee), about eight miles from its mouth. It is a compact building, with four bastions, eight cannon, a petard, and other warlike stores for its defence. The river, like most others in Hudson's Bay, is full of shoals and sandbanks, that it is with the utmost difficulty that a vessel of small burden can get in or out; and even when within the point of land, obliged to wait for spring tides to get up to the Fort. The tides here are so weak, and the current so strong, that the tide is scarcely ever observed to run up; it only swells the water. But there is yearly a vast deluge at the breaking up of the ice in the latter end of May, and much damage is frequently done by it. The whole complement of men at this delightful settlement is eighteen, and the trade about five thousands made beaver in furs and pelts. Here is a good strong sloop which annually brings the trade to York Fort to be put on board the ship, and returns again with a supply of European articles. A few miles up this river are seen the ruins of an old house, which we suppose to have been built by the French, when in possession of York and Albany Forts. Venison, American hares, ptarmigans, and fish are here in

great abundance. In short, I affirm that New Severn River is the pleasantest river in Hudson's Bay.¹²²

After Severn Fort's completion, Graham "overhaul'd" Old Severn and "found a few nails one old halbart and about six hundred bricks, clinkers, the English tiles being perished." He observed that it had not been built "log, on log, but upright logs and measures much the same as this in all shapes."¹²³

By settling on Severn River, the Hudson's Bay Company hoped to attract the trade of the Indians up the river and in the vicinity of Lake Winnipeg. But by the middle of the 1760s Canadian pedlars were on Lake Winnipeg, and made such extensive inroads into Severn's trade that Graham was obliged to send William Tomison inland in June 1767.¹²⁴

Tomison, on his journey to Lake Winnipeg between June 1767 and June 1768, found two houses at "Misquagamaw" River, one-half day's paddling across the lake. He reported that one house was commanded by "an Englishman" who had eight men, the other by a "frenchman and 16 Servants." To the westward, there were "3 houses more all commanded by frenchmen."¹²⁵

No Canadians resided in 1768-69 to the "Westward of Misquagamaw River," and as a result of their absence, Severn experienced a profitable trade, and was even visited by 20 canoes of "Keskachewan and Pegogama Indians."¹²⁶ Hopeful that he could expand his trade further to the westward, Graham had William Tomison journey into the "Muscuty or Asinepoet Country."¹²⁷

Traders from Lake Winnipeg reached the head of Severn River, presumably the northern end of Severn Lake, by 1772. Christopher Atkinson, at Severn, notes in his journal for 1 July, 1772 that there were "several of the pedlars lying at the head of Severn River" who probably had gotten most of

the trade of the Indians who used this waterway.¹²⁸ He does not indicate whether these pedlars had wintered there. But 11 Canadians did winter, in 1773-74, on the side of Frenchman Lake nearest Severn, and received the trade of some of Severn's debtors.¹²⁹ Andrew Graham wrote in November 1772, "These two years past Severn trade has been made up of the low country natives, none of the inland traders visit us. I assure you the Peddlars will diminish the Company's trade if not prevented."¹³⁰ By the end of June 1773, not one hunter had come since the previous summer from Lake Winnipeg, whence Graham previously could expect 10 canoes per annum,¹³¹ and only 3,000 MB were in the house.¹³² Some Indians who took debt at Severn sold their furs at Albany and York.¹³³

In order to attract the inland natives, William Falconer, who replaced Graham in 1773-74, was paying double the price for furs paid nine years previously, but by the end of June 1774, he had traded only a little more than 3,000 MB.¹³⁴ Despite the fact that both Falconer and his successor, Matthew Cocking, recognized that they could not compete with the Canadians, who were in the hunting grounds of the Indians and could supply all their needs, no effort was made to move inland. By 1777, Hudson's Bay Company men from Albany were on Gloucester Lake and in 1780 they reached Sturgeon Lake. While Albany was given a number of men specifically designated for service inland, Severn was overlooked.

The earliest reference to Canadians in the area about Paint Lake, west of Winisk Lake, is in 1776-77. William Falconer, Atkinson's successor, writes that a party of Bungee Indians had told him that they had "traded their winter furs with the Pedlars, who had two Houses "Near Paint Lake this year."¹³⁵ The ensuing winter "Two Canoes of Pedlars" resided at Cat Lake, and returned again in 1778-79.¹³⁶

Matthew Cocking relates that two Indian families which came to Severn in June 1780 stated that two canoes of pedlars had resided near them on Paint Lake, and had "fleeced all the Indians thereabouts of what Furrs they had, except what is now brought here, sent to trade Iron Work, which the Peddlers could not supply them with." Cocking was obliged to give presents to encourage them and others to return the following year with better furs, but he thought that this measure would not be effective, for the Canadians were within their hunting rounds.¹³⁷ In 1780-81, two canoes of Canadians wintered at Paint Lake, and three canoes were at Muskake-Wagamen (Swampy Water Lake).¹³⁸

Exploration and Settlement Inland From Albany to 1785

When the London Committee ordered the re-establishment of Henley, it was not with the intention of making it a trading post, but rather a haven for distressed natives on their way to Albany.¹³⁹ This proved to be an unwise decision, for many of the interior Indians chose to bring their furs to the Canadians rather than undertake the long and difficult journey to the bay; and those who did journey were intercepted by the Canadians as long as they "had any Goods to Supply them."¹⁴⁰ The Albany trade declined from 8,000 MB in 1770-71¹⁴¹ to under 5,000 MB in 1771-72.¹⁴² Yet it was not until May 1775 that the status of Henley was altered. Thomas Hutchins authorized John Martin at Henley to trade with each hunter a maximum of 10 MB; however, if he was certain that a native would trade with a pedlar instead of going down to Albany, Martin was permitted to trade an unlimited amount with him.¹⁴³ That summer, the London Committee made Henley a "Place of Trade" permitting the natives to trade there, and raised its complement of men from 8 to 20.¹⁴⁴ Henley subsequently did recover some trade from the Canadians;¹⁴⁵ in 1776-77 it received about

1,000 MB, 300 MB of which would have been lost.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, this was but a small percentage of the loss Albany had sustained since 1766. The Canadians were now well established in the interior, and posts further inland from Albany were necessary to compete directly with them.

Not until 1774 did the London Committee request that the area above Henley be explored. Edward Jarvis was instructed, at the end of March 1775, by Thomas Hutchins at Albany to proceed to Henley and from there to continue to "Lake Mepushanauka,"¹⁴⁷ probably Lake Wapiscuacow (McKay Lake), where the London Committee had been informed Canadians had erected a log tent. He would be accompanied by one man and native guides. He was to order the Canadians to remove themselves from the lands within the company's charter, and encourage those natives whom he encountered to patronize Albany rather than the Canadians.¹⁴⁸ However, the guides declined to conduct Jarvis beyond Henley.¹⁴⁹

This failure only made Hutchins more determined "to push the discovery of the Country," especially Lake St. Anns (Lake Nipigon) which had drawn the attention of the London Committee. The Canadians settled in Lake Nipigon probably before 1770, and frequently changed their location. Some years they had more than one post on the lake. Hutchins instructed John Favell, who was now the master at Henley, to explore inland at the earliest possible opportunity.¹⁵⁰ In June 1776, Jarvis left Henley and journeyed as far as the Canadian settlements at Michipicoten.¹⁵¹

After his return, Jarvis "repeatedly declined" to undertake any further voyages inland. George Atkinson was willing, but fell ill during the winter of 1777. John Kipling, who was acquainted with the Indian language of the interior and was thought to be "a prudent man," then volunteered to lead a party of four men and settle "at Lake Macobartan or if possible at Ea ba met Lake."¹⁵² The

post was to consist of "a Temporary House, with a pitched Roof in the Manner of the Canadians, allotting a Sufficient [] for a warehouse to deposit" the goods. It was to be called Gloucester House in honour of the brother of George III.¹⁵³

Kipling, after a fatiguing journey of 17 days, 10 of which were without food, stopped at Upashewa Lake. His men were so weakened by their trial that they could "hardly lift" their bundles out of the canoes. He selected a site "about 3 miles above where Ca, che, che, wan" River entered on the south side of the lake.¹⁵⁴

Few fish were initially caught at Upashewa Lake, and Kipling's men refused to stay beyond September if they were not immediately supplied with at least three months' provisions. On learning about the men's hardships, Hutchins dispatched three men from Albany with extensive supplies and additional goods, principally brandy.¹⁵⁵

From the reports of the Indians who hunted in his vicinity, Kipling concluded that Upashewa Lake was not fit for a permanent settlement, for there was not "anything to be got by Englishmen at it." David Sanderson surveyed Eabemet Lake, and reported that it was well situated for trade, as it was in the track of many hunters and well stocked with fish. Kipling was impressed, but felt that further surveys of that lake should be undertaken before a decision should be made to relocate Gloucester House there. Meanwhile, he liberally dispensed presents to the Indians at and near Upashewa Lake in order to draw them away from the Canadians.¹⁵⁶

The energy shown by Hutchins in dispatching the provisions was indeed fortunate, for the men at Gloucester had only one day's rations left when they arrived. By the middle of September, Kipling had still not erected his house.¹⁵⁷ It is not certain whether his men completed it

by the beginning of December when they left the lake, having expended all their European provisions. Kipling and three men reached Henley House on 10 December (the fourth man was tenting with Indians), and according to John Favell at Henley, they were "miserable spectacles indeed." Favell could not feed four more mouths, and they were sent down to Albany,¹⁵⁸ where they remained for the winter. In July Gloucester was reoccupied, with Kipling continuing as master despite the fact that the lake was "barren of victuals," and the clumsy and heavy batteaux employed by the company was not conducive to voyaging on the waters above Henley.¹⁵⁹

David Sanderson, in the course of his survey in the summer of 1777, passed through Macobartan (Makokibatan Lake) and Eabamet Lake where he saw "two old French houses that the Natives destroyed a few years ago."¹⁶⁰

In 1778-79, Gloucester House was completely surrounded by Canadian posts. Kipling says that he was informed "that there is not a Lake nor Creek but what have a Trading house on it so that there is almost a Trader for family of Indian that is in this part of the Country."¹⁶¹ There were two Canadian houses which seem to have been established that autumn "not more than 80 miles" southeast of Gloucester; each was manned by five men.¹⁶² The following winter, a "French Trading house" above Gloucester was destroyed by the Indians.¹⁶³

Having returned to Gloucester during the summer of 1778, Kipling had ample time to make preparations for an autumn fishery, which was surprisingly rewarding.¹⁶⁴ Provisions were no longer a problem, but Kipling and his men throughout the winter were apprehensive that they would be attacked by a notoriously bad Indian and his followers.¹⁶⁵ In its first complete year, Gloucester has a respectable trade of 1,365 1/20 MB. Henley received 1,947 41/50 MB.¹⁶⁶

The London Committee was anxious that accurate information should be obtained in the summer of 1777 about the area between Grand Portage and Lake Winnipeg,¹⁶⁷ including Lac la Pluie and Lac du Bois. The exploration of this region was now beyond Hutchins' means; he did instruct Favell at Henley to send parties toward Lake Winnipeg, but he did so only because it was his duty. Fortunately for Hutchins, a number of Indians visiting Albany during the winter of 1777 expressed their willingness to have a man from the fort live among them for a year. George Sutherland, a young man in his early twenties, was selected by Hutchins, and left with them at the end of June 1777.¹⁶⁸ He passed through Henley,¹⁶⁹ Muckca ke batton Sacaheggon Lake (Macobarton Lake)¹⁷⁰ and Memenescau Sacaheggan Lake (modern Miminiska Lake,¹⁷¹ where he encountered an Englishman living with a family of natives. This individual related that he was employed by a Mr. Barlie, and had wintered at a lake 90 miles south-west of Miminiska Lake (possibly Osnaburgh Lake). Barlie had left him in charge of the house while he was absent at Michilimackinac, disposing of his trade of 1,200 MB and purchasing goods and supplies. He had remained there until he had expended all his victuals, and then had joined the family on Miminiska Lake. The unattended house was subsequently burned by some natives.¹⁷²

This European was dressed in an old blanket and "Pedlers Coat", and an "old Dirty Ruffled shirt," which Sutherland thought had not been off his back for 10 months. He had neither britches nor stockings nor shoes. Sutherland was "heartily sorry" to see an Englishman in this "miserable situation," but to his amazement he soon discovered that he was "as content as his Mejestie."¹⁷³

After travelling three days further inland from Miminiska Lake - a distance he estimated to be 85 miles but he gives no direction - Sutherland passed a night "in a

small lake about 5 miles across. Opposite to this Lake and about the Distance of 20 Miles is Barlies House."¹⁷⁴ About 60 miles beyond this small lake, Sutherland entered a river "called the Winapeg River as the water runs to the Winapeg or what the Indians call the sea."¹⁷⁵ Actually, he had entered a chain of lakes which led into English River. He mentions going through Lake Pashe Pick a Hoggan Sacakaheggan (Pashkokogan Lake),¹⁷⁶ and Eagle Lake.¹⁷⁷ The Indians stopped more than 50 miles before Lake Winnipeg and declined to proceed further. Sutherland was required to pay one of them handsomely to guide him to the lake. On his journey between Miminiska Lake and Lake Winnipeg, Sutherland did not observe any pedlars. He was informed that many had crossed Lake Winnipeg in September; however, none resided this winter on the lake.¹⁷⁸ Having few provisions, Sutherland did not stay more than a few days on Lake Winnipeg, passing most of his time taking readings of his position with quadrant.¹⁷⁹

Sutherland resided during the winter with the Indians on Lake Miskusheminechcon, which he called Rice Lake because of the large amount of wild rice which grew there.¹⁸⁰

At the end of May, Sutherland learnt from two natives that two Canadian houses had been founded the previous autumn. One was on Lake Pashe Pick a Hoggan (Pashkokogan), through which Sutherland had passed the previous summer, and the other was "about a days journey father off." The existence of these houses was unknown, until April, to the inhabitants of the region where Sutherland wintered.¹⁸¹ Soon afterward, nine canoes of Indians visited Sutherland. He endeavoured to persuade them that they should go down with him and trade at Albany, but found that they had "a strong Desire to take the nearest house and kill the poor Englishmen" at Pashkokogan who were only four in number.¹⁸² In order to warn them of this design, Sutherland cleverly

suggested that they should convey to the traders a letter written by him stating that they were his friends and should be given presents of brandy on his account.¹⁸³ This suggestion they readily accepted. On receiving Sutherland's letter of warning,¹⁸⁴ the pedlars gave the 12 Indians some brandy, saying that they did so at Sutherland's request. A tent was then made for them, where they retired to drink. Meanwhile, each man armed himself "with a pistole a baynet and a knife." The Indians soon came back for more brandy, but when they saw the traders fully armed

they would not Drink a Drop more but asked them to trade directly as they wanted to go away after all they did not stay to Trade above the one half of them goods - but went away Directly like Cowards saying they never will Trade with the Pedlars anymore for they are bad hearted People.¹⁸⁵

Despite all the presents that he gave during his year of inland residence, Sutherland could get only six canoes of Indians to come down with him to Albany in June.¹⁸⁶ On his way back, he inquired about Lake Nipigon, but learned only that there were two pedlar houses there and that the Albany River did not lead into it.¹⁸⁷

One year after Sutherland's return, July 1779, Germain Maugenest, his clerk, Thomas Coates and seven Canadians appeared at Albany, offering their services to the Hudson's Bay Company. Maugenest explained to the officer at Albany, Thomas Hutchins, that he had been for many years "a capital trader" about Lac la Pluie, Lac du Bois, Petit River and Nipigon, and had averaged 60 "french packs" of furs per annum, each pack containing 100 MB.¹⁸⁸ As the masters of the bay posts had been ordered not to engage any Canadians,¹⁸⁹ Hutchin at first declined their services. However, Maugenest was not easily discouraged. He dwelt

upon the serious injury which had been done to Albany's trade in the previous few years by the Canadian merchants in the Petit Nord, and offered to establish posts inland in opposition to them.¹⁹⁰

Maugenest's arguments partially disarmed Hutchins' suspicions. While Hutchins still declined to employ the Canadians in his company's service, he did suggest that Maugenest should remain at Albany until the arrival of the ship, and leave for England, where he could place his proposals directly before the London Committee. Meanwhile, the 17 bundles of furs brought by him would be traded for a supply of goods and provisions according to the company's standard, thus permitting Coates and the Canadians to make their way back to their post inland.¹⁹¹ On Maugenest's suggestion, Hutchins sent one of his men, George Sutherland, with Coates,¹⁹² who received 600 MB in supplies, equal to half the value of Maugenest's furs. Hutchins says in a letter to Kitchin at Moose Fort that he was "induced to Trade a supply of Necessaries with them, that necessity might not compel them to make an attempt on Gloucester," which was well supplied but weakly manned.¹⁹³ One day after Maugenest's arrival, Hutchins had ordered Favell at Henley to station five of his men at Gloucester until eight days after the Canadians had passed on their way into the interior.¹⁹⁴

Maugenest had spun a fine story of his past and the influence he had among the inhabitants of the Petit Nord. He even claimed to have another post.¹⁹⁵ In reality, he was an employee of Ezekial Solomon, and the 17 packs of furs which he had brought were not his property. It was only after George Sutherland reached Sturgeon Lake that these facts came to light.

In the journal of his voyage to Sturgeon Lake, Sutherland mentions that a Frenchman had wintered "about 7 or

8 years ago" at a place called Shewesla, which was "at the opening of Eabemit Lake," where it flowed into the Albany River.¹⁹⁶ When he passed the pedlars track to Paskokogan Lake on 13 September, he remarked that a "Mr. Bartie used to Winter" at Paskokogan Lake, and he was informed by an Indian "that two large canoes of french had passed by here about a week ago and are to winter at Poshcocoggan lake."¹⁹⁷

On 22 September, Sutherland reached Sturgeon Lake, and was informed that some Canadians, commanded by James Clark, were erecting a house on the other side of the lake. Two men, who had been left at Sturgeon Lake by Maugenest when he journeyed to Albany, had built a house on his instructions, but when Clark discovered it, he burnt it "to ashes." He claimed that this was in retaliation for Maugenest's action in running "away with Mr. Solomon's peltere."¹⁹⁸

Sutherland and his men were well received when they visited Clark's house on 29 September.¹⁹⁹ They were treated to Jamaica rum, had pork and plum pudding for dinner, and in the evening, tea "sweetened with refined sugar." For supper, they had fish with salt, pepper, vinegar and mustard.²⁰⁰

When Sutherland asked Coates and the Canadians wintering with Clark about the location of the Canadian posts inland of Lake Nipigon, he was told

that Mr. Clark has 8 canadians under his command in two large canoes that winters at this lake. Four canoes more came in company with him two of which are gone to winter at the Oker Lake [Red Lake] the same place that I made mention of in my Journal at Lake Winnipeg. the other two are gone to winter at a lake to the Westward called the Eagle Lake. I am also told that there are two canoes more are gone to Winter below the White Lake towards Gloucester House. two canoes

more at arimapeg or What we call Lake st. Anns three canoes more at a place on the north side of Lake Superior called the pike...two Canoes more at a lake between, that and henley called the tickamey Lake. two houses at Mishipicotton where Mr. Jarvis, was. now let us come back again twoards the great Carriang place here are no less then three or four houses where they keep men summer and winter and they Generally keep a stock of goods here. but they have got none this year to keep. I am likeweas told they have Cattle and Hogs at the great Carriang place - 1 canoe more at a lake about 70 miles to the Southward of this lake called the dog Lake two houses at a Lake called Lake Laplue. another house at a Lake called Lake deboies. these are all the houses that they have got Except one at a lake called Poshcocoggan. here are no less then 17 houses that, they have got to the Eastward of Lake Winapeg and to the Northward of Lake Superior. Just about Albany River.²⁰¹

The trade in this region, Sutherland writes, was "Entirely carried on by an Illiterate Jew, one Ezekial Solomo a kind of a pedling merchant at Mountreal."²⁰² Then Canadians had not penetrated the area to the northward between Severn and Albany. Solomon had paid a man 700 livres in the latter part of the 1770s to explore it; however he probably did not fulfil his engagement, for when asked for his report, he replied that he had seen few Indians and they "never killed anything in their Lives."²⁰³ Believing this, Solomon subsequently disregarded the region.

As the Hudson's Bay Company post had been burned and the season was well advanced, all but one of Coates' French Canadians deserted.²⁰⁴ Sutherland, having only Coates and the Canadian, could not hazard the difficult journey back to

Gloucester. A house was built by Sutherland's two men in the vicinity of the Canadian post;²⁰⁵ meanwhile, Sutherland lived in Clark's house, but left on 24 September, after he recognized that his host "wanted to get free" of him, being short of provisions.²⁰⁶

Of the two posts Sutherland remarks,
When I got to Mr. Coates I found our kind of a house finished and a poor house they have made of it. It is only 14 feet long and 9 feet broad and the Crevices filled up with moss instead of clay what a parcel of lazy sons of bitches these pedlars are. Mr. Clarks house is almost finished. it is 40 feet long and 20 feet broad. the one half Mr. Clark's Room and the Warehouse. The other half for the men with a garret about the whole it is plasterd out side and in with clay and straw mixt together. the Chimneys are built about two feet high with stones. then they are built all the way up with clay and straw in the form of lath and plaster and to my great surprise I am told that they never fall down nor take fire all the Winter. the roof is covered with Clay and staw or at least long grass. their floors are laid with head plank as pretty as can be. they likewas have got from hinges to their doors and stock locks. I dont see anything that they want here for all they are, so far up in the Countury.²⁰⁷

Both posts experienced extensive privations during the winter. By November, Sutherland had discovered that few fish could be caught or partridges killed. Clark, having experienced other winters in this relatively barren country, at the end of December was afraid that he would "lose all his men," who were nine in number. He told Sutherland that

these Frenchmen were "such a parcel of growling sons of bitches that if one or two of the men was to dye of hunger as is too often the case, the other would make a terrible compleant to the owners that he kept other people alive and let them starve."²⁰⁸ Despite these grim prospects, Clark invited Sutherland to pass the Christmas holiday with him. Sutherland observed that the French fasted the whole day before Christmas, and at twelve at night, after prayers, had a feast of Indian corn and consumed large amounts of liquor; they danced, chiefly the minuet, all night, but he took little part in the dancing.²⁰⁹

During his stay, Sutherland observed the character of the Canadians and the qualities valued by their employers. He learned that the

pedlars keep no accounts, and never ask a man wither he can write or no, when they want a master for any of their houses. the only Question that is put too him, is if it be a frenchman parle vu. bo. Savage, and if he be an Englishman, can you Speak good Indian. if he answers this question he gets a place at once if not he is cast, if he was the best scholar in America. the Canadians are so illiterate in general that they are often obliged to keep their Indian debts by marking notches in sticks.²¹⁰

Unable to catch any fish during the winter, Sutherland was required to live on the skins and bones of "the Rotten fish,"²¹¹ and after consuming this, he ate his dog. Some days he was able to kill a small animal or two, but he went without food often for three or four consecutive days. By the end of February, he was convinced that he would starve before the spring, but he survived on the beaver skins, and when all else failed,²¹² he was obliged to eat his shoes, mittens and even his "very snow shoes strings and in short

every thing that was leather." He also suffered from a fever.²¹³ Clark and his men were also starving, although they had more to eat than Sutherland.²¹⁴

At Paskokogan Lake, an Indian entered the Canadian house during the early part of the winter while the master, a Frenchman, was alone, his seven or eight men being away fishing. The native requested some article, and upon being refused, shot the master in the breast, but the wound was not fatal. Before leaving, he plundered the post of some goods. The men at the post, Clark informed Sutherland, subsequently wasted and gave away most the remaining goods, which gave Sutherland hope that Gloucester House, about 170 miles from it, would have a good trade.²¹⁵

Almost all of the trade at Sturgeon Lake went to the Canadian house. Sutherland estimated Clark's furs were worth 1,300 "Beaver," but he calculated that he had paid for them not less than 4,000 "beaver" in goods.²¹⁶ This he regarded as a pitiful return for the suffering experienced. Sutherland says that two of the Frenchmen who had come with him from Albany had died at Lake Mistounga, where they were living by themselves.²¹⁷

From this ordeal at Sturgeon Lake, Sutherland concluded that "nothing can be done inland from Albany." He thought that Coates and Maugenest had known this all along: they had spun a "pretty" story to Governor Hutchins for their own ends. Everything, including the scarcity of provisions and the dangerous network of waterways leading to Sturgeon Lake, made settlements inland from Gloucester impractical. Nor was the country rich in fur-bearing animals; the Canadians were so numerous and the Indians "so few and so much scattered" that even if the men were available, little trade could be gotten.²¹⁸

In the middle of May, Coates left for "the Colonies," vowing he would never return, "not for all the furs that ever

went from Hudson's Bay." With him went all but one of the Frenchmen who had survived the winter at Lake Mistounga; one man joined Clark.²¹⁹

Sutherland left for Gloucester on 21 May with a small amount of furs. He had "hardly any strength to paddle," and suffered from pains in a leg and thigh,²²⁰ but was able to reach Gloucester on the last day of the month.²²¹

While Maugenest was showing the London Committee the benefits of moving inland, Philip Turnor, a surveyor, arrived at Albany. Hutchins instructed Turnor, in February 1780, to travel immediately to Gloucester and Henley and make the necessary observations. He then was to continue further inland, and if possible, chart the region between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg, paying particular attention to Lake Nipigon, Lake Mipis, cou, a, cou, (Wepiscuacow, modern McKay Lake), Lac La Pluie, Lac du Bois and "Assinibouil Lake."²²² Turnor left Albany at the beginning of June,²²³ and surveyed only the country north of Gloucester. During his years of association with Albany and Moose, Turnor never went further westward than Gloucester. He explored the track between Moose and Michipicoten, but never did venture in the direction of Lake Winnipeg.

Gloucester was relatively well supplied in 1778-79, but the shortage of European provisions at Albany induced Hutchins to restrict his supplies to Gloucester in 1779-80. This, added to the poor fishing, resulted in "hungry bellies."²²⁴ In August, Kipling was apprehensive that he could not maintain the house through the winter, as the provisions he received via Henley were only for 35 days for five men. The difficulties encountered in supplying Gloucester also limited the quantity and variety of trading goods.²²⁵

The Canadian house at Paskokogan Lake, Gloucester's principal competitor, was destroyed and its master was killed by a band of Indians in 1779-80.²²⁶ Because of this, Gloucester received an unexpectedly large trade, 2,347 14/15 MB.²²⁷ Kipling for a time could not find canoes to convey the furs to Albany.²²⁸ After the destruction of Paskokogan House, the only competition experienced was from a pedlar's house at Lake Mou che cat. This house, in existence since 1777-78, was not reoccupied the ensuing winter.²²⁹ A trader named Mautau was settled on Carp Lake some time before 1780-81.²³⁰

Maugenest was so skillful in presenting his proposals to the London Committee that he returned to Albany, in the spring of 1781, with a five year contract and the commission of "Factor Inland" beyond the distance of 200 miles from Gloucester House.²³¹ He was personally assigned 13 men, increasing the complement of men for Albany to 67. Hutchins instructed him, in May 1781, to proceed above Gloucester and establish a new post, to be named Williamsburgh in honour of the third son of George III.²³² On 29 May, Maugenest set off from Albany with 28 Englishmen and nine Indians in three Henley boats and two batteaux.²³³ He got as far as Martin Falls, but his Indian guides would proceed no further, claiming that the water was too high. They promised that they would be down the following year at Gloucester, and then would guide him inland.²³⁴ Even had they been willing to proceed this year, the expedition probably would have failed, for "owing to the unacquaintedness of the men in this way of working in Martin Fall," one batteau was lost as well as all the powder and much of the provisions. The men considered the Frenchman the author of their misfortune and were reluctant to go any further with him.²²⁵

Maugenest resided at Gloucester during the winter,²³⁶ ostensibly preparing for a new attempt when the ice broke.

But he passed his time making excuses for not going inland. His principal complaint was that the Orkneymen were unfit for inland travel. They could not steer the canoes and could "not live the same as Canadians on fish always." The Canadians were "brought up to such labour from their infancy," and the company's servants, as soon as they acquired experience, were recalled to England and replaced by young and inexperienced recruits. He also objected to the use of batteaux.²³⁷ Sixty-four men were assigned to Albany.²³⁸

In preparation for the inland expedition, Hutchins lodged two batteaux and extensive goods and provisions at Henley in the course of the winter. But the loss of so many provisions in the fire which destroyed Henley in January 1782 and the great consumption of supplies at Gloucester obliged him to modify his plans. Maugenest was given six men instead of 13, and instructed to proceed to Paskokogan Lake, where he was to winter. Six more men would accompany him to his destination, helping him with the batteaux, and would then return.²³⁹ Believing that the apprehension of the men about going inland stemmed from their fear of starving, Hutchins provided eight months' provisions.²⁴⁰ There was no Canadian house this year at Paskokogan Lake.²⁴¹

Maugenest remonstrated against the use of batteaux for travel to Paskokogan Lake, pointing out that a batteau or any other wooden craft could never reach that lake because the river was "nothing but Rocks and Shoals" for about half the way to Miminiska Lake.²⁴² Hutchins, having gone to much expense and effort to collect provisions, urged that the scheme should not be given up without at least a trial;²⁴³ however, Maugenest still would not proceed inland.²⁴⁴ In the autumn, Maugenest was transferred to Moose to assist Philip Turnor to found a post on Lake Abitibi.²⁴⁵ After Maugenest's departure, Albany's

complement remained at 64 men, including 20 for Henley and 12 for Gloucester, and this number was maintained until other settlements were founded inland.²⁴⁶

In 1780-81, Ezekiel Solomon personally wintered at Paskokogan Lake, and had an unexpectedly large trade, principally because Kipling at Gloucester had expended his goods by June and many of the Indians in the region had yet to dispose of their hunts.²⁴⁷ The following winter Solomon, expecting Maugenest to winter inland, advised his masters to give "2 Beaver for every Beaver skin in order to break Mr. Maugenest Trade." It is very likely that Solomon was again at Paskokogan Lake.²⁴⁸ There were so many traders throughout the country that the hunters told Kipling that they did not know where to bring their furs and demanded from him large amounts of brandy. Kipling was also required to clothe the chief Indians who visited him.²⁴⁹ Small pox ranged through the area inland of Gloucester in 1782-83, and was so virulent that Solomon's trader at Sturgeon Lake left with most of his goods untraded.²⁵⁰

Two years after Turnor visited Henley, the post was "in a very ruinous condition," which obliged John McNab, its master, to instruct the watch to keep a fire burning all night during the winter. The house, in many places, had birch rind patches and the chimney was crumbling.²⁵¹ On the night of 12 January 1782, a fire, caused by the carelessness of the watch, engulfed the post, and before all the men could be evacuated, the gun-powder exploded. The post was burned to "the very foundation Logs of the Cellars." Three men died, and the three survivors, including the master, took shelter in an Indian tent across the creek.²⁵² After he learned about the fire, Jarvis at Albany dispatched men and provisions for Henley. McNab was recalled to Albany, as he was required to serve as a witness in the investigation of the fire. John Hodgson replaced

him, and built a log tent within the palisades, where he and his men resided throughout the winter.²⁵³ In April, the log tent was flooded by the rising river, forcing Hodgson to sleep outdoors for a day or two.²⁵⁴

McNab returned the following summer, but did not begin reconstructing the post until November.²⁵⁵ Work proceeded slowly, and the flankers were not completed before the summer of 1785.²⁵⁶

In the summer of 1782, the French admiral, La Perouse, captured both York Fort and Prince of Wales Fort. On receiving intelligence of these events, the master of Severn evacuated his men to Albany with everything that was moveable.²⁵⁷ William Falconer, on entering Severn at the beginning of October 1783, "found only the shell of the House, the windows all broke, the doors open and several of the keys gone." Having no means to repair the broken windows, no hatchets to fell trees and insufficient clothing, Falconer and his men passed an uncomfortable winter, and did not venture outdoors on cold days.²⁵⁸ Not before March 1784 were repairs begun on the Factory.²⁵⁹

A number of York Fort Indians appeared at Severn in April 1784, warning Falconer that the French were again on the bay. They suggested that he should entrust them with his goods to avoid their seizure by the French, but Falconer declined to do so until he had sighted the French squadron. Recognizing Falconer could not be duped, the Indians threatened to hang him "at the Flag Staff and put an Indian in his room" if they were not given part of the goods. Falconer, however, succeeded in obtaining their departure by giving them one bull.²⁶⁰

At the end of the spring of 1783, Kipling was ordered by Edward Jarvis at Albany to evacuate Gloucester,²⁶¹ probably because of the difficulty in adequately supplying a settlement so far inland and the French successes.

Nevertheless, Jarvis, after analyzing the returns of the trade of Gloucester, ordered its reoccupation. Jarvis thought that the extension of a chain of posts was imperative to increase the company's influence in the interior, but the losses sustained because of La Perouse's attack and the necessity to rebuild Henley forced the postponement of his elaborate plans.²⁶² Nevertheless, James Sutherland was instructed to explore the region between Gloucester and Lake Nipigon. Kipling, however, was more interested in exploring the track between Gloucester and Paskokogan Lake, where his main rivals were stationed, and thought that it was impractical to establish a post at Lake Nipigon from Gloucester.²⁶³

The pedlars, in 1783-84, had only three houses as opposed to seven the year before.²⁶⁴ During his voyage inland in May and June 1784, Sutherland did not see any Canadian posts between Gloucester and Paskokogan Lake; nor does he note any abandoned ones. At Deer Tent Lake, he found a French Canadian trading with some Indians, who asserted that they would have gone to Gloucester had they been aware of its re-establishment. Sutherland learned from the Canadian that his master had departed for the summer from his post on Paskokogan Lake after making 15 bundles of furs, about 1,200 beaver.²⁶⁵ There was another Canadian house on Crow Nest Lake.²⁶⁶ At Lake Nipigon there was "but one House;" it procured "15 some years 20 bundles of Beaver, and...about 30 hunting Indians belong to ye Lake."²⁶⁷

Sutherland entered Paskokogan Lake at 8:00 A.M. on 31 May, and after paddling for one-half hour, arrived at the Canadian house. He remarked, "It is no better than a Hoggstie." He said that he made "a draught of it to the minutest dementions,"²⁶⁸ but it is not in the journal. At

the house, he conversed with a Canadian, who said he was working for himself; he had been in the Nipigon country for 15 years and had sent his trade with the master of Paskokogan to Lake Superior.²⁶⁹

Unable to obtain a guide to Lake Nipigon, Sutherland returned to Gloucester. He reported that it was not possible to employ batteaux in voyages to Paskokogan Lake because of the number of portages.²⁷⁰

Soon after his return, Sutherland commenced a journey to Lake Nipigon via Macakocabarten Lake, (Makokibatan Lake) Cockenaggimy Lake, (Kagianagami Lake) and Frenchman's River (Alsekeslpey River), which joined Albany River below Henley.²⁷¹ He left Frenchman's River after travelling two days, perhaps 38 1/2 miles, and after passing through a crooked creek on the south side of the river, he entered Mootchicat Lake, which was six or seven miles long.²⁷² After paddling 2 hours, 56 minutes, he "came to the Old French House built 4 or 5 years ago." He then went ashore and found that it had been burned, either by accident or by the Indians.²⁷³ About two miles from it, he entered a narrow creek and then a small lake. Four days later, he reached Lake Nipigon, but did not visit the house because his guide would not venture into the lake, fearing its inhabitants.²⁷⁴

In 1784-85, there were four Canadian houses around Gloucester.²⁷⁵ One of them, manned by 20 Canadians, was on Crow Nest Lake. At the end of spring, four of the men remained behind "to build a House further inland."²⁷⁶

The Extension of Albany's Trade from Osnaburgh to Lake Winnipeg

Introduction

In 1785, an outpost from Albany was founded at Miminiska Lake, and the following summer it was removed to Osnaburgh Lake, which was along the route taken by the Canadians on their voyages to Cat Lake, Lake Seul and Red Lake. Some time between 1785 and 1787, the principal trader in the Nipigon region, a Mr. Shaw, probably Alexander Shaw, became a partner in the North West Company. The latter created the Nipigon department, placing it under the supervision of Duncan Cameron, an energetic and able young man who had come to the region in 1785 as a clerk for Shaw. The other traders disappeared from the region by 1790.

Under Cameron's supervision, the Canadian ventures into this region were no longer haphazard and ill-supplied. Cameron obtained his supplies during the summer from Grand Portage and after the turn of the 19th century from Fort William, and then proceeded inland through Lake Nipigon and Osnaburgh Lake on his journey toward Lake Winnipeg. The concentration of authority in one person made it possible for the Canadians to organize a concerted and effective opposition against Albany. Cameron placed his men in strategic locations to intercept the trade flowing to Osnaburgh, and this forced the masters at Albany to penetrate further inland. When Albany extended its outposts into Cat Lake and Red Lake, Cameron moved further toward Lake Winnipeg, and succeeded in limiting the flow of trade from that important lake. The Albany men were inexperienced and

were hesitant to undertake the voyage from Osnaburgh, which served as a supply base for the posts further inland, to Lake Winnipeg, a journey believed to be long and difficult.

In 1789-90, Cameron commanded a formidable force, but two of his most able men, John McKay and Donald McKay, were dissatisfied with their lot, and the following year sought employment with the Hudson's Bay Company. Their experience in the Nipigon region was decisive in Albany's expansion beyond Cameron's ring of posts. Donald McKay, in the summer of 1791, commanded an Albany party which surveyed the route between Osnaburgh and Lake of the Woods and the following spring he reached Portage de Lisle and Rainy River. In the summer of 1793, three well equipped parties set off from Martin Fall. Donald McKay crossed Lake Winnipeg and founded Brandon House, John McKay reached Rainy River and James Sutherland Portage de Lisle. The new sources tapped by the three expeditions within a few years had increased Albany's receipts six fold.

The large commitment of men to these enterprises left Albany weak in the region immediately to the west of Osnaburgh, and Cameron continued to impede the flow of trade to Osnaburgh and its outposts. Both Rainy River and Portage de Lisle were abandoned in the latter part of the 1790s, permitting more men to be concentrated against Cameron, but Brandon House was retained and annually drained a minimum of 20 men. There were two major water routes used by the Albany men to reach Lake Winnipeg from Osnaburgh. One, leading to Family Lake, consisted of Bajami Lake, Gull Lake, Springpole Lake, Birch Lake, Upper Goose Lake and Berens River. The other was through Lake Seul, English River, Ball Lake, Indian Lake, Umfreville Lake and Winnipeg River.

John McKay, in the autumn of 1792, succeeded in reaching Lake Nipigon, long an elusive objective for the London Committee. The trade, however, did not prove to be as

fruitful as had been anticipated, and the lake was abandoned at the turn of the 19th century.

In 1788, Albany's complement was increased to 76 men and each master of a post was promised one shilling per score of beaver to encourage industry. The complement was 85 men in 1790, 90 in 1791. The London Committee hoped in 1792 that ultimately 212 men would be assigned to Albany, but the resumption of war with France made recruitment in the Orkneys difficult. In 1793, Albany was 94 men short of the goal, and the following year the committee encouraged the master at Albany to recruit as many Canadians as possible, for they were experienced, enterprising and excited the company's servants to emulation. To make the employment of Canadians easier, the committee in 1790 had sent out blank notes payable upon the company.¹ However in 1798 there were complaints from London about the "intolerable" cost of servants, and especially the practice of advancing wages before the contracts expired. European provisions and liquor supplies were also reduced. In 1796 the distilleries in England were closed to prevent a grain famine. The price for molasses spirits quadrupled and the committee sharply cut its purchase.² Two years later, the shipment of all articles was cut in half, and in 1799 the committee discouraged a trade in furs such as marten and wolf, which were fetching lower prices. It was only with difficulty that the company received permission to send out any food in 1801.³ Between 1801 and 1803, Albany's receipts declined by almost 3,000 MB.⁴

The committee enjoined the master at Albany in 1803 to bring prices for furs more in line with expenses.⁵ That year, the XY Company made its appearance in the Nipigon region, further intensifying the competition and obliging Albany to expend much larger amounts of liquor and goods for a smaller and unrewarding trade. Fortunately, the two

Canadian companies merged in 1804, and expenses were reduced. The merger, however, left the North West Company with a large resource in manpower, which it used to advantage.

THE FOUNDING OF OSNABURGH

In June 1784, John Best, who had been engaged on the same terms as Maugenest's clerk, Coates, and had served as Maugenest's assistant, was selected by Jarvis to establish, the following spring, a post at Lake Paskokogan.⁶ For a time during the latter part of the winter and early spring, Jarvis abandoned the plan because of the poor hunt at Albany and the general want of provisions throughout the country. Instead, he requested John McNab, Henley's master, to procure for Best natives to guide him to Lake Nipigon, where a house could be "a means of recovering the Henley trade," which had been steadily declining.⁷ This plan, in turn, was discarded when it was learned that no one patronizing Henley was willing to undertake the voyage for fear of the Lake Nipigon Indians, who were suspected of killing one of Henley's principal hunters.⁸

As late as the middle of March 1785, Jarvis wrote to Kipling at Gloucester that the scarcity of provisions would force the postponement of the settlement on Lake Paskokogan.⁹ However, Jarvis could wait no longer and instructed Kipling to give Best all the provisions he could take, leaving at Gloucester only enough food to last until the middle of October, when he hoped to replace the quantity.¹⁰ Best and five men departed from Albany on 28 July,¹¹ and stopped for a short time at Gloucester. Two batteaux and three canoes were used, but because the canoes were small, Best could not take as many provisions as he thought he required.¹²

He passed through Elbow Lake, and on 5 September carried his batteaux over the fall at the foot of Miminiska

Lake. As he was "short" of provisions and was informed by his guide that the road to Paskokogan was bad, Best decided to pass the winter on Miminiska Lake. The following day, he started up the lake at 6:00 A.M. and stopped at 1:00 P.M., after sighting a suitable location. He computed the distance travelled at "a Bout 8 miles." The men began building a house on 12 September; good timber, however, was difficult to find.¹³

Best saw no hunters during the winter, but had adequate country provisions. By the beginning of March, he had received orders from Jarvis to abandon Miminiska Lake in the spring, and proceed further inland. He had received only 200 MB by the second week in May, and some of those who had visited him usually traded at Gloucester.¹⁴

According to Best, the Canadians, on learning of his approach to Miminiska Lake, "pulled down their Houses" at Paskokogan Lake and set off for Crow Nest Lake (Springpole Lake).¹⁵ However, Kipling was informed by Indians from the latter lake that there was no trader there; Mr. Shaw, who had a house there for "many years past,"¹⁶ had gone about 200 miles above it and intercepted many hunters coming down to Gloucester.¹⁷ There were two houses at Skunk Head Lake, near Lake Sturgeon, in 1785-86. James Clarke was the master of one, the other master, Kipling guessed from the description given by the Indians, was Edward Umfreville. Neither post had a good trade.¹⁸ There was also a pedlar's post on Lake Wapiscuacow (McKay Lake). Few of "the old traders" were inland this year, and Kipling thought that the new men were Americans. There were "few lakes but has a hous on it."¹⁹ This resurgence of free trader strength injured Gloucester's trade and made imperative a more concerted penetration inland.

Preparations were begun, in the autumn of 1785, for outfitting Best's expedition beyond Miminiska Lake. Letters

were exchanged among Best, Kipling and Jarvis on the most suitable site for a new settlement and the means to be employed in getting there. Kipling reported to Jarvis that James Sutherland, who had travelled the track to Paskokogan Lake, had related that batteaux could not proceed beyond Cockiame Falls, which was "above 40 miles" from Paskokogan Lake. Canoes would have to be used the rest of way. Kipling suggested that the house should be built at Miskicoggamy Lake, about 12 miles to the northward of Paskokogan Lake; it was easier to reach, a better place for fishing, and was directly in the track of Canadian travelling to Crow Nest Lake.²⁰ On Best's recommendation, Jarvis had two less cumbersome batteaux built.²¹

In his instructions to Best, dated 18 May 1786, Jarvis directed that the new post should be established "at or night [sic] to Pascocogan Lake." Jarvis added that there was a lake in the vicinity of Paskokogan, called "Miskickamy", which was reputed to be a good fishing place; if he found this report to be true, he was given "full liberty to settle there or any place within a short distance."²² He was to construct "a temporary house after the manner of the Canadians."²³

Best departed from Miminiska Lake in May, and went directly to Gloucester, where the batteaux and provisions were waiting for him. On 15 June, he left Gloucester.²⁴ Despite the fact that he did not have a guide for a part of his voyage and encountered great difficulties in portaging the falls, he succeeded in reaching Lake "Miskeaggagamy," where he intended to settle, at the beginning of August. At the lake he discovered an abandoned Canadian house, which he described in the following manner:

I was in one of their [Canadian] Houses that's on this lake but it is such a wretched hole as I never saw in my life. It is 12 feet long and

three feet broad the height of the side walls is 14 inch then the roof is sett on it like a Bogg tent so that the whole Height from the floor to the ridge pole is just 6 feet the Door is about 6 foot high then it is all covered with earth and grass and the chimney is of the same materials. It seems as if they had only left it last Fall for it is all fresh and standing except the chimney which is part tumbled down."²⁵

There was another and older house on the lake. Best noted, went up the south side of the Lake about 6 miles came to an old french house or rather hog style for it is more like the latter than the former about 1/2 a mile above two miles thro' it....the House is two logs laid on the side which raises the wall 14 or 15 inches then the roof is set on that like a log tent so that when I stand upright my head just clears the ridge pole.²⁶

According to several reports received by Jarvis from the Indians at Paskokogan Lake,

The Canadians were under much apprehension that the settlement there was intended vi et armis, to oppose their excursion further upwards and they were all armed with the intent of forcing their way several Gangs of them passed in their way to the Country above York.²⁷

After conducting his survey, Best travelled down the north side of the lake until he came "a little below the Canadian path on the opposite shore." There he found a "pretty good point" where he could "have a good outlook up and down the Lake."²⁸ Having only five men with him, he could construct only one house, "40 feet by 22 with Angles

instead of flankers which is equally defensible," before winter set in.²⁹ Not until spring were palisades set around it. Best experienced competition from John Tupa, who wintered for the North West Company at Cat Lake.³⁰

In June 1786, a number of Indians, who had promised during the winter to conduct a Hudson's Bay Company party to their hunting grounds on Lake Seul (called by the natives Lake Upishingunga), set off with James Sutherland and another Englishman.³¹ Sutherland remarked that he was informed "that 100 large canoes from the Grand Portage last Fall and dispersed themselves all over the Country. Seven of these canoes belong to Mr. Umfravele, who has made 100 bundles of Beaver this year he stays in the Country, sends down his Indent and receives his goods in the fall."³² Umfreville's house was at a place called Mine, he, cu, ca, eight days' paddling from Lake Seul.³³ Sutherland encouraged those he encountered at Lake Seul to trade at Gloucester, and distributed some presents.

Duncan Cameron came to the Nipigon region in 1785 as a clerk in the service of a Mr. Shaw, (most likely Alexander Shaw), who had been one of the first Englishmen to venture into the region. The following year, Cameron joined the North West Company, and was encharged with the command of the newly created Nipigon department, which stretched westward from Lake Nipigon to the eastern side of Lake Winnipeg and northward to Severn House. As has been seen, few of the old traders were in the field in 1785, and there is subsequently no mention of Ezekial Solomon. By the end of the 1780s, the North West Company had exclusive control over the Canadian trade in this region.

Anglo-Canadian Rivalry to Lake Winnipeg to 1800

In 1786-87, the first year of Cameron's superintendancy of the North West Company's Nipigon department, there was a Canadian house on Cat Lake (Tupa's house) where there were eight men.³⁴ Canadians, according to the reports which were received by Kipling, were also at Lake Nipigon, Monontague (Minnitaki Lake) and Crow Nest Lake, each party having two large canoes.³⁵ In the autumn of 1786, Best received a visit at Osnaburgh from "a Frenchman and 4 Canadians," who were "going to Wapanock Lake." There were nine men destined for that lake, and the leader was "the same man that had the House of Puskocoggan Lake."³⁶ An unidentified "French" trader established himself "near the head of Severn River;"³⁷ he made his way there from Lake Nipigon, and passed Osnaburgh in the autumn.³⁸

Gloucester experienced a substantial decline in trade, principally because many of its hunters that year patronized Osnaburgh. Kipling foresaw that this decline would continue so long as Osnaburgh were maintained, "as every Indian that comes this way must pass it."³⁹ However, the retention of Osnaburgh was indispensable because it was further inland than Gloucester, and served as a base from which the region in the vicinity of Lake Winnipeg could be penetrated.

Tupa, in 1787-88, returned to Cat Lake and obtained "20 Packs of Prime Furs."⁴⁰ In addition to Cat Lake, the Canadians were at Sturgeon Lake and Lake Nipigon, where the master, John Clarke, almost starved.⁴¹ Despite the competition from these three posts, Best's successor, Robert Goodwin, had a fruitful trade, receiving 4,330 MB.⁴²

A hunter, who visited Gloucester in 1787-88, reported that a trader, called by the Indians Meekesee, resided on Paskokogan Lake,⁴³ but another Indian later contradicted this, saying that Meekesee had passed Osnaburgh in the autumn "on his way to Catt Lake."⁴⁴ As the European name

of this trader is not known, it is not possible to ascertain whether the latter Indian was referring to Tupa, who passed Osnaburgh in September and settled at Cat Lake.⁴⁵

Three Canadians, Tupa's clerk and three labourers, were taken into the company's employ at the end of the 1787-88 winter by Goodwin, who had been empowered to hire any Canadian who could prove that he was not bound by contract to the North West Company.⁴⁶ Before he departed Tupa informed Goodwin that he was not certain whether he would return in the autumn; if he did not, there would be another trader in his stead.⁴⁷

After Sutherland's voyage of exploration into Lake Seul, Jarvis desired that Best should proceed to settle in the "fire country," the region between Lakes Seul and Winnipeg.⁴⁸ Although in his instructions of 16 June 1788 to Best he did not mention a specific location,⁴⁹ he hoped that Best would proceed at least "as far as possible up Upish can ga Lake." But 11 days later, Jarvis wrote to Goodwin that he had been informed by David Michael, an American who had been in the employ of the Canadians at Lake Nipigon, that a voyage that summer to Lake Seul was "scarcely particable" and that Trout Lake, 500 miles from Osnaburgh, was a more suitable location but even more inaccessible.⁵⁰ On Michael's recommendation, Best's destination was changed to Cat Lake; Michael and one of Tupa's men, Pierre Bonoux, also called Peter Goodwin, whom Jarvis had met at Michipicoten on his journey in 1776, were to be Best's guides.⁵¹ Tupa's trade of 20 "fine packs" of furs the previous year at Cat Lake impressed Jarvis.⁵²

Michael and Bonoux were apparently delayed in their departure from Albany, and Best left Osnaburgh without them. A batteau, a large canoe built during the winter by the Indians at Osnaburgh, and a small canoe were employed in the voyage. Though not long in distance, the journey was

exacting. Best lamented, "I do not know how I shall get down in the Spring, some of the falls is so very bad that we cannot run them and we have not strength to launch the boat."⁵³ Because of the badness of the track and the shortage of goods at Osnaburgh, he had but a poor assortment of trading articles.⁵⁴

Best settled "about 12 miles" into Cat Lake, "a little above the pedlers house," and "between it and the River." In January, Best, unable to obtain provisions at Cat Lake, sent three men to Crow Nest Lake, but they returned in the middle of February, bringing nothing back.⁵⁵ There is no indication whether they built a house on Crow Nest Lake.

Tupa, having lost three men by desertion, did not return, and his house was unoccupied throughout the winter. The three deserters and Michael were employed at the outpost, and the five Englishmen who had accompanied Best were sent to Albany.⁵⁶ The four Canadians were discharged in 1793 or 1794.⁵⁷

There was a Canadian trader again on Lake Nipigon in 1788-89, but it was not the Mr. Clarke who previously had had a house there. This trader had five men and one canoe and was "but poorly Gooded."⁵⁸

In the autumn of 1789, a Mr. Chavoudrill settled for the North West Company at Osnaburgh Lake, but his exact location is not stated. Goodwin described him as "a middle aged Man," who had passed 20 years "mostly in the Missipy Country," and had wintered the previous year "at Lake Superior." His clerk was a French Canadian from Montreal who spoke English well, and he had four additional men.⁵⁹ Relations between the masters were harmonious. At the end of the winter, Chavoudrill and his men expressed their desire to enter the Hudson's Bay Company's service,⁶⁰ but they apparently were not hired and seem to have passed the following two winters on Osnaburgh Lake in opposition to Goodwin.

As his men were being hampered in their inland travels by the want of canoes, Jarvis, in 1789, had at least three built, each of which could be carried "with ease" by three men and could hold 36 gallon kegs or 18 bales besides the mens' provisions. These canoes were to be steered by the Canadians in the service.⁶¹

Jarvis, in 1789, intended that Best should push on into the "fire country" after the conclusion of his spring trade. Jarvis favoured Trout Lake or Red Paint Lake (Red Lake), where a trader, who was at Sturgeon Lake the previous winter, now resided.⁶² Cat Lake would be given up because the Canadians were not resident there. Six months' provisions of meat and ten of flour were provided for Best and his men. Only the canoes were to be used.⁶³

However, Jarvis was replaced in the summer of 1789 by John McNab, a more cautious individual. Jarvis' plans were postponed and Best returned to Cat Lake. On 16 September, one day after Best's return, a Canadian trader, Chavoderi, settled about 30 yards from his house.⁶⁴ The Canadian clothed the principal Indians and dispensed large amounts of liquor, and Best was forced to do the same.⁶⁵ The masters were on friendly terms, and indeed, during the month of March, Chavoderi tended a sick Hudson's Bay Company man.⁶⁶ Both masters left at the beginning of June. Best seems to have received his share of the trade, though he paid a high price for it. He had an advantage in men, having 10. He resided another winter at Cat Lake, when the trade was evenly divided.⁶⁷ The Hudson's Bay Company post was not open in 1791-92.

The Canadians were more numerous inland in 1789-90 than ever before, and McNab estimated that he needed 12 more men to offset their increased numbers.⁶⁸ Osnaburgh was "surrounded with traders:" Duncan Cameron was on "the paint Lake" (Red Lake), Tupa on "Lake sail or Upishinguna," Donald

McKay on Sturgeon Lake and "another McKay" (John McKay) on Lake Nipigon. Each master had two large canoes and ten men.⁶⁹ Because of the presence of the Canadians at Cat Lake, Jarvis decided that the post there should be maintained for at least another year.⁷⁰

Fortunately, neither of the two McKays was satisfied with his situation. Both previously had been free traders. In the autumn of 1789, Donald McKay sent a letter to Osnaburgh expressing his desire for employment at York, so that he could have an opportunity to revenge himself for the "injuries" which he had sustained some years before in the "Great North."⁷¹ McKay suggested that he should visit Osnaburgh at the end of the trading season and expatiate further on his desires. McNab thought that McKay could be a valuable addition to the service, but he instructed Goodwin that he should point out clearly to McKay that if he intended to use violence against those who had wronged him, his application for employment would be rejected.⁷² Donald McKay subsequently hired and assigned to Albany. John McKay's application took longer to consider because unlike Donald, his abilities and personality were unknown to the company. Despite John McKay's defection, Duncan Cameron wrote highly about his qualities in a letter to Albany in September 1790. Cameron said,

I can assure you that he does not leave this province for want of employment but only by the inclination he had to serve your company for which reason he has sacrificed all the property he had at Montreal and besides his last years wages which Mr. Alexander Shaw would not pay him because he would not serve him any longer although he behaved himself in a very satisfactory manner Towards his employer.⁷³

James Sutherland, who had had experience inland with Best, was selected, in May 1790, by McNab to settle at

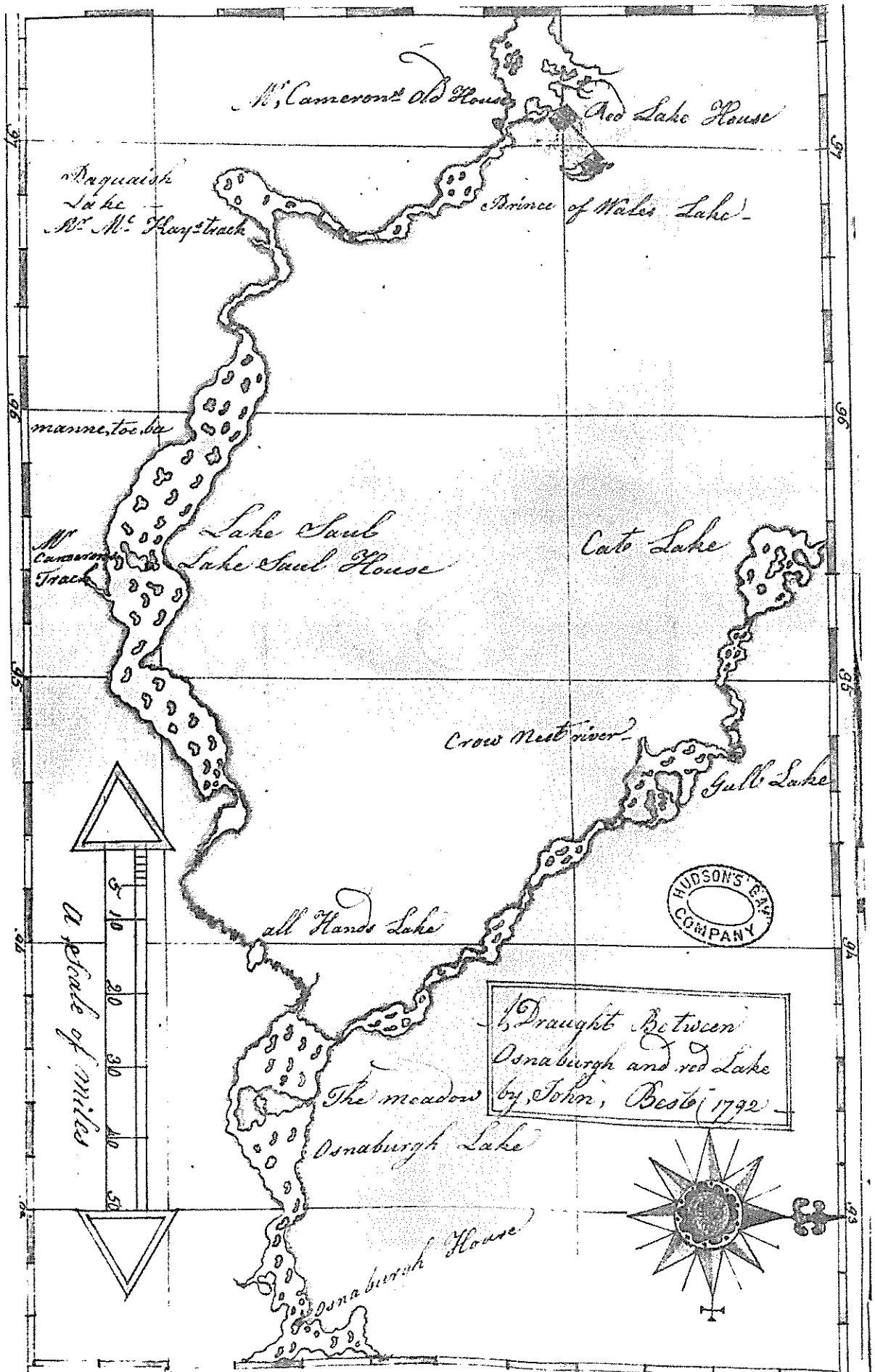
Sturgeon Lake or some other eligible location in its vicinity.⁷⁴ Goodwin, subjected to a spirited trade from Tupa at Lake Seul, favoured a house beside Tupa, but also thought that posts on Sturgeon Lake and Cat Lake were indispensable.⁷⁵ McNab possessed sufficient men for only two posts westward from Osnaburgh, and left to Goodwin's discretion autumn.⁷⁶ Provisions were also sent to Henley for an expedition which was to leave that summer for Lake Nipigon.⁷⁷

In June, Sutherland, Goodwin and Best discussed at Osnaburgh the strategy to be pursued toward the Canadians. Sutherland agreed that he would settle beside Tupa at Lake Seul if he could not obtain a guide for Red Lake. Best promised that if Sutherland could reach only as far as Lake Seul, he would try to procure an Indian to conduct him to Red Lake.⁷⁸

After "a hard Journey" of 17 days from Osnaburgh, Sutherland reached Lake Seul. He passed Tupa's house, which was situated on an island "in or about the middle" of the lake.⁷⁹ Tupa "was so poor" that he could not entertain his guests "with a mess of fish." Concluding from this that the lake was not good for fishing, Sutherland decided to continue on to Red Lake. In addition, he feared that if he opposed Tupa at Lake Seul, the latter would move to "a further station in the Lake and be still more in the track of the Indians." Tupa's house was "18 feet high & 30 around."⁸⁰

Fortunately for Sutherland, Tupa gave him one of his men to conduct him to Red Lake, where Duncan Cameron wintered. On 13 August, Sutherland entered Red Lake and breakfasted with Cameron, whose house was situated "at the foot of the Lake." As Sutherland thought that this location was not adequate for either "view or for wood," he went a few miles further into the lake, and on 23 August laid the

- 7 John Best's draught between Osnaburgh House and Red Lake. Taken from Red Lake Journal, 1791-92. (Hudson's Bay Company, B.177/a/2/70 1d.)

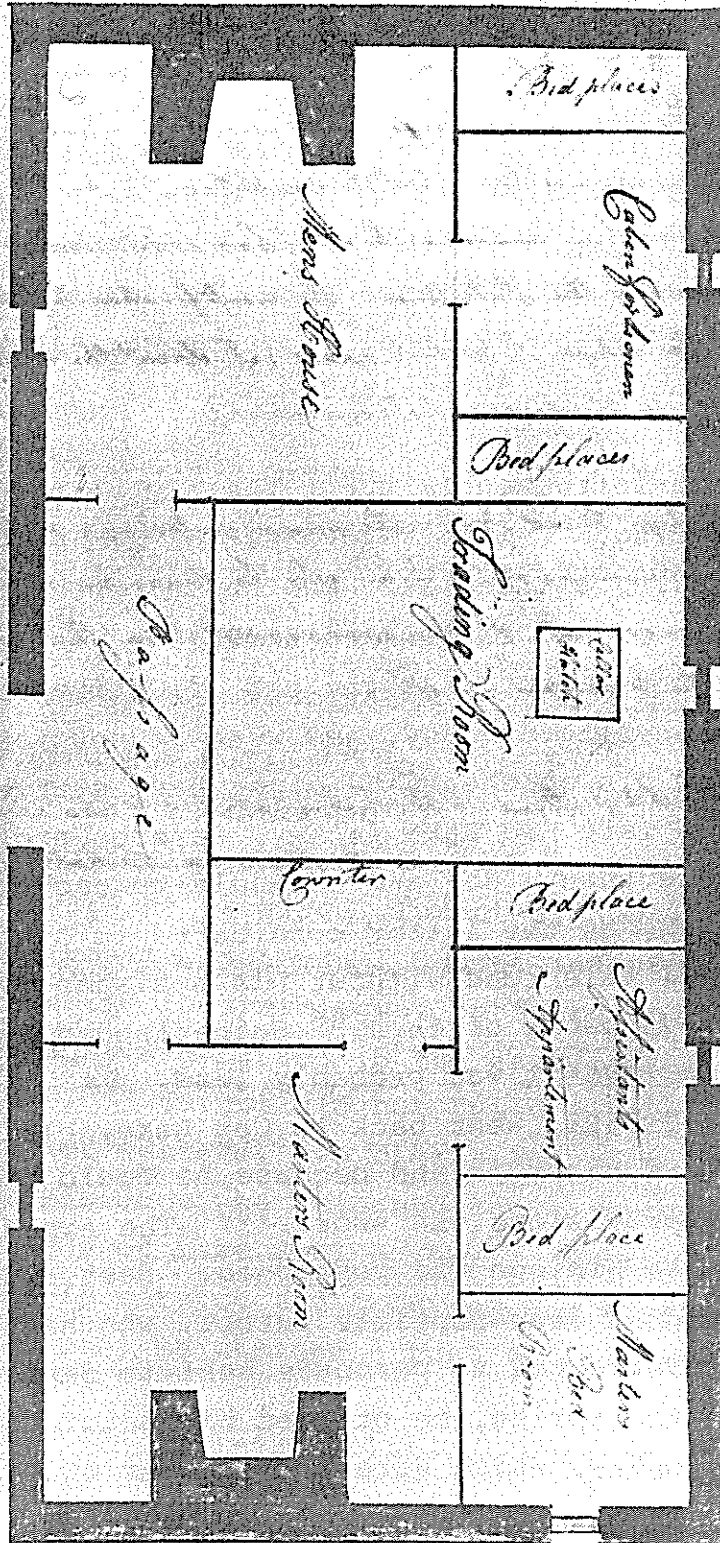


- 8 Sketch of Red Lake House by James Sutherland, 1790.
(Hudson's Bay Company, B.177/a/1/70.17d.)

Ground Plan of the House on Lake George
Dimensions 30 feet by 30 feet quarter of an inch to a foot



outer Door
Rearch window



foundation of a house "38 feet by 18, with a cellar 4 feet deep and 9 feet square."⁸¹

Unlike Tupa, Cameron was well provisioned, and when he dined with the Canadian on 7 October, Sutherland "found entertainment suitable for any gentleman." He had a fine variety of meats and wines and his table was "cover'd with clean linnen." Sutherland, having not "so much as a knife and a fork" and "but one plate," was ashamed to return the compliment.⁸²

The following day, Cameron began to construct a house within 100 yards of Sutherland. Cameron was liberal in dispensing liquor, and Sutherland was forced to do the same.⁸³ While they engaged in a spirited competition, the two masters not infrequently spent their evenings together, dining and dancing. Cameron had a set of men of indifferent quality, including a translator who had a penchant for hard drinking, which proved fatal, and a man who was "dropsical" and unfit for any labour. At the end of October, Cameron had only one man fit for duty, and were it not for the generous aid of his opponent, he might have starved.⁸⁴ When the two parties left Red Lake in May, Cameron prolonged his journey for more than a day and one-half to escort Sutherland toward Osnaburgh, as the latter considered it out of his "power to travel this road without his assistance."⁸⁵ Cameron traded 25 packs of furs;⁸⁶ Sutherland does not state his trade, but it was probably less.

Best, in 1790-91, went back to Cat Lake, claiming that he could not go further inland because he could not engage a guide and his "provisions was short."⁸⁷ The expedition intended for Lake Nipigon was postponed. Best and his 12 men were opposed by Jean-Baptiste Turcot, who had only a few men. Turcot endeavoured to persuade Best to desert;⁸⁸ he failed, and in the spring, he offered his services to the Hudson's Bay Company, which were accepted at £50 per annum.⁸⁹

Opposed to the inland Hudson's Bay Company posts in 1790-91 were at least seven Canadian houses: two were on Lake Nipigon, one at Missacowacow (Wapiscuacow), one "between Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Sutherland who occupys a post at Red Lake and one on the same lake," one at Cat Lake and another at Sturgeon Lake.⁹⁰ Edward Jarvis, who in 1790-91 was again master of Albany, expected that the returns would be as poor as in the previous year. However the entrance of Donald McKay into Albany's service brought the hope that Albany's men could penetrate beyond the ring of posts established by Duncan Cameron in the Petit Nord. To this end, McKay proposed that two canoes should be purchased for future service beyond Red Lake. Three men, including John Sutherland, whose abilities were highly regarded by Jarvis, were assigned to McKay.⁹¹ In the summer and autumn of 1791, McKay voyaged into Lac du Bois, and left provisions along his route, expecting that he would settle on that lake in 1792.

After joining the Hudson's Bay Company service, Turcot was dispatched, in the summer of 1791, to oppose the Canadians on Lake Seul. Judging that he would have to pay dearly for any furs he received, Turcot signed an agreement with Duncan Cameron "to put equal Quantities of Goods in his Warehouse & likewise to share equal in furrs in the spring." Cameron seems to have departed in the early autumn for his post on Red Lake.⁹² Turcot did not build a house; he lived with the Nor'westers, two clerks and an unspecified number of men. In June, he returned to Osnaburgh with 500 MB, half the trade of Lake Seul house.⁹³ Subsequently, he left the company's service and departed for Montreal.

Neither company maintained a post at Cat Lake that winter.

At Red Lake, in 1791-92, relations between Cameron and John Best, who had replaced Sutherland, were strained, at

least during the spring. Best notes in his journal for 20 May: "Mr. Cameron and me was almost gone to war about the debts as I have given all the Indians debts before he came in the fall and he wold [sic] not let the Indians carry their furs out of his House to pay me but I got most of it as last but had a deal of high words first."⁹⁴ Cameron left five men for the summer at Red Lake.⁹⁵

At the end of February 1792, McKay departed from Albany bound for Lac la Pluie.⁹⁶ He used sledges until the latter part of April, when he reached an unspecified location inland from Osnaburgh near Lake Seul, where he had left a canoe and some rice the previous autumn. There he remained until the ice broke at the end of May.⁹⁷ On 30 May, he reached the first long carrying place near Portage de Lisle and found the rice which he had deposited the autumn before in good condition.⁹⁸ The following day, he encountered a group of Indian women whose men were at the French settlement at Lake du Bonnet.⁹⁹ On 7 June, he entered Lac du Bois,¹⁰⁰ went as far as the Canadian post on Lac la Pluie River and then turned back to Albany. While he descended the river below Osnaburgh, a tree fell into the water and pushed his canoe into the current of a fall. The boat was lost and two of his six men were drowned.¹⁰¹

Notwithstanding this misfortune, James Sutherland and seven men left Osnaburgh, in the summer of 1792, for Portage de Lisle, carrying in two batteaux and one canoe an assortment of goods valued at "upearads of 3,000 MB."¹⁰² Early on the morning of 14 September, Sutherland passed Escabitchewan falls and paddled through Wipenaban Lake (Ball Lake) until noon, when he came to a large encampment of Indians. As the latter desired his presence on the lake and he was too exhausted to continue after his 30-day voyage from Osnaburgh, he decided to winter there.¹⁰³ Sutherland spent some time looking for a suitable site, the lake front

being rocky. He selected a "good fishing place," but does not indicate its location. A house was constructed "in the Canadian manner."¹⁰⁴ It was 40 feet by 20 feet "on the very plan of Red Lake House," and was covered with grass; Sutherland was unable to find any other roofing material.¹⁰⁵ During the winter, his men were insolent at times, which no doubt in part was occasioned by the scarcity of country provisions. They were placed on a ration of two days' European provisions per week.¹⁰⁶ Sutherland returned to Osnaburgh on 1 June. Ball Lake was abandoned the following year for Portage de Lisle.¹⁰⁷

James Hudson, with his clerk, James Clarke, and six men, in September 1792, settled "about 2 miles above" Osnaburgh House.¹⁰⁸ At the beginning of December, Hudson was drowned and was buried at the Hudson's Bay Company house at Clarke's request. The latter succeeded as master of the house, and was on friendly terms with Goodwin, though he competed virorously and made Goodwin's trade expensive.

Both Cameron and Best wintered again in 1792-93 at Red Lake. On 28 September, Cameron sent six men to Bad Lake (Larus Lake, Sabourin Lake or Musolow Lake), called by the Canadians Lake St. Charles; the following day, Best dispatched Mr. Beaugrand with three men to settle beside them. Best had to promise the men 40 shillings each from his own pocket, as they were reluctant to go because they could not understand Beaugrand, who was a French Canadian.¹⁰⁹ Beaugrand's opponent, Rusit,¹¹⁰ received the majority of the trade, and the two outposts intercepted a substantial part of the furs destined for Red Lake. Best did not fare too well, having fewer trading goods than Cameron.¹¹¹ The Canadians were also at Lake Seul, Dog Lake (probably the Dog Lake not far from Fort William) and Minnitaki Lake. Best's trade was also injured by James Sutherland's house on Ball Lake.

- 9 Map from report on Osnaburgh, 1816. (Hudson's Bay Company, B.155/e/4.)

Closer to Osnaburgh in 1792-93, Edward Clouston and five men opposed Turcot at Cat Lake. It is probable that a new post was built by Clouston,¹¹² but it is not possible to determine where it was located. The Canadians at Cat Lake outnumbered their opponents three to one, and did not hesitate to use this superiority to intimidate the Indians, who had to resort to hiding underground the furs intended for Clouston.¹¹³ Turcot settled an outpost at Crow Nest Lake, where he obtained only one pack of furs,¹¹⁴ and in May sent men to Sandy Lake to intercept the Severn trade. Despite this formidable opposition, Clouston did leave Cat Lake with 1,100 MB.¹¹⁵

In the first half of 1793, McNab's attention again turned to penetrating beyond Cameron's ring of posts. In 1792-93, the Canadians had been "very numerous in the Upper branches of Albany river," and the trade of Albany and its outposts probably did not exceed 4,500 MB.¹¹⁶ John McKay, in the summer of 1793, was sent to Lac la Pluie with 10 men. Donald McKay, given a complement of 20 men, crossed Lake Winnipeg and founded Brandon House on Red River.¹¹⁷ Sutherland, having the same number of people as John McKay, reached Portage de Lisle.¹¹⁸ Twenty-four batteaux were assembled at Martin Falls and McNab personally supervised the preparations.¹¹⁹ In order to facilitate these elaborate expeditions, buildings for storage were erected at Martin Fall; batteaux were also made at this new post. These exertions resulted in an increase of almost 4,000 MB in Albany's trade in one year,¹²⁰ and in 1795-96, Albany sent to London in excess of 24,000 MB.¹²¹

James Sutherland and John McKay departed together from Osnaburgh in the middle of August 1793.¹²² Sutherland passed through Lake Seul, and then Ball Lake (which Sutherland calls Lake Burdino), where he had wintered the previous year.¹²³ The Indians he encountered enjoined him

to reside again at his old house, but he was intent upon carrying out his orders.¹²⁴ He paddled down the English River until he came to "La Towers House" at Portage de Lisle on 9 September. The Canadians had yet to arrive. McKay left Sutherland here and turned in the direction of Lac la Pluie.¹²⁵

Sutherland had difficulty in finding a suitable location for a house, the region being rocky. On 13 September, he cleared a site¹²⁶ between 2-3/4¹²⁷ and 2-7/8¹²⁸ miles from "La Towers" house.¹²⁹ The house, which was not completed until the middle of December, was "40 feet long by 20 broad and early on the same plan" as Sutherland's two former houses.¹³⁰ Sutherland had contemplated going further down the river, but the Indians warned him that they would not journey there.¹³¹ "La Tower" (La Tours) arrived on 26 September with one canoe in the company of a Mr. Fredrick, who had three canoes and was bound for River de Pabino.¹³² La Tours, a resident in this region for six years,¹³³ was well supplied with rum and brandy, which he liberally dispensed. He had five men and "a most compleat outfit of every kind necessary for the Trade."¹³⁴ He built a house beside Sutherland, transferring everything from his old house except the "side logs."¹³⁵

Besides La Tours, Sutherland faced competition from posts at Lac la Pluie, "Mr. McKay still nearer, another Trader on Eagle Lake, and La Sear betwixt me and the Winnipeg." ¹³⁶ La Sear seems to have been at "the Wenepegg."¹³⁷

La Tours was a short-tempered man who, Sutherland was subsequently told by Cameron at Osnaburgh, was looked upon by the Nor'westers as "a near madman."¹³⁸ He so cruelly beat his men with heavy sticks that one begged Sutherland at the end of August to take him into his service.¹³⁹ Another man applied in November, after being beaten,¹⁴⁰ and another

in March.¹⁴¹ He not infrequently behaved uncivilly toward Sutherland, especially when those with whom he had long traded went to his opponent, but he invariably apologized later for his conduct.¹⁴² He also instructed his men not to divulge the best fishing spots to Sutherland,¹⁴³ who was in constant want of provisions throughout the winter.¹⁴⁴ Despite this behaviour, Sutherland did invite La Tours to dine with him.¹⁴⁵

At the end of March, Sutherland ordered his men to construct a small house "on a spot opposite" La Tours' old house "in case of [La Tours] being obliged to go there for that purpose under pretence of making Gardens."¹⁴⁶ Sutherland's new building was "28 feet long by 12 broad."¹⁴⁷ La Tours removed to his old house in the latter part of April,¹⁴⁸ leaving one man behind,¹⁴⁹ and Sutherland immediately followed him.¹⁵⁰ This winter Sutherland received at least 21 packs of furs.¹⁵¹ La Tours left in June, having made 10 packs of 80 pounds each.¹⁵² One of La Tours' houses, probably the older one, was burned by the Indians in the summer.¹⁵³

Sutherland prevailed upon John McKay, who spoke French, to pass the summer with four of his men at Portage de Lisle.¹⁵⁴ At the beginning of June, Donald McKay passed through from Red River,¹⁵⁵ and throughout the summer John McKay was visited by Canadians coming and going to the Prairies from Grand Portage. Palisades were raised during the summer.¹⁵⁶

The Canadian master at Portage de Lisle, in 1794-95, was a Mr. Guillet, who had one canoe and six men.¹⁵⁷ Edward Clouston arrived with four batteaux and 15 men,¹⁵⁸ 11 of whom set off with McKay for Lac la Pluie. The Canadians were also at Bad Lake, their master being Mr. Marco, called by the Indians the "Bear Cat."¹⁵⁹

This winter, the Indians had difficulty in finding country provisions and some ate their furs.¹⁶⁰ There was

little contact between the two houses at Portage de Lisle, and only one minor dispute.¹⁶¹ Clouston arrived at Osnaburgh with 19 packs of furs,¹⁶² leaving Jasper Corrigan at Portage de Lisle for the summer.

Upon parting with Sutherland at Portage de Lisle in September 1793, John McKay travelled through Lac du Bois¹⁶³ and then up Lac la Pluie River. On 26 September, he reached the Canadian fort, located a day's journey from the last "ripple" on the river.¹⁶⁴ The fort had "a very formidable appearance" and served as a rendezvous place for the Slave Lake and Athabasca traders, as they could not get to Grand Portage the same year.¹⁶⁵

After breakfasting with the Canadian master, Charles Boyer, McKay searched for a suitable location for a post, but none could be found near the Canadians for want of wood; Donald McKay, on his voyage the previous summer had marked out a site near the fort, which proved to be unsuitable. John McKay settled at Manitoo Fall (modern Manito Rapids), 12 miles below the Nor'westers, building a house which was surrounded by stockades.¹⁶⁶

Four of Boyer's men had been killed by two Indians the previous year while fishing, and murders at Lac la Pluie were not infrequent.¹⁶⁷ Boyer made only 18 packs in 1792-93.¹⁶⁸ The trade had dwindled over the past several years; the animal population had declined and many Indians had gone elsewhere to hunt.¹⁶⁹ McKay believed that it would be "impossible ever to make much at this Post unless it be made at a great Expence," the Indians having in the past been too much "Indulged" by the Nor'westers.¹⁷⁰

By the end of April, both Boyer and McKay had expended their brandy, not only to purchase furs but provisions as well.¹⁷¹ At the beginning of May, Boyer had fewer than five packs of furs and was "glad to get furs at any rate."¹⁷² McKay's trade for "River Lake La Pluie" was "18 good Packs."¹⁷³

McKay passed the summer at Portage de Lisle, leaving for Lac la Pluie in the middle of September.¹⁷⁴ While crossing Lac du Bois, he encountered a large body of hunters who informed him they would not make the voyage to Manitoo Falls (Manito Rapids) and wanted him to winter "in Lake du Bois, at the rivers mouth."¹⁷⁵ McKay decided to divide his force, thinking that if he reoccupied his former house the Canadians would not venture to settle at the mouth of the river, where he left Thomas Norn and three men. The house they built is referred to in the correspondence as being at the mouth of the river; however, it may have been as much as six hours paddling up the river.¹⁷⁶

McKay continued on to his house at Manito Falls, which he found in "a very ruinous condition," the Canadians or Indians having broken the door, chimneys and oven.¹⁷⁷ On 26 October, Boyer appeared with seven men and began building a house about 200 yards below McKay, directly in the path of the hunters.¹⁷⁸ McKay then cut down the trees obstructing "the sight of a point below his house from me which point the Indians from below must pass close to on their way here."¹⁷⁹ Boyer maintained his other settlement,¹⁸⁰ placing it in charge of Frederick Shultz. By November, Boyer had given debt to most of the Indians who were in the vicinity, and McKay wrote to Norn to intercept the Lac du Bois hunters before they could come down Lac la Pluie River.¹⁸¹

As provisions were difficult to obtain, McKay sent two men to Norn to hunt and fish.¹⁸² Four men returned with plentiful country provisions at the end of December.¹⁸³ Boyer, however, was not as well supplied, and at the beginning of January dispatched two men back to his other post.¹⁸⁴ Boyer still did not have adequate provisions to feed his family, and in the latter part of January, McKay sent him some dried venison.¹⁸⁵ Boyer left in the middle of April, having endured a winter of privation and having

experienced a disappointing trade. The Canadian, McKay says, realized that he had made a mistake by not going down to the mouth of the river to oppose Norn.¹⁸⁶

McKay's two posts received about 1,200 MB, but the furs were bought at a dear rate, many of the debts having remained unpaid.¹⁸⁷ The Canadians, who maintained Lac la Pluie post during the summer, rarely lost their debts because the Indians repaid their unpaid balances by making canoes for the establishment. Consequently, they gave liberal credits while McKay gave only what he thought would be repaid.¹⁸⁸ McKay calculated that "the returns will not be sufficient to pay us our wages and victuals supposing the goods cost nothing."¹⁸⁹

There was a trader from Mckinac [Michilimackinac] that winter on Red Lake, about 40 leagues to the south of McKay. He undersold the posts at Lac la Pluie and his goods were superior in quality.¹⁹⁰

John McKay, in the autumn of 1795, brought 10 men,¹⁹¹ and on his way to Lac la Pluie picked up Jasper Corrigan, who had passed the summer at Portage de Lisle. The latter post was closed.¹⁹² As all the hunters in the Lac du Bois region refused to journey to Manito Falls, McKay wintered at Norn's House,¹⁹³ called by the men Asp House (it was probably known to the Canadians as Aspen House).¹⁹⁴ A trader, who the previous year had been on Eagle Lake, was expected to settle near it.¹⁹⁵ He had arrived by the second week in October,¹⁹⁶ and was somewhere in McKay's vicinity, though he is seldom mentioned by McKay. In addition to him, McKay had to contend with "Cameron's Brother in Law" at a lake "a bout 6 Days Journey from here N.E.," and a settlement above him which was "a bout the same distance S.E. from him."¹⁹⁷ McKay wrote, "I am almost sure that there is more Canadians within two Hundred miles round me than Indians."¹⁹⁸ Competition was also experienced from Magnus Birsa's house at Ball Lake.¹⁹⁹

Thomas Norn was dispatched with four men to Manitoo Falls in the latter part of October.²⁰⁰

Additions were made by McKay to Asp House: a new house, with perhaps two stories,²⁰¹ "25 foot long 20 broad within the walls with 2 Chimneys and an excelent Cellar," was erected.²⁰² The old house was repaired.²⁰³ In November, the palisades collapsed.²⁰⁴

The old Canadian post at Lac la Pluie, this year commanded by the "Soldier" (Frederick Shultz), received much of the Lac la Pluie trade.²⁰⁵ But because of the great mortality among his Indians, Shultz obtained only four packs of furs, not more than 260 beaver.²⁰⁶ McKay's region, however, was free from disease and the hunts were unusually productive. Though only a small number of Indians visited him, McKay had a relatively profitable trade,²⁰⁷ receiving 1,000 MB.²⁰⁸ He left his untraded goods with Shultz, being unable to carry them back to Osnaburgh.²⁰⁹

In 1795-96, Magnus Birsa and his men passed the winter at Wepinaban Lake under almost constant siege by a band of Indians. One of the band was shot and killed by Birsay's men, who were firing from the windows of the house.²¹⁰

McKay departed from Osnaburgh in August 1796 with 17 men,²¹¹ leaving Magnus Birsa and seven men to build a house at Iscabigiwin Lake (Ball Lake).²¹² McKay then continued on to Portage de Lisle, where he found Frederick Shultz engaged in constructing a house. McKay could not understand why the Canadians had decided to settle at Protage de Lisle "again"; no Indians would go there, for Point au Foutre, Lac la Pluie and Wepinaban Lake all had traders.²¹³ Shultz informed McKay that the Michilimakinac and southern traders had abandoned this region. David and Peter Grant had given up their business and Peter Grant was now master at Lac la Pluie.²¹⁴ La Tours was Grant's interpreter.

McKay was accompanied to Asp House by a Mr. McIntosh and five men, selected by Grant to winter in opposition to him.²¹⁶ McIntosh settled near him,²¹⁷ but McKay does not state his exact location. There were five Canadian traders competing with McKay: Peter Grant, McIntosh, Shultz, Adhemar, who apparently was at least 70 miles from him, and "a Canadian Trader on a River called by the Natives Summer Berry River." They competed not only with McKay but among themselves, making the trade more expensive for all.²¹⁸ Shultz made only four packs at Portage de Lisle. At Lac la Pluie and Portage de Lisle, McKay, Grant, McIntosh, Adhemar and Shultz together received about "38 good packs," not more than 2,300 MB, 1,200 of which McKay made.²¹⁹ Birsa made "1,200 Beaver."²²⁰

McKay left Birsa and two men behind to pass the summer at Escabitchewan.²²¹

John Best reached his house on Red Lake, in 1793-94, at the end of September, well before Duncan Cameron. Cameron, however, in September had planted two posts in the "vicinity" of Bad Lake, to intercept the trade which came from that direction. In his history of the fur trade, Cameron says that he also sent Turcot, with three well-provisioned canoes, to travel as far north as he could, but Turcot could not go any further than Big Lake.²²² We are informed in the Severn journal for 1794-95 that a new Canadian settlement was established at the "Head of Severn River" (Lake Severn), which injured Severn's trade.²²³ If this house was actually in existence the previous year, it is possible that it was Turcot's house. Turcot's men travelled as far as Lake Winnipeg in search of furs and, by the end of May, he had made 14 packs. He was supplied from Cat Lake.²²⁴

At Cat Lake, Edward Clouston, with only eight men, was opposed by Tupa. Clouston had left a man, David Michael, to pass the summer there.²²⁵ Because Turcot intercepted much

of the trade destined for Cat Lake, Clouston, in November, found it necessary to establish a settlement two days' march from him. Hugh Petrie and two men spent a month at an unidentified lake. Petrie and one man returned in December for some unspecified reason, and Clouston subsequently recalled the remaining man, finding it too difficult to supply the post.²²⁶

The strategy of the Nor'westers was designed to cut the flow of trade to Cat Lake, and Tupa wintered beside Clouston only to make him pay dearly for his trade. While Clouston did make 13 packs of furs, they were purchased at a high price.²²⁷ Tupa received only 2 1/2 packs. In May, Clouston, hoping to open a trade with the inhabitants of the southwest to compensate for the loss from Lake Winnipeg, sent an Indian to Winnipeg River with "plenty of Brandy & Tobacco to Harangue the Indians and try to gain them over to the Companys Interest." Clouston was informed that there were four traders on the river.²²⁸

The two posts founded by Cameron in the vicinity of Bad Lake were strategically placed to intercept the main flow of trade to Red Lake. Soon after his arrival at Red Lake, Best, concluding that the better part of the trade was lost, elected to establish an outpost at Paquash Lake, (Pakwash Lake) "for a guard on that quarter," as he could not "get above it bieng [sic] so late in the year and the water so low."²²⁹ Magnus Birsay and two men wintered there; one man died in April.

At Red Lake, Best was outnumbered at least seven men to five,²³⁰ and Cameron had the better of the trade. Best left behind three men for the summer; they returned to Osnaburgh by autumn, and the post was not occupied the following winter.

Cameron's success in intercepting the trade from the Lake Winnipeg region induced Goodwin to extend his

settlements into Lake Winnipeg. Best closed his house at Red Lake and travelled late in the summer of 1794 through Bad Lake, observing there a "French House." The two Canadians residing there, having orders to settle beside him, trailed him into Blood River. All the hunters he debted on Blood River indicated that they would hunt on the east side of the lake, and Best thought that it would be prudent to remain among them.²³¹ The two Canadians, named "Latoor" (most likely La Tours) and "Shivelee," (probably Chevalier), knowing that the site he chose was poor for fishing, crossed the lake, and were supplied from Bad Lake.²³² Best does not state the exact location of his house. The two Canadians across the lake had little trade, and were beset by desertions. They endeavored without success to seduce Best's hunters.²³³ The trade at the Canadian house on Bad Lake was equally as unprofitable.²³⁴

The Nor'westers were again at Osnaburgh Lake in 1793-94. In July 1793, Duncan Cameron wrote to Goodwin, "I have sent Mr. Tupar, a peacable neighbour, in hope there may be no Discord between you and I."²³⁵ However, Mr. St. Germain wintered at Osnaburgh instead, and erected a new post close to Goodwin.²³⁶ St. Germain, like his predecessors, competed fairly and departed in June, leaving a clerk for the summer.²³⁷

The new Canadian master in 1794-95, Sancarte, however, was a man who did not scruple to use violence. When he arrived at Osnaburgh Lake in June, he staked out a site within 12 yards of the Hudson's Bay Company house, now commanded by James Sutherland, with the intention of constructing a new post.²³⁸ This action Sutherland considered an infringement upon his "plantation," and consequently he constructed a fence around his post, frustrating Sancarte's design.²³⁹ In August, Sutherland's men succeeded in obtaining the furs of some hunters under

the noses of Sancarte's men. Sancarte demanded that the furs be given to him, and when Sutherland refused, he warned him to arm his men, for in future when his men reached the Indians first, they would "shoot...on the spot" anybody who tried to interfere.²⁴⁰ Subsequently, the Canadian proposed that if a hunter, who had taken his debt at both posts, visited one of them, the master would be free to request the payment of his debt, after the Indian had paid what he owed to the other. If he could not pay both, the furs would be divided proportionally "to each ones Debt." Sutherland, believing that his arrangement would give Sancarte, who gave larger credits, the advantage, rejected it. He in turn proposed that the Indians should be free to trade at the house of their choice, but the Canadian made no reply.²⁴¹

Throughout the winter, Sancarte more than once took furs by force. He insulted Sutherland when dining at his house in June, and challenged him to a duel.²⁴² The Canadians left in June, and did not return the following year. Their houses was "pulled down" by Sutherland in April 1796, "for firewood lest the Indians burn it which they have often threatened to do."²⁴³

Duncan Cameron maintained, during the winter of 1794-95, traders on all the major waterways to the westward of Osnaburgh Lake to blockade Sutherland's establishment. Allan McFarlane was at Eagle Lake and Turcot beyond him on "Great Lake" (Lake Winnipeg). David Sanderson, also called David Saunders, wintering for Sutherland on Cat Lake, was opposed by the Canadian Pero or Perreault, and did not have sufficient men to send to the westward. At Eagle Lake, McFarlane obtained upwards of 100 packs of furs. Turcot, who was 50 miles from McFarlane, made 30 packs and could have made more had he had more trading goods.²⁴⁴ Sutherland had no outpost further west than Red Lake.

As in the previous winter, the Hudson's Bay Company got the majority of the trade at Cat Lake, 14 packs to only two by Perreault.²⁴⁵ But James Sutherland at Osnaburgh, more concerned with the furs intercepted at Lake Winnipeg, instructed Sutherland to explore the track toward that lake and settle in opposition to the Canadians.²⁴⁶

Sanderson, in September 1795, left his son Tom and five men at Cat Lake,²⁴⁷ and journeyed only as far as Fly Lake²⁴⁸ (modern Fly Lake), where John Sanderson and James Fidler had passed the winter of 1794-95 for the Hudson's Bay Company.²⁴⁹ Sanderson visited the Canadian trader, Mr. Solomon, probably Samuel Solomon, and then paddled 10 miles beyond him before selecting a site for his house.²⁵⁰ The two masters had little contact during the winter, though two men deserted from Solomon's service. Sanderson experienced a relatively good trade.²⁵¹

Edward Clouston wintered for the Hudson's Bay Company at the "bottom of the River Winnipeg" (Bas de la Rivière or Point au Foutre).²⁵²

The importance placed upon the Red River and Lake Winnipeg trade hurt "every other place." In 1795-96, Goodwin went to Red River with 17 men and Best to "the Winnipeg" with 14. John McKay probably retained nine or ten. This left only six for Cat Lake, five for Osnaburgh,²⁵³ seven for Henley and the same number for Earnest House, formerly called Gloucester House. The allocation of men was decided upon by a council of inland masters meeting at Earnest House, and McNab had no opportunity to alter it before the masters departed for their posts.²⁵⁴

It was the practice for the inland masters to deposit their returns at Osnaburgh, and they were then transported by men from Osnaburgh to Earnest House.²⁵⁵ Donald McKay, the master of Earnest House in 1795-96, co-ordinated Albany's inland activities. He felt constrained by a system of

communications which he thought was no better than the old one which had impeded Albany's expansion.²⁵⁶ Often boats were not available at Earnest House for transportation to Osnaburgh.²⁵⁷ Apparently, McKay was not reticent about these inefficiencies when meeting in council with his colleagues, and was warned by McNab that he should treat all with delicacy and respect. McKay arrogantly replied that he would "treat every Gentlemen [sic] according to his merit, experience, and Behaviour, and not according to Dignity, or title of Seniority."²⁵⁸

Having fallen out of favour with McNab, McKay, in the summer of 1796, was dispatched to an unspecified location beyond Red River. At least two hands declined going inland with him,²⁵⁹ and all but one deserted on the voyage.²⁶⁰ McKay stopped at Osnaburgh Lake and that winter was obliged to cut his own fire-wood and "look out for a living;" he was also short of European provisions. He wrote angrily to McNab that there was a general conspiracy against him among the Orkneymen at Albany, and warned McNab that he would bring him "to an account" for the manner in which he had acted, "contriving" to take his life by starvation.²⁶¹ McKay was transferred to York in the spring or summer of 1797.²⁶²

In 1796-97, James Sutherland was master at Brandon House,²⁶³ followed by John McKay, with 22 men in 1798-99.²⁶⁴ Goodwin was replaced by Thomas Bunn in 1801-02,²⁶⁵ who in turn was succeeded by John McKay in 1802-03.²⁶⁶ With the exception of one year, 1806-07, John McKay commanded at Brandon House until his death in the winter of 1810-11.²⁶⁷ In 1812, Brandon House was transferred to the newly created East Winnipeg district.²⁶⁸ After the abandonment of Gloucester House (Earnest House) in 1795, the expeditions to Red River, which annually numbered between 20 and 25 men, assembled at Osnaburgh. The commitment in men for Brandon

House handicapped Albany's effectiveness against the Canadians in the Petit Nord. Supplying Red River from Osnaburgh was difficult, and few men were willing to make the long and hazardous voyage.

Cameron again, in 1796-97, strategically located his houses to impede the flow of trade to Osnaburgh from the west. John Best, Sutherland's successor at Osnaburgh, lamented in August 1796,

the Canadians is coming in on every hand of us
4 canoes has past going the way of Cat Lake

. Cameron is coming behind with one more
either going the way of the others or to stay
here. At Red Lake is one Trader at Monatague
one, at Eagle Lake one, Sturgeon Lake one Horse
Lake Lake St. ans one so that we are entirely
enclos^d on every Quarter.²⁶⁹

Sanderson returned, in the autumn of 1796-97, to Fly Lake and Duncan Cameron, having 11 men under his charge, personally administered the trade there that winter, living in Solomon's house.²⁷⁰ In order to settle the lake in force, Sanderson closed Cat Lake House. Allen McFarlane was sent by Cameron to Eagle Lake,²⁷¹ and in January Cameron dispatched three men to pass the rest of the winter at Lake Winnipeg (Great Lake House),²⁷² but Sanderson had no men to spare. However, Sanderson did send four men, led by John Sanderson, to settle "along sid" of the Canadians at Deer Lake (Umfreville Lake) in March 1797. The Nor'westers had been there all winter and two of them had died of starvation.²⁷³ Within a month, John Sanderson and his men were also starving, and were forced to withdraw to Fly Lake without having traded a single pelt.²⁷⁴

Edward Clouston set off from Osnaburgh, at the beginning of August 1796, with two batteaux and eleven men bound for Point au Foutre, where he had wintered the previous year.²⁷⁵ The Nor'westers were again there, their master being a Mr. Peron. Clouston left John Cobb and five men at his house and journeyed with nine men and the two batteaux "lightly loaded" to settle "some where on Lake Winipeg."²⁷⁶ He travelled, he calculated, 60 miles north and northwest before being forced to stop by bad weather. An Indian family persuaded him to winter in the vicinity; Clouston's "little" assortment of goods and the availability of wild rice (oats) also had much to do with his decision.²⁷⁷ He constructed a house, divided into "cabins,"²⁷⁸ in "a pretty bay with good woods and apparent good fishing."²⁷⁹ Clouston estimated that he was 100 miles from Pigeon River.²⁸⁰

He was free from opposition until 15 December, when three Canadians from Point au Foutre arrived with sledges loaded with trading goods and the following day began to construct a house not far from him.²⁸¹ Their opposition was ineffectual, and at the beginning of March, two of them departed, leaving an old man with "a little Rum & a few things"²⁸² to collect the debts given at Point au Foutre to two Indians. Subsequently, the Canadians directed their competition from Point au Foutre.²⁸³

In the middle of April, the Canadian master at Point au Foutre visited Winnipeg Lake post, and withdrew the old man and burned his house to the ground. The Nor'westers had obtained only 50 MB at much expense.²⁸⁴ Clouston left in May with 27 bundles of furs, 1,645 MB, having traded all his goods.²⁸⁵ Twenty-five bundles were received by Clouston's men at Point au Foutre. Clouston considered the receipts from his two posts "very good...for the goods we brought in."²⁸⁶ Peter Taylor and Magnus Sinclair were left at Point au Foutre from the summer,²⁸⁷ but it is not certain

whether either establishment was open the following autumn.

The closest Canadian establishment, besides Point au Foutre, to Lake Winnipeg post was at Pigeon River. Its master, "La Rock," in the autumn sent two men with rum and trading goods to Lake Winnipeg post to collect his debts; they returned 20 days later, claiming that they could not find their way. La Rock visited Clouston in January, looking for the goods the two men had left in the woods.²⁸⁸ No competition was subsequently experienced from Pigeon River. The closest Hudson's Bay Company post was at Jack Fish River,²⁸⁹ a York Factory outpost, in charge of Henry Hallet.²⁹⁰

Magnus Birsa (also written Birsay) in the autumn of 1796, established an outpost from Osnaburgh at Escabitchewan Falls at the entrance of Ball Lake. From this location, he hoped to capture some of the English River trade. Some boards from the previous house on Ball Lake were used in the construction.²⁹¹ Birsa had only four men, and found himself surrounded by the Canadians, who had posts at Portage de Lisle, Eagle Lake, Red Lake, and one "a day journey" from Ball Lake, probably at Whitefish Lake, whose master was named "Shevelle"²⁹² (probably Jean-Baptiste Chevalier). The high prices given by his opponents forced Birsa into an unprofitable competition, in which he obtained only five bundles of furs.

Having only enough men for one more outpost, Best decided that they should go to Sturgeon Lake rather than oppose the Nor'westers at Cat Lake. Thomas Harvey, with five men, left in August²⁹³ but did not go "quite so far as Lake Sturgeon." He stopped at a lake "near it," as the Indians assured him that it was the "best place for Trade being in the Direct Road of all the Inds of that Quarter."²⁹⁴ It was undoubtedly Moose Lake (modern Savant Lake). Harvey gave debts to a considerable number of hunter

but may have experienced difficulty in collecting them because there were "so many" Canadians about him.²⁹⁵

When Duncan Cameron passed through Osnaburgh Lake in September 1797, he left behind Ronald Cameron and two canoes of goods.²⁹⁶ The location of Ronald Cameron's new house is not stated; however, it was in the vicinity of the Hudson's Bay Company post, whose master this year was Edward Clouston. Cameron's goods were varied and so attractive that Clouston complained that if he offered the natives "all the Goods & Brandy" in his warehouse, they would still go to the Canadian.²⁹⁷ The two masters were on friendly terms and during the winter exchanged men.²⁹⁸ Cameron received about 300 MB.

Besides leaving a trader at Osnaburgh, Duncan Cameron had three other settlements, one at Lake Saunders (Sandy Lake), a second at Fly Lake where he personally wintered,²⁹⁹ and a third at Moose Lake, under Mr. Pommeville.³⁰⁰

For the Hudson's Bay Company, David Saunders (Sanderson) wintered at Lake Saunders³⁰¹ and John Creer, with four men, at Escabitchewan. Harvey returned to Moose Lake in opposition to Pommeville.³⁰² Closer to Osnaburgh, Jacob Henderson and two men were dispatched, in October, to Crow Nest Lake to collect the debts given to the Osnaburgh hunters there,³⁰³ and he received 500 MB.³⁰⁴ From his settlements, Duncan Cameron made about 2,600 MB, while the Hudson's Bay Company obtained about 3,00 MB from Osnaburgh, Moose Lake and Crow Nest Lake and 2,700 "odd" MB from Lake Saunders.³⁰⁵ Twenty-two packs of furs were brought by Creer from Escabitchewan.³⁰⁶

Cameron and Sanderson again faced each other, in 1797-98, at Fly Lake. This time Cameron had an even greater superiority in numbers, which he used to his advantage, sending men to the Indians' tents to trade as soon as the animals were

caught. He debted the lake's best hunters. Cameron also endeavoured to intimidate his opponent by sending him two threatening letters.³⁰⁷

Sanderson's only outpost this winter was at Deer Lake, where John Linklater was master with probably four men.³⁰⁸ There were no Canadians there, but they were not "far off." As in the previous year, the men were short of provisions. They nevertheless experienced a good trade, returning with 16 packs of furs.³⁰⁹

Birsa wintered at Escabitchewan with only two men, as reinforcements were needed for Lac la Pluie where John McKay again resided. Birsa was given only a "little a sortments" of goods,³¹⁰ and did a poor trade. The returns seem to have improved the following winter when Birsa wintered with four men,³¹¹ but he still did not have sufficient trading goods to successfully compete with the Nor'westers, who had numerous posts surrounding him.³¹² The Canadian house at Eagle Lake provided his most active competition.³¹³

The house on Lac la Pluie was not retained beyond 1797-98; its complement in its last winter was 18 men, including its master, John McKay.³¹⁴ Together Brandon House and Lac la Pluie drained 40 men from Albany. McNab was forced to choose between them, and he considered Brandon House the more important.³¹⁵

Duncan Cameron employed the same strategy in 1798-99 as he had in the previous winter, placing Ronald Cameron at Osnaburgh and surrounding Osnaburgh with a number of posts. Neither Cameron nor John McKay, Clouston's successor, did an extensive trade, although McKay received considerably more. McKay wrote in February,

My neighbour poore fellow has passed but a poor winter this far, and I believe will soon be reduced to the same state of some of his Brother Traders. I have don every thing in my

power to render him compleately so, but he is so very clever and industrious, that I fear he will disapoint me. this may appear very spiteful and cruel in me, but I assure the reader there is not a man in this Country I should sooner oblige, them [sic] Mr. Ronald Cameron, provided I was my own Master, and I may venture to say, he is the best neighbour I ever had in this Country. but all his goodness can be no motive for me to support him in opposition against myself.³¹⁶

McKay, at the end of August, pulled down the old house as it was "dangerous to live in it." A new house was begun, but building materials were hard to find and the work proceeded slowly.³¹⁷

Mr. "Chavallier" (Jean-Baptiste Chevalier) resided at Lake Seul that winter.³¹⁸ In the spring, his men robbed and stabbed to death three Lake Seul Indians who desired to trade with McKay at Osnaburgh.³¹⁹ At Moose Lake, Mr. Adhemar (Jacques Adhemar), a Canadian,³²⁰ was opposed by Jasper Corrigan. Country provisions were scarce and one of Adhemar's men died of starvation.³²¹ Corrigan, on the other hand, was well supplied from Osnaburgh and passed a reasonably comfortable winter. While Corrigan received more than twice as many furs as his rival, 500 MB to 200 MB, the Hudson's Bay Company's receipts from Moose Lake were reduced by one-half from the previous year, the difference going to Chevalier at Lake Seul.³²²

The Hudson's Bay Company post at Crow Nest Lake, where there were no Canadians, was reoccupied by Jacob Henderson. On his return to Osnaburgh with 550 MB, Henderson and his men were shot at and robbed by some Indians.³²³ There was a Canadian trader at Cat Lake.³²⁴

Duncan Cameron, in June 1798, instructed McFarlane to build a house for him at Sandy Lake,³²⁵ and Sanderson, in September, established himself "alongside" the new post.³²⁶ Cameron again had a superior force, and had two men tenting with a party of Indians all winter.³²⁷ Nevertheless, Sanderson did make 23 packs.³²⁸ On his journey to Sandy Lake, Cameron left some men at Fly Lake, three of whom died of starvation.³²⁹

The same summer, Sanderson's assistant, John Linklater, went northwards from Fly Lake up the Albany River to Duck Lake (modern location unknown) where no Hudson's Bay Company man had wintered before.³³⁰ A house was built of squared logs and was covered with grass,³³¹ but its location on the lake is not mentioned. As there was a Canadian trader within "two days journey," Linklater was obliged to distribute large quantities of liquor.³³² He and his men almost starved during the winter, though they did carry on a rewarding barter. At the end of May, Linklater returned to Osnaburgh, resting one night at his company's house on Crow Nest Lake.³³³ Although Linklater reported to George Sutherland at Osnaburgh that the water network to Duck Lake could be travelled by either batteaux or canoe "with as much ease and safty as any other part of the area around Osnaburgh,"³³⁴ the post was not maintained the following year, and there is no record of any men from Osnaburgh residing on the lake in subsequent years.

McKay, in 1799-1800, was given only five men and a poor assortment of goods for Osnaburgh. After receiving his supplies from Grand Poratge, Duncan Cameron passed through Osnaburgh, leaving Ronald Cameron at the Canadian house, and then journeyed to Sandy Lake, where he wintered again.³³⁵ A new Canadian post was established "in the Wilderness of Cat Lake;" its master was called, according to McKay, "Green or Yellow Back" by the Indians, who did not know his French

name.³³⁶ McKay wrote in October 1799,
 Mr. Chaveillier at Monatagay with 2 canoes which
 he makes two parts of. Mr. Pomaville at red
 Lake with one canoe in opposition to Mgs Birsay.
 Mr. Adhemar on the tin pots Lands between this
 House and Severn which cut of [sic] northward
 trade Burdegon [?] is gone to Crow Nest Lake
 where Indians is all debted from me Ronald
 Cameron is my nighbour Duncan Cameron is as usual
 at Lake Sanders withn 4 canoes. Tell me where
 I am to expect trade from so surrounded as I am,
 or how at this time of year I am to secure my
 debts.³³⁷

The Canadians also came "down nigh Gloster" and a
 Mr. Marsen and three men from Martin Falls were sent to
 oppose them.³³⁸

Soon after his arrival at Osnaburgh, Ronald Cameron
 established an outpost at Crow Nest Lake, supplying it with
 a good assortment of merchandise. McKay, having insufficient
 men to send in opposition, lamented that by this stroke, the
 Canadians had gotten most of his debts.³³⁹ When he left
 Osnaburgh for Albany in June with his trade, McKay remarked
 caustically in his journal,

I sincerely wish your Honours would pay attention
 to the observations of your Officers respecting
 this trade; then perhaps the Canadians would not
 have so much; for it must not be expected that we
 can make good Traders, in opposition to those
 people, while we have so few men & goods.³⁴⁰

David Sanderson's arrival at Sandy Lake in 1799-1800 was
 delayed by the reluctance of the men at Osnaburgh to under-
 take the journey. He did not reach it until the middle of
 September, when he found that the Canadians, having remained
 during the summer, already had made six packs of furs and

debted many of the hunters.³⁴¹ Sanderson's poor assortment of goods also handicapped him.³⁴² In October, Cameron dispatched seven men to winter at Owl Lake, the hunting grounds of most of the Indians who visited Sandy Lake. Sanderson did not have sufficient men to settle beside them,³⁴³ and many of the furs destined for Sandy Lake were intercepted at Owl Lake. Throughout the trading season, Cameron showed more energy than Sanderson, and received most of the Sandy Lake trade. Sanderson left two men for the summer at Sandy Lake.³⁴⁴

No men were sent to Albany from England in the last few years of the 18th century because of the war with France and the concentration of the company's attention on the richer fur-bearing areas of the west. Albany's trade reached its zenith in 1798-99, when it received 28,545 MB;³⁴⁵ subsequently a gradual decrease began. While Albany's complement did not increase, the number of hands employed by the North West Company in the Petit Nord was swelling each year. The extension of Duncan Cameron toward the northeastern part of Lake Winnipeg arrested the flow of trade coming from the south to Severn. The master of Severn, Thomas Thomas, sent James Swain, in July 1798, on a voyage of exploration into the heart of the country infested with the Canadians. On his eleventh day, Swain passed through "Musqua Rat" Lake, and after paddling four hours passed a river, which his guide told him was part of the Albany track, and that "there was a House built here very near the Lake not long ago, by some of the Albany People, but they only Wintered at it one Winter."³⁴⁶ Emerging from the lake three hours later, Swain entered Sandy Lake River, and 1 1/2 hours later he reached in Sandy Lake. Swain observed that this lake had two rivers running into it, Ne he ka mo Seepee and Pine River; "this last is where the Albany People wintered last Winter also some Canadians, the Albany people come down the former River and go thro' the Lake to the Westward to Pine River."³⁴⁷

After passing through Sandy Lake, Swain retraced his route, going through Muskrat Lake, then along a river 23 hours until he entered Wa sha oo Lake (most likely modern Bearskin Lake), which was "very near the Entrance" of Severn River. He paddled one hour through this lake and then entered Severn River, but does not mention the presence of any Canadian posts, occupied or abandoned.³⁴⁸

Instead of reoccupying his post at Escabitchewan Falls in the autumn of 1799, Birsa settled on Red Lake. When he reached it, he discovered that a Canadian trader had been there for 17 days and was residing in the house built by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1790-91.³⁴⁹ Birsa settled some distance from it,³⁵⁰ and the Canadian master, "Mr. Pomavel" (Jean-Baptiste Pominville), immediately moved beside him. Birsa then burned Pominville's abandoned post, considering it the property of his employers. The competition was so spirited that at one point the two men almost came to blows.³⁵¹ Birsa was handicapped by a lack of trading goods. The Canadians also had a post "a days journey up the North River."³⁵²

In May, Birsa, while visiting a hunter's tent, was seriously wounded by an Indian. Birsa's men immediately seized the culprit and conveyed him to an island, where they hanged him.³⁵³ The company censured this action, and instructions were sent to Albany never to put to death an Indian without a trial.

The Hudson's Bay Company men, in August 1800, were again unwilling to go inland from Osnaburgh, forcing the abandonment of Red Lake.³⁵⁴ Sanderson distributed those who had agreed to accompany him to three posts: Sanderson went to Sandy Lake,³⁵⁵ William Thomas to Sandy Narrows, and Peter Taylor and four men to Lake of the Islands.

The returns from Lake of the Islands were considerable, 900 MB, but apparently expensive, as the men there were

continually returning to Sandy Lake for merchandise. At Sandy Lake, Sanderson was again opposed by Cameron, who got the better of the trade. An outpost was established at Succar Lake (possibly modern Red Sucker Lake) for the Canadians by "Young Mr. Cameron."³⁵⁶ Sanderson did not return to Sandy Lake the following year.

Severn

As has been seen, the Canadians, by the early 1780s, had succeeded in capturing much of Severn's southern trade. In June 1784, Falconer dispensed large quantities of cloth, brandy and tobacco to the Indians patronizing his post to be distributed to their kinsmen inland.³⁵⁷ This measure was to some degree beneficial, for more hunters made their way northward. However, most of them had disposed of the better part of their furs by the time they had reached the bay. By 1784-85, there were Canadians at the head of Severn River who were trying to entice with brandy those who paddled by.³⁵⁸ Severn's receipts, by 1787-88, had risen to 7,488 1/4 MB.³⁵⁹

Nevertheless this increase was short-lived because the Canadians were becoming more numerous each year along the waterways leading to Severn. Some hunters, who arrived in June 1791, had already traded at three different Canadian houses. They requested the master of Severn, John Ballanden, to make a settlement inland. This Ballanden was willing to do, but he did not have anybody fit to undertake such a task; there were "few else but old men, who required a nurse more than to do duty."³⁶⁰ Ballanden's applications to the London Committee for an inland post were not answered, and he became resigned to the fact that nothing would be done to rescue the post from its decline.

Little was done to repair the buildings which had now stood for more than 20 years. Fire destroyed the men's cook room, cow house, carpenters shed and master's cook room in December 1793.³⁶¹ They were only partially restored by August 1794 because building materials were lacking at the post. The absence of a bricklayer prevented the rebuilding of the chimneys and ovens, and during the winter Ballenden was required to cook in a tent and bake his bread in an iron pot.³⁶² Thomas Thomas, Ballenden's successor, commented in a letter written to York Fort in April 1797,

On my arrival here I found the place in a very shatter'd state, the broken platforms were overgrown with grass, the house looked quite ragged, the mortar being off in many places so as to admit the water, which had made the timber very rotten the stockades were in a condition very like those of YF some time after you quitted it, indeed I cannot convey to you a truer idea of the place than by saying it had much the appearance of your old factory at the time it was only inhabited by a few half-dead scurvey men, to which three or four decrepit looking old men who were here, not a little contributed.³⁶³

Thomas had, that year, two house carpenters, a bricklayer, a blacksmith and a sawyer³⁶⁴ who repaired the crumbling fort.

Despite Thomas' efforts during his two decades at Severn, the post could not recover from its steady decline. The trade of Lake Winnipeg went to the Canadians at the lake, the Hudson's Bay Company men at Norway House and the parties venturing into the Lake Winnipeg region from Albany. Much of the Severn River trade was drawn away by the Canadians who from the 1780s resided more or less regularly at the head of the river. The southeastern trade was lost to the settlements maintained by the two companies at Cat Lake.

Lake Nipigon

Henley's trade was not seriously threatened until the early 1780s, when the Canadians established a new settlement on Lake Nipigon. It succeeded in attracting many of Henley's Indians by offering liberal prices and liquor, and its inroads into Henley's receipts had become so extensive by 1785, that McNab wrote to Edward Jarvis at Albany that a post in opposition at Lake Nipigon was imperative.³⁶⁵ But no men were available for such an enterprise.

Another Canadian establishment which subsequently injured Henley was at Wepiscuacow Lake. It is first mentioned in the Henley journals of 1786-87.³⁶⁶ George Knowles, an experienced trader who was hired by the London Committee in 1790 to explore inland, visited it in June 1792. He writes that it was four hours' paddling into the lake, and its master was a Canadian named La Guard.

Monsieur La Guards House is about 30 foot long and 20 foot wide, verry low made of the Logs of Poplar or the Aspen Slit and Built in the same forme as a Barn or our saw house at Albany, three bed placed only, and them full of Your Body Guards, the house stands in a bay Shop verry small.³⁶⁷

Both John Best and Jarvis were anxious that the track to Wepiscuacow, where "Mr. Umfreiville" was master in 1786-87,³⁶⁸ should be explored, yet there were still insufficient men at Albany to undertake and immediate penetration in that direction.³⁶⁹ No exploration parties went inland in the summer of 1787. The following winter, Jarvis's attention turned to Lake Nipigon, where James Clark was settled but was poorly gooded and had no liquor.³⁷⁰ The Indians, however, declined to act as guides to Lake Nipigon for fear of the lakeside inhabitants.³⁷¹

On the instructions of Jarvis, John Hodgson at Henley dispatched James Hudson, in June 1788, to explore the region

between Henley and Lake Nipigon, but Hodgson's guide refused to take him beyond Frenchman's River Lake (perhaps modern Ogoke Lake).³⁷² At this lake, he saw a "Canadian Hut," built that spring. Its master, who is not identified, had already succeeded in attracting some of Henley's best hunters.³⁷³

In 1789-90, competition was experienced at Henley from three sources: Lake Nipigon, Lake Wepiscuacow, and Cat Lake. At Cat Lake, both companies had houses.³⁷⁴ The Canadians at Wepiscuacow were particularly bothersome, venturing closer and closer to Henley each year.³⁷⁵ George Knowles, on his voyage in 1792 to Lake Wepiscuacow, noted that there had been a trader on the south side of Lake Washcobar, three days' journey from Lake Wepiscuacow,³⁷⁶ and many Henley Indians had traded with him.

Hodgson, in May 1790, prepared supplies for a party, to be led by Richard Perkin, which was intended to chart a route to Lake Nipigon.³⁷⁷ For some reason, Perkin did not leave.

John McKay, equipped with a quadrant and compass³⁷⁸ and accompanied by a Mr. Knowles (presumably George Knowles), in the spring of 1791 explored the track from Henley to Lake Nipigon. His guides would accompany him only to within 70 miles of the lake, but he did succeed in reaching it on his own. The Lake Nipigon Indians expressed their desire that a Hudson's Bay Company post should be founded among them. When informed of this, Jarvis lamented that "the want of men and provisions obstruct everything."³⁷⁹ Nevertheless, McNab chose 12 of his best hands and dispatched them with McKay in the summer of 1792,³⁸⁰ although this meant that he would be short of men at Albany.³⁸¹

As has been seen, John McKay had wintered for Duncan Cameron on Lake Nipigon in 1789-90. On reaching the lake in October 1792, McKay found that his house was occupied by a Canadian, Mr. Chauvandry (perhaps the Mr. Chavonderi mentioned

previously), but he made no effort to evict him because the house was too small for his men. A new one, which proved to be leaky, was constructed near it;³⁸² its location is not mentioned, though it may have been on an island.³⁸³

Chauvandry received most of the trade that year, having debted the majority of the hunters before McKay's arrival. The Canadians also had a house "about 40 miles from the lake," under the charge of a Mr. Bellown.³⁸⁴

In 1793-94, David Sanderson succeeded McKay at Lake Nipigon,³⁸⁵ and the following winter he in turn was replaced by Jacob Corrigan.³⁸⁶ There is no mention of Canadians during these two winters. Some Nor'Westers were trading, in June 1796, on the side of the lake opposite the house,³⁸⁷ but the fact that their presence is not mentioned before June probably indicates that they were only returning to Lake Superior from the interior.

The Nor'Westers returned to Lake Nipigon in the autumn of 1796, and built their post at least 15 or 20 miles distant from Corrigan.³⁸⁸ In October, Corrigan moved beside them, leaving his brother William to tend the old house. The new one was partitioned into a men's room and a warehouse and was covered with grass.³⁸⁹

Jacob Corrigan came to an understanding with the Canadian master, Samuel Solomon, whereby both would inform each other if a hunter had left his furs in the woods for one of them.³⁹⁰ There seems to have been some ill-feeling between them, for Solomon wrote a letter to Jarvis at Albany, accusing Corrigan of trying to murder him.³⁹¹ Solomon, being better supplied, received the majority of the trade. Corrigan left with 767 MB in the middle of June for his second house,³⁹² and then returned to Albany.

The new house was occupied the following year by Corrigan and seven men; no one was stationed in the old one, except in March and April, when two men were sent to watch

for Indians.³⁹³ Corrigal's opponent, who is not identified, was better supplied and may have had an advantage in men, and debted most of the hunters, having arrived a month before Corrigal.³⁹⁴

Having lost much trade in the autumn of 1797 because of his late arrival, Corrigal reached his old house the ensuing year on 1 August. He debted the Indians in its vicinity, and then left for the second house, arriving on 10 August, well before the Canadian, Solomon, returned.³⁹⁵ At the end of September, Solomon built a new house "a little to the Wtward" of Corrigal, and placed Frederick Shultz in charge of his other house.³⁹⁶ Both Solomon and Shultz experienced poor returns, obtaining no more than four packs of furs between them.³⁹⁷ Although Corrigal does not state his trade, it was certainly more. In the middle of June, Corrigal, having collected all his debts, set off for his other house, and then left for Martin Fall.³⁹⁸

Shultz passed the summer at Lake Nipigon in order to give debts before Corrigal's return,³⁹⁹ but Corrigal, having expended his goods, could not leave any men to compete. He returned in September with only "a very small supply" of merchandise, and discovered that Shultz had already debted most of the Indians.⁴⁰⁰ The Canadians maintained only one house, probably the one beside Corrigal. During the winter, the Canadian master, whom Corrigal contemptuously called a "dutch vagabond," entered Corrigal's house and, without saying a word, stabbed to death one of his men who had been visiting. Although the murder had been committed on his premises, Corrigal made no attempt to arrest Shultz.⁴⁰¹

Corrigal had a moderately good trade, considering that he had a poor supply of goods and Shultz had been at the lake all summer. As in the previous year, Corrigal departed for his old house in June, and after collecting his debts there, left for Martin Fall.⁴⁰²

There is no indication whether the Hudson's Bay Company posts on Lake Nipigon were open in 1800-01 and 1801-02. In August 1802, William Corrigan, with five men, arrived at the old house, debted the Indians, and then departed for Squirrel Lake⁴⁰³ (modern name unknown). Because of his small stock of flour, he was forced to stop at Small Trout Lake (modern name unknown), a journey of 21 days to the westward of Lake Nipigon, and constructed a house of logs.⁴⁰⁴ A Canadian house was in the vicinity, perhaps even on the lake itself, and the Canadians and Corrigan's men tented with the Indians throughout the hunting season.⁴⁰⁵ In the middle of May, Corrigan left with 12 bundles of furs, returned to Lake Nipigon to claim his debts, and in June left for Martin Fall.⁴⁰⁶ He does not state whether there were any Canadians on Lake Nipigon, but Thomas McNab and three men wintered "N. East" of Lake Nipigon.⁴⁰⁷

There are no subsequent journals for Lake Nipigon in the Hudson's Bay archives before the union of 1821. In the first two decades of the 19th century, the North West Company maintained on Lake Nipigon a post called Fort Duncan, which Daniel Harmon relates in his diary for 1807-08 was "on the north side" of the lake and for that winter was under the command of R. McKenzie. By the second decade of the 19th century, it was an unproductive establishment. We find in the North West Company council minutes for 1814, "Nipigon-One clerk too many and the post fallint to nothing-If Dorion's Post is not more productive this winter it is to be thrown up in the spring-Mr. Leith to bring out at all Events the Extra Clerk."⁴⁰⁸

Henley

In the last decade of the 18th century, Henley's most active competition came from the Canadians at Lakes Washcobar and

Wepiscuacow, and a settlement established at Acokemey Lake about 1795. John Hodgson, who became master of Henley in 1797, wrote in that year that Wepiscuacow "produces by all accounts a considerable trade annually."⁴⁰⁹ It was in operation until the spring of 1798, when Nicol Spence at Henley says its residents moved to another lake nearer Lake Nipigon,⁴¹⁰ but they were back by 1800-01. Though Hodgson was determined in 1801 that a post should be founded "in that quarter," he realized that unless additional men were attached to Albany in the summer, his plan could not be implemented.⁴¹¹

Magnus Birsa was selected to command a party to Lake Wepiscuacow in 1802, but no guide could be engaged and the plan was abandoned.⁴¹² There is no mention in subsequent Henley journals of the presence of Canadians at Wepiscuacow Lake. Hence it is likely that they moved to another locality in the first years of the 19th century.

Nicol Spence left Henley in June 1797 to explore the region up the South River to Acokemey Lake. He slept one night at the Canadian house on Acokemey Lake, called by the Indians Tavatusqueniem Lake, a lake about six miles in length.⁴¹³ Unfortunately Spence does not describe the house, nor does he give the name of its master.

Henley's importance as an inland post began to decline after the establishment of Osnaburgh in 1786 and the subsequent penetration of men from Albany into the eastern Lake Winnipeg region. For a time, it served as a supply depot, but in 1793-94 a post was founded at Martin Fall specifically for this purpose. While animals were plentiful in the Henley region at the beginning of the 19th century, the attention of Albany's masters turned to areas further inland where the Henley Indians were encouraged to go. Because of this policy, the number of hunters about Henley steadily declined, and by 1815 only two were left.

Martin Fall

In the course of their voyages inland up the Albany River to Osnaburgh House and beyond to Lake Winnipeg, the men from Albany experienced considerable difficulty in portaging Martin Falls and the rapids approaching it, especially as they used, during their early years of inland travel, heavy and cumbersome batteaux. By the early 1780s, supplies from Albany were deposited in log tents beside Martin Fall to be used by the inland posts in the case of emergency. As has been seen, in the summer of 1793 work was begun upon a supply depot at Martin Fall, which was intended to serve as a jumping off point for expeditions into the interior.

The first master, John Hodgson, reached his post in October 1794, and found its construction well advanced. He writes, "A house 40 feet long and 20 feet broad is erected near the bank, and a small log house at the back is built with a fireplace in it, which will make my situation much more comfortable than I expected." In addition, there was "a trench for a row of pallasades nearly completed." Hodgson intended to immediately "complete a small dwelling for the men, who reside here during winter, after which a regular plan shall be begun, for completing the building intended."⁴¹⁴ Hodgson noted in his journal for October 26,

Upon consideration of the intended building to be erected here I find it will not be possible to get this store house raised another story and the roof on in time to deposit the cargoe next summer which in that case would be liable to be damaged. I have therefore though it the best plan to begin another house, which may serve as a residence, and the store house already built to continue as such which shall be properly tight in time to deposit the cargo next summer. Hitherto we have been very busy in digging a foundation for the intended building,

which is finished, building a forge and oven, which are also nearly completed. I have also had a fire place built in the stone house, where I have taken up my residence for the winter, and the men are in the log house which was formerly built, these things completed. I hope to go to work on the intended building, and the boat building with regularity.⁴¹⁵

At the end of November, Hodgson "laid the foundation logs of the square house."⁴¹⁶ The next addition to the post was in May 1797, when Hodgson says,

I have got a shed, or house erected 30 feet long by 20 feet broad within the pallasades, which I think will hold every article of the cargoe. It is complete except the covering to the roof, which I should also have been enabled to accomplish if the necessity of sending down the sawyers had not occurred.⁴¹⁷

After the establishment of Martin Fall, the London Committee thought that Gloucester House (Earnest House) was superfluous and ordered its abandonment. Osnaburgh was to be enlarged to serve as a supply depot above Martin Fall.⁴¹⁸ Gloucester House was retained until at least the end of the 1795-96 season. During the late 1790s, Martin Fall proved to be a valuable supply depot for the posts inland. Cargo was brought from Albany, and sent both southward to Lake Nipigon and southwestward to Osnaburgh House and beyond.⁴¹⁹ Boats and canoes were also built at Martin Fall; in 1796-97, two batteaux were completed for Osnaburgh and two canoes for Lake Nipigon. Rundlets to hold spirits were also made.⁴²⁰

Martin Fall was a poor place for fishing, and Hodgson, in May 1799, favoured its abandonment for Gloucester Lake, where the men would "certainly live better," and the natives who frequently complained of the distance of his establishment,

from their hunting grounds, would be happier.⁴²¹ Martin Fall's inhabitants lived almost exclusively on European provisions.⁴²² Osnaburgh's proximity limited its importance as a trading post; Jacob Corrigal, Hodgson's successor, complained that he "never had a Canadian neighbour more willing to hurt" his trade than the master of Osnaburgh.⁴²³ Despite these deficiencies, Martin Fall was retained for more than another decade. In 1803-04, a new house 40 feet long by 30 wide was constructed.⁴²⁴

The Canadians never settled beside Martin Fall, probably because its immediate vicinity was barren of fur-trading animals. In 1799-1800, Canadians resided as close as Gloucester Lake.⁴²⁵ In order to protect his trade from that quarter, John Best, at Martin Fall, dispatched John McDonald and a man to Gloucester Lake in early December 1799,⁴²⁶ and later in the winter reinforced McDonald, who probably resided in old Gloucester House.⁴²⁷ Neither of the two companies had representatives there the ensuing year. Gloucester House was burned in January 1807 on the instructions of Jacob Truthwaite at Martin Fall, who thought the nails and spikes would "be very serviceable" at his post.⁴²⁸

Anglo-Canadian Rivalry West of Osnaburgh, 1800-05

No Canadians wintered at Osnaburgh Lake in 1800-01. McKay had been expecting Duncan Cameron to abandon Osnaburgh, for he could not make "anything in opposition to this house itself; for any Indian that takes the trouble to come this far, will seldom or ever go into a Canadian House," while his house had merchandise.⁴²⁹ John Best, who succeeded McKay in the autumn of 1800, wrote in December of that year, Mr. D. Cameron arrived here the 28th August with 6 large canoes, there is one gone to Tinnewabans'

Land, 1 to Cranes lands, the other 4 to Cat Lake, Crow Nest and the Way of Lake Sanders. There is one Trader between thir [sic] and Stirgeon Lake (at the Monatagge and) at Red Lake, so that I am enclosed every way.⁴³⁰

Adhemar wintered in the "Cranes land," where he had passed the previous year.⁴³¹ These establishments completely surrounded Osnaburgh.

As the master at Albany had elected to concentrate this winter on Lake Nipigon, and supplies were late in reaching Albany, Osnaburgh was neglected. In December, Best complained that he was "out of goods and no provisions nor anything to procure it with." He had only a little powder and ball.⁴³² His returns were poor that winter. It is not certain whether there were any Hudson's Bay Company establishments inland of Osnaburgh. In 1802-03, Osnaburgh was again entirely surrounded by Canadians posts,⁴³³ and its trade was 2,000 MB, a decline of 1,000 MB from the previous year.⁴³⁴

Having learned that Best had been drinking immoderately, Hodgson at Albany, sent William Thomas, in the autumn of 1802, to investigate his conduct. Early in 1803, Hodgson received a report that Best was in a delirious state caused by an excessive consumption of liquor.⁴³⁵ Hodgson immediately replaced him with William Thomas.

Osnaburgh, in 1803-04, was again neglected, and there were insufficient men for an outpost in its immediate vicinity. Duncan Cameron passed Osnaburgh with seven canoes.⁴³⁶ We learn from the Osnaburgh journal only that the Canadians were at Crow Nest Lake and received most of the trade in that region.⁴³⁷ In 1804-05, Robert Goodwin at Osnaburgh had only "a man half dead, & 4 more to do all the duty of the House."⁴³⁸ The Canadians, meanwhile, were "in every hole and corner of the Country."⁴³⁹ Osnaburgh

seems to have been in a delapidated condition. It continued to be neglected in the following two years, and was either closed between 1807 and 1810 or tended by only one or two men.⁴⁴⁰ The trade for 1805-06 was only 1,400 MB.⁴⁴¹

In 1802-03, Thomas Vincent, having a complement of seven men, established an outpost from Osnaburgh "nearly half way thro" Red Lake.⁴⁴² He mentions passing Birsa's former house, which indicates that Birsa had resided closer to the eastern entrance of the lake. One month later, Jacques Adhemar settled beside Vincent.⁴⁴³ Adhemar had only four men, and after a winter of active but fair competition, he obtained only 8 of the 35 bundles of furs traded,⁴⁴⁴ the first time a Canadian had been bested at Red Lake. Vincent's trade was impressive, considering that the Canadians had three more houses east of Lake Winnipeg than in the previous year. There were two Canadian houses "at the Entrance of Bloody River" (Bloodvein River), one belonging to the North West Company and the other to the XY Company.⁴⁴⁵ These two companies also had posts at Eagle Lake.⁴⁴⁶ A Mr. Cobb wintered for the Hudson's Bay Company at Escabitchewan Falls, but most of the Ball Lake trade went to the Canadians at Eagle Lake,⁴⁴⁷ and Cobb's post was not retained the following year.⁴⁴⁸

Vincent left three men at Red Lake for the summer,⁴⁴⁹ but Adhemar remained. When he returned, Vincent built a house beside the Nor'Westers,⁴⁵⁰ who probably had changed their location. Throughout the winter, Vincent's men scoured the neighbouring lakes in search of Indians. Duncan Cameron was at Lake Seul, opposed by William Thomas, a Hudson's Bay Company man, and a Canadian, Mr. Le Mai, wintered at Monitoolear Point.⁴⁵¹ XY Company men visited the region, but apparently did not remain.⁴⁵² A house was established by Thomas McNab for the Hudson's Bay Company at Bad Lake and was supplied from Red Lake. McNab, who had five

men, was opposed by six Nor'Westers, and he brought 680 MB with him on his return to Osnaburgh.⁴⁵³

Further west, the Hudson's Bay Company had posts in 1802-03 at Sandy Narrows (modern Stout Lake), Great Falls and Windy Lake. The one at Sandy Narrows was open during the summer of 1802, when it probably was founded. David Sanderson, who resided at Great Falls (also called Big Fall; it was between Fishing Lake and Family Lake), left Jasper Corrigan and three men at Sandy Narrows.⁴⁵⁴ There were no Canadians to oppose Corrigan, but few Indians visited him.⁴⁵⁵

Great Falls was also established during the summer of 1802.⁴⁵⁶ There was a Canadian post in its vicinity which offered active competition but Sanderson does not mention its location.⁴⁵⁷ At the end of August 1802, David Sanderson dispatched John Sanderson and three men to winter at Windy Lake. There was no Canadian opposition there, and John Sanderson returned in May with a trade of 800 MB.⁴⁵⁸ The three posts yielded a total of 39 bundles of furs.⁴⁵⁹

David Sanderson wintered again the ensuing year at Great Falls, and faced formidable opposition from the Canadians on Lake Winnipeg. The Nor'Westers were "so many" that they accompanied the natives on their hunts and traded with them as soon as the beavers were caught.⁴⁶⁰

As he was informed by the Indians that they would not be at Sandy Narrows in 1803-04 and he believed that the Canadians were at Windy Lake, Sanderson stationed five men on the latter lake and closed Sandy Narrows house.⁴⁶¹ Jasper Corrigan was instructed to winter at Rice Lake, but his guide was unwilling to voyage beyond Lower Rice Lake, where he settled.⁴⁶² There were no Canadians at either of these outposts but provisions were scarce and few Indians were seen. On his way back from Great Falls to Osnaburgh in the spring, Sanderson left James Slater and three men at

Sandy Narrows to pass the summer, when a considerable amount of furs was obtained.⁴⁶³ However, Sandy Narrows post was not maintained the following winter.

Albany's returns fell in 1802-03 to 24,739 MB, but Hodgson was well pleased that it still was so high, considering the increasing Canadian competition and the "small supply" of flour received because of the war with Napoleon.⁴⁶⁴ The Canadians were growing more powerful each year but their methods of trade did not endear them to their trading partners. In the winter of 1802-03, one of their houses on Lake Superior was "totally destroyed" by Indians and all the men were killed (most likely at Pic River), and at "a Post near Lake Sanderson," one man was killed, and two were mortally wounded and all the goods and furs were burned by some members of the "Tinpots Gang."⁴⁶⁵

The trade of Albany and its outposts was also injured by the "almost universal Warfare" among the natives. In the winter of 1803-04, both Martin Fall and Osnaburgh were attacked, but there was bloodshed only at Martin Fall, where a quarrel between the post's hunters and "uplanders" ended with a "dreadful slaughter." Many inland Indians were driven by this violence to frequent Albany.⁴⁶⁶

Soon after Sanderson's return to Big Fall at the beginning of September 1804, Alexander Campbell, an XY Company man who had six men, appeared and informed Sanderson that he would build a house "at the foot of the fall."⁴⁶⁷ A Mr. McDonald, who had seven men, settled at the "little Grand Rapid" for the North West Company.⁴⁶⁸ Campbell suggested to Sanderson that they should both "recall" their debts in the vicinity of McDonald's house, but Sanderson declined. Sanderson had previously suggested that they should form a common front against the North West Company, but Campbell had been reluctant.⁴⁶⁹

After these abortive attempts to combine against the North West Company, an intense competition began among the three companies. In October, both Canadian companies received additional men and goods. Six houses were built by them "all round the Lake below the fall," the nearest to Sanderson being "at the foot of the fall about 6 or 7 miles" away. Sanderson writes for Octobe 31: "they have stoped all the Inds on that quarter and our Boats are so weighty that we could not go over the fall."⁴⁷⁰ This would indicate that Sanderson's house was on the Fishing Lake side of the fall.

Five of Sanderson's men settled beside the Nor'Westers at "the little fall" in order "to collect what Debts they can,"⁴⁷¹ but they left on 5 May with only 82 MB.⁴⁷² Few hunters from Lower Lake (Family Lake) reached Sanderson's post, which did not receive more than 600 MB. Sanderson, on his voyage back to Osnaburgh, stopped at Sandy Narrows where he left James Slater and four men to pass the summer and build a house.⁴⁷³ The following year, Sanderson closed Great Falls house and resided in the new house at Sandy Narrows.

In 1804-05, Sanderson maintained outposts from Great Falls at Stony Lake and Owl Lake. James Slater, with five men, was instructed to settle at Rice Lake⁴⁷⁴ (modern Harrop Lake), but instead stopped at Stony Lake. Many of the Indians accompanying him took debt from some Canadians who visited the lake and liberally dispensed presents.⁴⁷⁵ A band of hunters requested Slater for men to tent with them during the winter, but he had none to spare.⁴⁷⁶ The Canadians were "all round" the region, though not settled on Stony Lake, and few Indians came to Slater's house. Iroquois Indians, brought from Montreal by the Canadians, made good hunts, but would not trade with Slater.⁴⁷⁷ At the beginning of May, he left with five packs of furs.⁴⁷⁸

John Sanderson went to Owl Lake with five men, and on his arrival debted some of those who were hunting in the region. Soon after, "Mr. Cameron" appeared for a short time and the remainder took debt from him. Some of the Indians went to hunt at Red Lake.⁴⁷⁹ John Sanderson also had to compete with four Canadians who were wintering at Duck Lake. As much of his trade was from that quarter, he had two men spend the winter beside the Canadians.⁴⁸⁰ Only 450 MB were traded at Owl Lake and its outpost.

Donald Sutherland, who settled an outpost from Norway House at Big Fall in 1816, writes in his report for 1818-19 that he found near his house "the remains of a old House Formerly built by the Albany Traders, they wintered hear Several years before they abandoned this place."⁴⁸¹

The first Hudson's Bay Company settlement on Lake Seul was established by William Thomas at the end of August 1803. John Hodgson, the master at Martin Fall, suggested to Thomas that he sould "get into the Mannataugy Country or about Eagle Lake,"⁴⁸² but he proceeded no further than Lake Seul. Forty miles into the lake he erected a post, which seems to have consisted of only one house serving as a residence and a warehouse.⁴⁸³ In September, both the North West and XY companies settled beside him; Nor'Westers also resided 12 miles further into the lake, and XY Company men 20 miles. In the latter part of the autumn, three XY Company men were stationed at the far end of the lake.⁴⁸⁴ There were also four other Canadian houses within a day's walk of Thomas's house.⁴⁸⁵

Thomas lost most of his debts and had to pay dearly for what he received. The Canadians tented with the Indians throughout the winter, and they were so numerous that Thomas could get his furs during the winter months only by sending men out after dark. Four men constructed a log tent in February beside one of the Canadian houses, probably one

- 10 Sketch of Beren's River district, 1819, by Donald Sutherland. (Hudson's Bay Company, B.16/e/2/705.3d, 4-1819.)

belonging to the North West Company, but they could recover only a few of Thomas's debts.⁴⁸⁶ Those who did visit Thomas's posts in the spring were clothed and given brandy, as the Canadians were doing the same.⁴⁸⁷

Three XY Company men passed the summer at the post at the end of the lake.⁴⁸⁸ There is no indication whether any Nor'Westers were left. Thomas and all his men returned to Martin Fall. The North West Company masters are not named, but one was probably Duncan Cameron. The XY Company's masters are unknown.

In the autumn of 1804, William Thomas left Magnus Murray and seven men at Lake Seul⁴⁸⁹ and continued to Red Lake. He found that three Canadians had spent the summer in the house which Vincent had built, and had burned it on their departure. A new house was constructed by Thomas about one mile distant, as there was insufficient timber near the old site.⁴⁹⁰ In September, Nor'Westers established themselves beside him and at the end of the month, the XY Company made its appearance, dispensing large amounts of liquor as presents and "offering goods in debt at one third price."⁴⁹¹ By the middle of October, Thomas, who had to match the XY Company's presents, had expended his liquor and was required to get additional supplies from Osnaburgh. On being informed in the autumn about the competition, Duncan Cameron wrote in his journal, "the English, the X.Y. and Mr. Adhemar were striving who would squander most and, thereby, please the Indians best, but the consequence will be that the Indians will get all they want for half the value and laugh at them all, in the end."⁴⁹² The two Canadian companies received most of the trade. Fortunately for Thomas, by the spring of 1805 they had merged, and trade subsequently was conducted on a more equitable basis.

In the autumn of 1804, the three companies founded outposts from Red Lake at Trout Lake. Thomas's outpost

managed to obtain only 26 MB, but the Canadians could not have received much more, because the hunters were continually intoxicated during the hunting season.⁴⁹³

The two Canadian companies also settled "in two or three parts" of Lake Seul.⁴⁹⁴ Cameron describes the house he built beside his Hudson's Bay Company opponent, Murray, in the following manner:

We got our building, which is now weather proof, but not finished in the inside, it is 40 feet long and 20 wide, divided into a room and bed room for myself, a shop and room for my men, 10 feet long on the whole breadth of the house. The only good material I found here to build is excellent loam, very white, which enabled us to make the house very warm and make two good chimneys. I had, and have still, to do my share of the labour, as the men are very unhandy about the building, but, still, we shall have a tolerably neat house for this part of the world.⁴⁹⁵

When Thomas visited Murray in the autumn, he found it necessary to send two men to erect a small house beside a Canadian house at the end of the lake.⁴⁹⁶ Murray lamented in December,

people here are going to the Inds. almost twice every week which has expended a great deal of my Brandy the X.Y. thinks nothing of giving them 3 or 4 g^s of Liquor for 1 Kettle of Meat, it is impossible for me to be more frugal of my Liquor than I am but indeed now without expense it is impossible to get 1 skin.⁴⁹⁷

After the union of the two Canadian companies, Duncan Cameron and the XY officer pooled their resources and increased their distribution of liquor. By the end of winter, Murray had expended his liquor and requested and

received additional supplies from Thomas. Murray faced a force of 18 Canadians, and seems to have lost many of his debts.⁴⁹⁸

On his arrival at Lake Seul at the end of May on his return to Osnaburgh, Thomas found 40 Canadians, most of them having come from the westward on their journey to Lake Nipigon. Duncan Cameron used his numerical superiority to intimidate the Indians, and twice, at the beginning of June, tried to rob Hudson's Bay Company men.⁴⁹⁹ All but seven Canadians left on 10 June. Two days later, Thomas departed, leaving four men to pass the summer beside the Canadians.⁵⁰⁰

In 1804-05, Cameron placed a Mr. Munro, with six men, on Lake of the Islands. Joseph Monier, Cameron's guide, who was "a very careful, honest man," but had "very little talents" with the Indians although he had spent a considerable time in Indian country, went to Owl Lake. He had only a small assortment of merchandise, "but still as much as the place could pay for." Five men, including an interpreter, accompanied him.⁵⁰¹ The post on Lake of the Islands had been open the previous winter; Cameron says in his journal that Munro's interpreter had been left there for the summer in charge of goods. A house was also maintained at Fly Lake.⁵⁰²

Albany's trade declined more than 4,000 MB, in 1804-05. Hodgson wrote, in August 1805, that the Canadians had "poured in" so many traders in the Nipigon region (Petit Nord) that unless "there is one of the Companys servants with every family of Indians to take the Beaver out of the hole after the Indian has staked them in, they are likely not to get them."⁵⁰³

Violence in the Nipigon Region and the Decline of the Fur Trade

Introduction

After the XY-North West Company coalition in 1804, the Red Lake-Lake Seul region was transferred from the Nipigon to the Monontagué department. Duncan Cameron's competence apparently was questioned in the councils of the North West Company, and it was decided to select a more aggressive wintering partner, John Haldane, to conduct the competition with Osnaburgh. In 1806-07, Haldane was assigned three active clerks, Angus and Alexander McDonell and Aulay McAulay.¹ They introduced a new element, violence and intimidation, into the region's trade. The North West Company seems to have calculated that unless the Albany men were prevented from going inland, the growing impoverishment of the region would make inevitable a continuing decline in returns. Haldane's bellicose activities were also related to the North West Company's overall plan to drive the Hudson's Bay Company from the beaver hunting lands inland from Hudson Bay.

Duncan Cameron remained as the master of the contracted Nipigon department, confined to the Severn region, whose resources had yet to be fully exploited. The Severn region was initially productive, but within a few years it too had succumbed to the strain of the Canadian-Hudson's Bay Company rivalry. In 1807-08, Nipigon department was abolished and its territory was added to Lake Ouinipique department which was assigned to Cameron. In 1809-10, Lake Ouinipique was united with River Ouinipique department, with Cameron as

proprietor. Cameron continued in the department until 1811-12, when he was transferred to Lac la Pluie.²

The war with Napoleon, resumed in 1803, made the recruitment of Orkneymen difficult and expensive. In 1806, the Hudson's Bay Company engaged David Geddes to recruit in Stromness and authorized the use of large bounties. But the demands of the army and navy exhausted the supply of Orkneymen and the payment of bounties was discontinued in 1808, though Geddes still seems to have been seeking Orkneymen the following year for the newly formed lumbering industry at Moose.³

Meanwhile, the coalition with the XY Company swelled the ranks of the North West Company. Having this numerical superiority, Haldane and his bullies terrorized both their opponents and the Indians west of Osnaburgh. In 1809, Alexander McDonnell was shot and killed by John Mowat at Eagle Lake. Mowat was arrested by Haldane and the following spring was sent to Montreal for trial. William Corrigan, the master of the Hudson's Bay Company post, and one of his men accompanied Mowat as witnesses. Haldane continued as master of Monontagué department until 1812-13, when he was assigned to Pic department, and the following outfit to Athabasca River department. A united Monontagué-Lake Nipigon department was created in 1812-13 under Roderick McKenzie and Jame Leith.⁴

As has been noted in Section I, the London Committee began to reorganize the structure of its trade in 1810, creating the Southern and Northern departments and appointing Thomas Thomas as the superintendent of the former. John Hodgson, the aging veteran, was replaced as governor of Albany by the younger and more energetic Thomas Vincent. The latter immediately took measures to reduce expenses and end the wasteful consumption of provisions both at Albany and inland.

But the "number of useless and expensive

servants" passing their time at Albany limited his success.⁵ His efforts earned him the plaudits of Thomas Thomas and the London Committee, but did not make him popular with the Albany men.⁶ Vincent was transferred to Moose in 1814 as a replacement for the inefficient John Thomas. Vincent's successor at Albany, William Thomas, was selected entirely on his merit, passing over more senior men.⁷

By 1810, Albany's domain extended from the Albany River westward across Lake Winnipeg, a vast territory which was difficult to supply. The London Committee decided in 1811 that two new districts, the East and West Winnipeg districts, should be formed by the following year (1812-13). Albany would cede all its territory between Osnaburgh and Lake Winnipeg to East Winnipeg district whose master, William Hillier, was to set up his headquarters near the mouth of the Winnipeg River. Brandon House would be given to the West Winnipeg district. Both districts would be placed under the jurisdiction of William Auld, supervisor of the Northern Department. Hillier was instructed to extend his posts into Lac la Pluie and Lake Seul. All the Canadian servants under Albany's jurisdiction were to be transferred to him. No longer burdened by exploiting so large a territory, Albany could extend its outposts toward the Pic and Lake Nipigon, weakening the opposition to Hillier by obliging the Canadians to divide their forces.⁸ Albany had reanimated its activities in the vicinity of Lake Nipigon in 1810, the winter after the incident at Eagle Lake.

In 1814, the London Committee decided that Albany should be considered a separate post and should form part of Moose district, being subordinate to Moose. Albany's three major inland outposts, Osnaburgh, Gloucester and Henley should constitute "Albany Inland" district. A chief trader would command at Osnaburgh, his second at Gloucester and a "Trader" at Henley.⁹ At the beginning of 1819, the

Committee wrote to Vincent that William Thomas, on a visit to London, had advised that it would be in the interest of the trade to remove Albany from Moose district and place it in "Albany Inland" district. The Committee left the matter to Vincent's discretion.¹⁰ It is not certain whether Vincent implemented the recommendation.

The East Winnipeg district was beset by problems from the first, the Irish recruits being exposed to the bad habits of the Canadians engaged to train them. This was particularly disturbing because the Committee had intended that the district should be a training ground for obedient and enterprising new servants. Hillier retired in 1814 and was succeeded by James Sutherland. A depot was established at Norway House in 1815. The servants of the new district proved incapable of exploiting the region as far east as Red Lake, and in 1816 the Red Lake district was created in the Southern Department.

The Severn-Trout Lake district was created by the reorganization of 1814 and placed in the Northern Department. Its head was a "Second," with two shares.¹¹

By the second decade of the 19th century, the region between Osnaburgh and Lake Winnipeg was returning substantially fewer furs than in 1805, perhaps too few to permit only one unchallenged company to make a profit. Servants from Norway House began crossing to the eastern side of Lake Winnipeg after 1815, but their trade was unproductive. In the latter part of the 1810s, the exhaustion of the Nipigon region became more accelerated, and the Indian population was being reduced by illness. Only the coalition of 1821 and the accompanying reduction in the tempo of hunting saved the fur-bearing animal population from being completely extirpated.

The McKay Lake-Long Lake region which Albany's men began frequenting in 1810 had been exploited for many years

by the Canadians and its productivity was rapidly declining. Despite their disappointing returns, the Albany men, and after the reorganization of 1814 the servants of Henley district, persevered there until the coalition of 1821.

Four Years of Violence West of Osnaburgh

The region between Osnaburgh and Lake Winnipeg, by the winter of 1804-05, was beginning to show the effects of 30 years of intensive hunting. Duncan Cameron writes in his journal for 1804-05,

Notwithstanding all these complaints and arguments against us, we still get the three-fourths of the trade. But I am sorry to say that, even if there were no opposition at all in the country to spoil the trade, it is now getting so barren and poor that in a dozen of years hence, the returns from it will be so triffling that, even if one company had the whole, on the cheapest terms, it will be little enough, to pay the expenses of carrying on the business, for the hunt is declining very fast, and we are obliged every year to make new discoveries and settle new posts. Even with all that, we cannot keep the former average of returns, although the consumption of goods is increasing every year, and I believe that our discoveries are now about at an end, and that the trade cannot be extended much further than it is at present.¹²

Duncan Cameron's replacement in the Lac Seul-Red Lake region in 1805-06 was John Haldane, a partner in the North West Company and proprietor of Monontagué department. Joseph Leger, who served under Haldane between 1805 and 1811,

relates in an affidavit written in the latter part of the 1810s that before leaving Fort William for the Nipigon country, he overheard Haldane remark to one of his trusted men that as the two Canadian companies were now united, he "would set about ruining the trade of the Hudson's Bay Company, and force them to leave the Country, so that the North West Company might have the trade all to themselves, and that the Agents had given orders to that effect."¹³

On his way to Bad Lake, where he intended to winter, William Corrigan, who had left Osnaburgh with ten men, met Haldane. According to Leger's account, Corrigan imprudently boasted that he already had had a house constructed on Bad Lake. The two parties then made their separate ways there. Haldane sent two of his men ahead to burn the house, and threatened to punish any who dared to mention it to Corrigan.

While Corrigan rebuilt his house, Sabourin, one of Haldane's men, stole a sack of 100 pounds of flour.¹⁴ The house constructed by Haldane, located near but not directly next to Corrigan's, was covered with grass and partitioned into a residence and a warehouse. Because the Canadians were constantly stealing his fish, Corrigan built a fish house.¹⁵

Both companies had posts at Red Lake. The Canadian master was Aulay MacAuley and his opponent was James Nourse, who had four men.¹⁶ MacAuley, on 1 February, robbed Nourse's house "and threatened to kill the men Burn the house and Destroy the Companys Goods" if Nourse sent his men to a hunter's tent.¹⁷ About a month later, Leger delivered a letter written by Haldane to MacAuley.¹⁸ A few days later, the latter ordered Leger and some of his men to appropriate from his opponent's house some goods which he required for his trade. They carried away "a barrel of double proof Rum, with 40 or 50 pounds of Gunpowder a fowling piece and a quantity of dry goods," the rum being worth \$600 at the North

West Company rate. The men at the post offered no resistance. McAuley subsequently used these goods in his trade. When Leger returned to Bad Lake, he was punished by Haldane for neglecting to take the furs at the post.¹⁹

At Bad Lake, the competition was spirited, but no violent incidents occurred during the winter months. Haldane, "towards" the month of May, stole five or six fishing nets and broke Corrigan's fishing canoe. On 8 May, a verbal altercation occurred between a number of men of the two posts. Haldane, who was listening, afterwards told his men that Corrigan had called them cowards, and he encouraged them to defend their honour by seizing his furs. That night five men broke into Corrigan's post.²⁰ Corrigan narrates in his journal:

Last night a bout or near the hour of twelve, 5 men of Mr. Haldane, entered the House and Robbed it of furs to the amount of 482 MB Hudsons Bay Companys Standard, Self and Men ware in bed one of them Knocked at the Door____ When George Grot opened the Door, immediately they all rushed in and Seized 3 loaded Guns and one of the Villains Held a pistol too My Breast and told Me to make no resistance or he would shoot me, after having robbed the house of the furs they retired and left me and the men at liberty I immediately slipped on a pr of Trousers and went to Mr. Haldane House who was up and dressed at the time, to enquire the reason of the Outrage, when I received the following answer viz that he (Mr. Haldane) had come for furs and furs he would have if they should come from Hell.²¹

The stolen furs were hidden during the night and brought to Haldane's house before daybreak. Haldane congratulated his men and treated them with "a bottle of shrub and another

of Wines."²² Those who had committed the robbery divided the furs equally, and Haldane purchased them in the summer for brandy.²³ According to Leger, four or five days after this incident Haldane ordered Rustoule and Landrie (Nicholas Landry) two hours before daylight, to burn a canoe on a little scaffold near Corrival's storehouse, in order that the fire might spread to the roof of the storehouse, in which some gunpowder was stored. After the two men had departed, Haldane told his men to be ready to leave when the roof of the storehouse took fire. "He said that if the Storehouse took fire we should get rid of Mr. Corrivals people, or at all events they would possibly die of hunger having no other Canoe and no fishing Nets to support them." Two unsuccessful attempts were made to burn the canoe, although about a foot of its bow was damaged. The following morning, Corrival requested Haldane's help in repairing the canoe. Anxious to remove any suspicion, Haldane ordered his men to do as Corrival requested.²⁴

Two weeks after his post was pillaged, Corrival departed for Red Lake where he found his company's men in fear of being attacked by the Nor'Westers. He passed an anxious week at Red Lake in June, being outnumbered on his arrival 21 to 11. The Canadians were continually drunk. Haldane justified his behaviour by stating that Hudson's Bay Company employees in the past year had abused Canadians at Lake Seul and Bad Lake. By 10 June, there were over 50 Nor'Westers at Red Lake, and Corrival considered himself fortunate to leave the lake alive.²⁵

During that winter, a Mr. McDonald resided on Lake Seul for the Canadians. He had no opposition.²⁶

William Thomas, who had been stationed at Red Lake in 1804-05, left Osnaburgh in the summer of 1805 with 15 men, passed through Red Lake and continued toward Lake Winnipeg. He divided his men; some went to Lake Sanderson (Sandy Lake),

David Sanderson's wintering spot the previous year, while Thomas resided on Eagle Lake where James Slater had passed the summer. In the course of the winter, a number of Canadians visited Eagle Lake but did not construct a house.²⁷ In June, Eagle Lake House was abandoned.

In the Selkirk papers, there is a fragment of a journal for Eagle Lake, composed by an unknown Canadian author, probably in 1806. The extant part of the journal runs for only eight days; no month is mentioned, but it was probably August or September. The author reached the "Portage of Eagle Lake," most likely from Lac la Pluie, and crossed it in two hours. He then paddled "about 9 Leagues" the same day through the lake, and the following day he embarked "early & got to the Fort about three o'clock."²⁸

As the author, two days after his arrival, removed the covering of the roof and covered it again with hay,²⁹ it can be assumed that the post had previously been open, perhaps during the previous winter. The author was informed by an Indian, who had come to Eagle Lake from Lake Seul, that a "Mr. Siveright was to Winter near Lac la Glaise, about a days march from here." Hudson's Bay Company men wintered "near hand," but no location is mentioned.³⁰

After delivering his trade and receiving supplies from Fort William early in the summer of 1805, John Haldane, with the brothers Angus and Alexander McDonell, returned to the Nipigon region.³¹ Alexander McDonell went to Lake Saginaga (modern Lake Sasaginnigak), arriving in October. Five days later, he left with four or five men to Big Fall, called by the Canadians "the Rapid of Winnipeg," where John Crear resided for the Hudson's Bay Company. A day after reaching it, McDonell waited until his opponent's men had gone to their fishing place, and then ordered his men to follow him. Leger relates:

When we reached the House we found a Gentleman walking before the door whose English name I do not know but he was called by the Indians the Needle which we Canadians translated Laiguille and Mr. McDonell had a short conversation in English which I did not understand. After this Mr. McDonell broke open the door of the Store House and when Laiguille offered to oppose him McDonell struck him on the head with a large block of wood so severely that Laiguille fell to the ground streaming with blood and when he was down McDonell continued to kick him. One of Laiguille Servants (the only one who remained at the house) came out to assist him on which McDonell drew his Sword and gave him two Cuts on the face which stunned him and covered him with blood. McDonell then ordered his men to take away out of the Store House, three or four sacks of flour several barrels of Pork and of Salt beef and a quantity of Rice Tobacco and furs. Finding that his own Canoe was not sufficient to carry all these things, McDonell also took a Canoe belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company with he set out immediately and arrived the next morning at Saginaga. On the way he gave his men a treat of the provisions which had been taken.³²

Lord Selkirk gives a similar description of the incident. He says that Crear's man, William Plowman, was knocked down upon endeavouring to impede the entrance of the Canadians into the warehouse and was subsequently stabbed by McDonell. Few furs were found in the warehouse, the hunting season having not yet begun.³³

After this incident, McDonnell departed for Saginaga, and he remained there until about Christmas, when he reappeared. He stationed a few men in an "old house" at Big Fall, a short distance from Crear's post, with instructions to have no contacts with its men. McDonnell and McAulay subsequently visited Big Fall from Saginaga throughout the winter, as it was "only a short days walk in Winter."³⁴ No incidents occurred until McDonnell received instructions from Haldane to take by force all the furs Crear possessed. Leger declined to accompany McAulay and McDonnell, and for this he later was punished by McDonnell.³⁵ According to Selkirk, the Nor'Westers "attacked Crear's house, overpowered him, beat him and his men in the most brutal manner," and carried away many valuable furs. Before departing, the Canadians, by threatening Crear with additional beatings, extorted from him a written statement acknowledging that the furs had been given voluntarily.³⁶

Leger and three or four men, with McAulay as master, were left at Big Fall to keep the Indians under surveillance, and prevent them from trading with Crear. McAulay soon afterward stole a large amount of fish hanging beside Crear's house, and before he had left Big Fall, he had killed Crear's dogs and plundered his post again.³⁷ All the stolen furs were delivered to Fort William at the end of the spring.³⁸ The Hudson's Bay Company house at Red Lake was abandoned in 1806-07, and William Thomas instead resided at "the Poplar River." On Donald Sutherland's 1819 map, a Canadian house is shown in opposition to him near "Thunder Lake."

Though he obtained 1,700 MB, the furs were hunted by the Lake Sanderson (Sandy Lake) Indians. Thomas Swain of Severn was on Jack Lake. At the Indians request, Thomas, in 1807-08, promised to occupy "near the same spot" on Poplar River.

However, Hodgson, at Albany, desired that the chief at York should settle a permanent post there, permitting

Thomas to retire to his former house, and giving the company added strength in the area. Thomas did not return; instead Alexander Kennedy of York wintered on Dunton Lake³⁹ (modern Wrong Lake).

Albany received 24 new hands in the summer of 1807 which permitted Hodgson to maintain posts at "Wepinaban, Asp River, Lake le Bonney to the South of Winnipeg, Red River, and a post up the Pabana River, the southernmost branch of Red River." All were independent of Osnaburgh, Martin Fall and Henley.⁴⁰

In the summer of 1807, William Corrigan followed John Haldane to Wipenaban Lake, where the Hudson's Bay Company had not been since 1799. By the time of his arrival at the beginning of September, the Canadians had already completed their house. Corrigan does not mention its location. Beside it, Corrigan constructed a house "40 feet in Length and 20 Broad," divided into a warehouse and residence.⁴¹ Soon after its completion, Haldane came with all his men. Corrigan notes in his journal:

As soon as he came to this House he said he would cut our D___D Bloody heads of [sic] for a Parcel of Rascals, at the same time his men Demanded flour Pork and Brandy, but some time before I had given all my men Guns Powder and Shot. if it had not been fore our Guns they would have Plundered what they thought Propor - his men in all was 16 or 17. had we been only 7 or 8 they would have plundered us.⁴²

Throughout the winter, Haldane continually threatened to shoot any hunter who traded with the Englishmen. The Nor'Westers took furs by force from those who had taken debt from Corrigan, and in March robbed a Hudson's Bay Company man on his way to Red Lake.⁴³ In February, Corrigan and his men cut "port holes on the House," expecting every day to be attacked.⁴⁴

As a result of his violent methods, Haldane secured most of the hunts. When Corrival left in June, he was required to leave seven men to care for the goods which were left. He "could not get a less number than 7 men to stay, on account of their being so many Canadians about them." During the trading season, the Canadians maintained a house at Deer Falls.⁴⁵

Daniel Harmon, having become ill during his residence at Cumberland House in 1806-07, was in 1807 placed under the care of Doctor John McLaughlin, and both were sent to winter on Sturgeon Lake, also called by the Canadians Portage du Fort. They built their fort at the west end of the lake. In his journal, Harmon mentions that "several years since, eleven Canadians lost their lives for want of food" there. Harmon, however, experienced a comfortable winter, seeing fewer natives than he had previously in the west. The following summer he returned to the west.⁴⁶

William Thomas wintered, in 1807-08, at Sandy Narrows, where some men had passed the previous summer. There was no Canadian post, but Canadians did visit from time to time.⁴⁷

James Slater resided that winter at "Little Ripple" (location unknown) because the Indians refused to travel to his former house at Big Fall, which they considered to be too far from their hunting grounds.⁴⁸ At the end of September, Alexander Campbell, with ten men, constructed a house "about 10 yds" from Slater's and another blocking the path to it. In retaliation, Slater raised a house "on the other side of the point that has the outlook of the whole Lake."⁴⁹ The Canadians endeavoured to intimidate the natives but neither side could obtain more than a few furs. Campbell was lavish in his distribution of liquor, and the hunters did nothing but drink all winter. By the middle of winter, Campbell had squandered all his liquor, and consequently Duncan Cameron, in charge of this region,

replaced him with a Mr. McDonald.⁵⁰ By April, Slater had received only 200 MB and had expended most of his trading goods.⁵¹

Duncan Cameron was at Brandy Lake (modern name unknown) in opposition to an outpost under Alexander Kennedy from York Factory. Kennedy was on Dunton Lake (Wrong Lake), opposed by Canadians. Trade was not lucrative at Brandy Lake, but the post's maintenance was considered imperative, as it prevented Cameron from moving to Sandy Narrows in opposition to Thomas.⁵²

When Slater and his men moved from Big Fall to Little Ripple, Magnus Tait and William Johnston were sent by Thomas to replace them.⁵³ There was no Canadian opposition there, and Tait experienced a better trade than Slater,⁵⁴ probably the best trade of the four Hudson's Bay Company posts.

Only Sandy Narrows was retained the ensuing winter by Thomas, but his trade was disappointing.⁵⁵ It was even worse in 1809-10, when Donald Sanderson was master. The Indians were starving and the area by now had been denuded of fur-bearing animals.⁵⁶ In 1809-10, James Loutett and six men settled on Grey Goose Lake and James Slater returned to Big Fall.⁵⁷ Neither post had Canadian opposition; nevertheless both proved to be unproductive. Hudson's Bay Company servants did not return to the Sandy Narrows region for another ten years.

As the company decided that all the men recruited in the Orkneys in 1808 should be conveyed to Churchill for the Athabasca country,⁵⁸ it was not possible for Hodgson to augment his force in the Petit Nord. Indeed, there may have been fewer hands assigned to the Petit Nord than in the previous year, for there were nine men unfit for duty in September 1808.⁵⁹ No reinforcements were received in 1809-10, the winter the Canadian violence reached its height.

Haldane moved to Lake Seul in 1808-09, and a Mr. McDonald took his place at Wipenaban Lake.⁶⁰ Corrigan had 12 men. Although he was not as aggressive and violent as Haldane, McDonald continued the practice of intimidating the natives and there was at least one altercation between the men of the two companies. In February, the Canadians shot four of Corrigan's dogs.⁶¹ McDonald left for Lake Seul in June, leaving one man to tend his post. Corrigan returned to Martin Fall with 1,300 MB,⁶² but it is not certain whether he left anybody for the summer.

In the region to the north of Ball Lake, a "Mr. Cameron," probably Duncan Cameron, prevented supplies from reaching an unnamed outpost of Severn. During the autumn, Cameron threatened "to break open" the Hudson's Bay Company house at Mish a Mish Weesty, (modern name unknown) and seize all the furs, nearly 200 MB, but the timely arrival of Thomas Thomas, the master at Severn, frustrated his design.⁶³

At Lake Seul, where Angus McDonell was in charge for the summer, Haldane, in July 1809 "gave a Ball to his men." On distributing the liquor, he remarked to some of them that they were going to winter beside Corrigan at Eagle Lake under Angus McDonell, who had instructions "to reduce these Englishmen in an effectual manner so that no furs shall be sent down from their post." Leger and eight men accompanied McDonell. When he arrived at Eagle Lake, McDonell warned the Indians that he had come to "spill blood."

The following day, according to Leger, McDonell ordered his interpreter, Nicholas Landry, to force two Indians, who had landed at Corrigan's wharf, to trade with him. Landrie, however, could get only "a single Rat Skin."⁶⁴ Thereupon, McDonell and his assistant, Jacques Adhemar, went to Corrigan's house, but they returned empty handed. James Tate states in his journal that "Landries" hid in the bushes opposite to where the canoe landed; however, he does not mention McDonell's visit.⁶⁵ That night, Leger relates,

McDonnell told his men that he would arrest the two Indians, who were passing the night at Corrival's post, as an example to deter others from patronizing it.⁶⁶

The next morning, Corrival had three men carry the natives' canoe down to the wharf, and the Indians soon followed. Corrival was standing at the door of his house and spotted McDonnell and a man running toward his wharf. They went to one of the Indians, and demanded that he go to their house, but he declined and entered his canoe. When McDonnell attempted to drag the canoe to his wharf, Corrival hurried to the scene. Corrival states:

I desired him to give me my goods, and he might make of the Indians what he pleased, he gave me no answer to that. I then ordered James Tate and John Corrival to go and take the goods out of the Canoe, as Tate was going to layhold of goods, McDonnell taking his Sword from its Sheath Cut Tate in the neck a lettle from his throat, and in the Left arm he then cut John Corrival in the right arm till it notched the Bone a leetle a Bove the Elbow, at the same time one of his men came running with a Large Hatchet and give John Essen a Blow on his Left shoulder that dislocated the Joint, McDonall was running after some more of our men flourishing his sword, and Coming up Our Bank made a Stab at John Mowat By this time Mowat was got a pistol, and in his own Defence Shot McDonall on the spot. all this time was Mr. Eddymoar going Swaggering with a pair of pistols in his Hands, and at one time put one of them to John Corrivals Brest and Exclaiming you Damn Rascal I will Blow out your Brains at 10 AM. 3 Canadians set of for Lake Saul.⁶⁷

Eight days after this incident, Haldane, residing at Lake Seul, appeared at Eagle Lake with a large party of men and demanded Mowat's surrender; he threatened that if Mowat resisted, he would bring 50 men "and do as he thought proper."⁶⁸ Mowat immediately agreed to give himself up, but Haldane would not accept the surrender until the next day. In his conversation with Corrigan, Haldane vowed that he "would take furs" at his "very door" from either traders or Indians.⁶⁹ On 25 September, Archibald McLellan, while paddling past Corrigan's post on his way from Lac la Pluie with reinforcements, shot at Corrigan and some of his men as they were standing beside their gates, but no one was injured.⁷⁰

According to Leger, Haldane desired that the surrender should be delayed until he had gathered the natives "in order (as he said) that they might witness the power of the North West Company, and the way in which they treated such sort of people."⁷¹ Corrigan states that he brought John Mowat to Haldane's tent; however, he does not indicate whether any Indians were present. Mowat was placed in irons, and left for Lac la Pluie on 26 September with two other Hudson's Bay Company men, James Tate and Robert Liske, who were to serve as witnesses.⁷²

Haldane departed for Lake Seul on 26 September, leaving McLellan at Eagle Lake to prevent any one from trading with Corrigan. McLellan and a number of armed men, on 28 October, pillaged two Indian canoes laden with furs and meat and threatened to shoot them if they entered Corrigan's post.⁷³ The Canadians again threatened a number of hunters in November.⁷⁴ During the winter, the Indians, who dared not bring their furs to the Hudson's Bay Company house, hid them in the woods where Corrigan hoped to have them picked up in the spring. Nor did Corrigan's men attempt to visit the hunters' tents.⁷⁵ Those who did trade with McLellan were often maltreated by him.

In May, Corrigan was requested by McLellan to serve as a witness in Montreal in lieu of Robert Liske.⁷⁶ McLellan threatened to take him by force if he did not go voluntarily.⁷⁷ He left with the Canadians on 18 May,⁷⁸ and proceeded to Lac la Pluie, joining there Mowat, Tate and Liske. The latter two had been employed during the winter by the Canadians, and Mowat had been kept in irons most of the daylight hours to demonstrate the power of the North West Company.⁷⁹ At the end of May, Tate, Mowat and Corrigan departed for Montreal⁸⁰ and arrived in September.

During the ensuing six months, depositions were taken from the witnesses. In March 1811, Corrigan requested Eneas Shaw, the justice of the peace for the Indian district, to issue a warrant for Leger's arrest. However, Shaw, a member of the North West Company, had been forewarned and he had already spirited Leger out of Montreal.⁸¹ A deposition was also made by Corrigan against Jacques Adhemar for aiding and abetting McDonell in seizing the Indian's canoe; and Tate made another deposition against Adhemar for aiding and abetting McDonell in his attack upon him.⁸²

Mowat, who had been confined to a jail since his arrival in Montreal, was found guilty of manslaughter in March 1811. Judge Reid sentenced him to six months' imprisonment and a branding on the left thumb.⁸³ Adhemar was pronounced not guilty by a grand jury in September 1811. Corrigan and Tate returned to England in the summer of 1812.

Leger, who had been sent early in 1811 to Mr. McTavish, the North West Company representative at Albany, New York, did not come to trial.⁸⁴ In the spring, Leger proceeded from Albany to Niagara. He reappeared in Montreal in the autumn of 1811, but was again spirited away by Thomas Thain. During the next six years, he was obliged to conceal himself and as he had no regular income, he sold his farm in the parish of New Longueuil.⁸⁵ He returned to Montreal in 1817, but again was sent away.

While in London, William Corrigan was examined by the London Committee and judged to be unfit as an inland trader. The Committee wrote to Thomas Vincent at Albany that if a routine job for him could not be found, he should be obliged to retire from the service.⁸⁶

In 1809-10, the Canadians had a post at Serpent Lake (perhaps Lower Manitoa Lake). Charles McKenzie, its master, described it as a "small post in the center between L.L. Pluie, and Lac Seule, a most ruined Country, as well as its neighbourhood."⁸⁷ Its returns were poor. There was also a house at Minnitaki Lake, where the trade was worse.

Martin Fall District

The Canadians did not settle in the Martin Fall region until the autumn of 1804, when an unspecified number of them constructed a house at Cockenogamy Lake (Kagianagami Lake), two days' walk in the Lake Nipigon track.⁸⁸ Nor'Westers were present at Cockenogamy Lake more or less regularly between 1804-05 and 1807-08.

In August 1808, Magnus Mowat and six men left Martin Fall to found an outpost at Trout Lake,⁸⁹ but they did not proceed beyond Cockenogamy Lake where the Canadians still resided.⁹⁰ Mowat does not say where his opponent's house was situated; nor does he indicate whether he built beside it. On 9 February 1809, some Canadians armed with pistols, knives and "every thing fit for execution," tried to break into his post; they got nothing from the house, though they did steal two nets that night. They subsequently told Mowat that a few days before they had received reinforcements from Lake Nipigon; these men had brought instructions to plunder Mowat or die doing it.⁹¹

Mowat requested Jacob Corrigan at Martin Fall for permission to evacuate his post. Corrigan replied that as there was no possibility for the moment of conveying both

the men and the goods back to Martin Fall, he was "under the disagreeable necessity" of ordering him to defend himself and his employer's property. The men, Corrigan advised, should keep their guns loaded and make small port holes on the sides and ends of the house; if the Canadians attacked again, they should be met by gunfire immediately as they entered the house. Mowat was also instructed to demand the return of his nets, and if the Canadians refused, he should respond by cutting theirs "in peices [sic] so as to render them useless." The Canadian master was informed by Corrigan of these orders.⁹²

On receiving Corrigan's instructions, Mowat went to the Canadian house and demanded the return of his nets. When the master, whose name is not stated, gave a negative reply, Mowat withdrew. He made no attempt to cut the Canadian nets, but wrote to Corrigan that he was waiting for a favourable opportunity.⁹³ Corrigan castigated him for not retaliating immediately after the refusal, especially since he and his men outnumbered the Nor'Westers six to four, and he ordered Mowat to retaliate if they again tried to rob him.⁹⁴

No further incidents occurred. Mowat's men seem to have been confined to their post during most of the spring, guarding themselves against a possible attack,⁹⁵ and as a result the Canadians acquired most of the furs. The Hudson's Bay Company withdrew from Cockenogamy Lake in the spring of 1809, leaving the Canadians unopposed. The latter were there in 1810-11,⁹⁶ and probably resided there continuously between 1811 and 1818-19, when they are again mentioned in a report.⁹⁷ Because of a scarcity of country provisions in the region southeast of Martin Fall in 1819-20, they suffered severely⁹⁸ and may have evacuated their post in the spring and resided at Lake Nipigon. There is no indication whether they reoccupied it the following year.

There was an outpost from Martin Fall in 1808-09 at Black Bear Lake. It was abandoned at the end of the spring.⁹⁹

A year after forcing the Martin Fall men to evacuate Cockenogamy Lake, the Canadians settled at Eabamet Lake, the hunting grounds of most of the Martin Fall Indians. They debted many of them and sharply reduced the flow of trade from that direction.¹⁰⁰ Jacob Corrigan, at Martin Fall, did not have sufficient men to place in opposition until September 1810, when Thomas Boar was dispatched with four men. At the beginning of October, Boar arrived at "By Lake" (probably Eabamet Lake) and "found the Canadians in a creek between this Lake [By Lake] and another large one that leith to the NE."¹⁰¹ Most likely, Boar settled on the end of By Lake near the creek.

From the first, Boar dispaired that a substantial number of furs could be obtained. He wrote, one week after his arrival, that the hunters were "afraid of the Canadians for they threatn them so that they are afrid to shew their face at our house."¹⁰² Those who did approach were stopped by the Nor'Westers, and Boar protested in vain to their master.¹⁰³ As there was no prospect of trade and only 1,000 fish were caught in the autumn, Boar sent three of his men back to Martin Fall in December.¹⁰⁴

The following autumn, Alexander Collie removed all the property left at Eabamet Lake to Gloucester Lake, where he was instructed to winter.¹⁰⁵ But his inability to procure provisions at Gloucester Lake necessitated his withdrawal in December. The Canadians were again at Eabamet Lake, and Corrigan desired that Collie should reoccupy his post there. But on leaving Gloucester Lake, he was caught in the ice,¹⁰⁶ and was forced to make his way back to Martin Fall.

A number of men led by Collie again settled on Gloucester Lake in March in order to fish.¹⁰⁷ At the end

of July, Corrigan supervised the construction of a new house "40 feet long and 22 feet wide" there.¹⁰⁸ After its completion, Corrigan returned to Martin Fall, packed up all his goods and brought most of them to Gloucester, leaving some in the woods about Martin Fall as it was too late to make another trip.¹⁰⁹ Martin Fall was closed until 1818-19.

Lake Severn District to 1814

As has been noted, the Red Lake-Lake Seul region was detached from the Nipigon Department in 1805-06. That winter Duncan Cameron went toward Severn, and apparently settled on Trout Lake (Big Trout Lake), drawing many of the Indians who annually journeyed to Severn.¹¹⁰ The London Committee in 1806 increased Severn's complement of men to permit the establishment of an inland outpost in the region between Albany and York.¹¹¹ In July 1807, James Swain and a party of men voyaged inland, to locate and settle near the Canadians. Swain notes while passing through Trout Lake in June 1807, "proceeded through the Lake about 5 miles and rowed down into a fine Sandy Bay on the south Main, landed and perceived the Remains of a Canadian Settlement which they left two years ago."¹¹²

These Canadians had been at their post not long before Swain's arrival, and had promised the Indians that they would be present during the winter. Swain toured the lake for a site for a settlement, but found the shoreline covered with only "small scrubby wood" and having few suitable locations. Finally, he selected a site near the Canadian house, and used wood which had been washed up in the lake. The house's dimensions were 40 feet by 22, and it had a thatched roof.¹¹³

When the Canadians returned in October, they constructed a new house about 20 miles up the lake on the south side. Having already debted most of the hunters, Swain did not move, but he sent a few men to oppose them. Three weeks later they returned with "an hundred frivolous excuses."¹¹⁴

Swain found the trade more expensive than he had anticipated because Cameron, hearing that men were coming inland from Severn, had "dealt with the Natives in a very extravagant way" the year before. In addition, Swain's men were inexperienced and relatively few in number compared with their opponents in this region. While Swain concluded that he must distribute his men in small parties and form different settlements wherever there was "a Family or two of Natives to be found," he did not have any men to spare and no outposts were established.

At the beginning of December, Swain went up the lake to spy on the Canadians. His presence was discovered, and he was invited by the master, a Canadian, to pass the night at his house. He accepted the invitation and was received "with all that politeness which is so peculiar" to Canadians. The Canadians departed in May from their settlement. More than a month later, Swain left for Severn with a trade of 1,500 MB.¹¹⁵

The London Committee, in the spring of 1808, requested another outpost from Severn, which would give Albany, burdened with the task of maintaining posts west of Lake Winnipeg, the opportunity to abandon its newly established post on Lake Sanderson.¹¹⁶ An outpost from Big Trout Lake was established at Beaver House Lake either in the autumn of 1808 or the spring of 1809. No one resided there during the autumn of 1809, and when he visited it in January 1810, James Swain discovered that some Indians had burned every movable piece of wood in it, although they had not damaged the structure of the house. On his departure, Swain seems

to have left behind a Mr. Monkman and two men. They spent much time during the winter travelling through the area in the post's vicinity.¹¹⁷ In April, Monkman had one man and, at the end of May, he departed with about 300 MB. There were no Canadian posts on either Big Trout Lake or Beaver House Lake; however, there was one on Severn Lake.¹¹⁸

Although the London Committee could send him no additional men in 1809, James Swain that summer fitted out a party under the command of Thomas Swain to found another inland outpost. While James Swain suggested Sandy Lake as a possible site, he left the final decision to Thomas Swain.¹¹⁹ The latter departed in August with four men, passed through Sandy Lake and two other lakes, and at the end of the month stopped at an "old House," which he was informed had been constructed by David Saunders (David Sanderson) about 11 years before. It was undoubtedly on Sandy Narrows. The Canadians had a settlement "within three miles" of it.¹²⁰ Swain either resided in the old house or built a new one close to it.¹²¹ There is no further information on Swain's house or his activities. He mentions that the Canadians had a settlement at May Max quay Shoo Lake, to the south of him.¹²² Swain's post on Sandy Narrows was probably not open the ensuing winter.

James Swain, in his report for Severn district in 1818, writes,

On my forming a settlement in Trout Lake in the year 1807 we opposed the Canadians, and they relinquished their Post. In the following year we formed an outpost at Beaver House Lake where we established our superiority, and they also gave this place up. In the Year 1809 they settled a Trading House at Severn Lake and which was deserted by them the year following, and after a lapse of two years, they settled

again within twenty miles of Trout Lake House but being no more successful than they had been before, they have never since intruded themselves into our parts of the interior.¹²³

Big Trout Lake post was situated three miles from the entrance of Big Trout Lake "upon a point of land on the South Shore." Only half a mile from it were the remains of a settlement erected by the Canadians in 1803.¹²⁴

A Mr. Tod and five men were sent in 1814 from Big Trout Lake to settle on Paint Lake. On their way, the guide deserted, and another native was engaged, who took them into the "Paint Lake quarter," though not to Paint Lake. As the lake was reputed to be good for fishing, Tod decided upon residing there. He says that he was "about a days walk from Beaver House." He dates his letters "Paint Lake,"¹²⁵ and may have been on Wunnummin Lake.

The fishing was not as good as first thought, and the men suffered from a shortage of provisions. Many hunters did not know of Tod's presence and others traded with the Canadians, who had three posts in the Big Trout Lake-Paint Lake region. Few furs were received, and Adam Snodie, the merchant at Big Trout Lake, considered the post a failure and abandoned it.¹²⁶

The Region Between Osnaburgh and Lake Winnipeg, 1810-1821

In the summer of 1810, "above 50" of the men's contracts at Albany expired¹²⁷ and perhaps as many as 40 chose to go back to the Orkneys rather than face the Canadians for another contract period.¹²⁸ Few if any recruits were received to replace them.

The Hudson's Bay Company withdrew for at least a year from the region immediately east of Lake Winnipeg. Osnaburgh was placed under the command of William Thomas, who was

instructed to be on his guard against the Canadians, but to be on as friendly terms as possible with them.¹²⁹ The closest Canadian post in 1809-10 was at Eabamet Lake, which attracted only a few of Thomas's hunters;¹³⁰ however, the Nor'Westers at Sturgeon Lake got much of his southern trade.¹³¹ In addition, Osnaburgh lost some trade to the Hudson's Bay Company outpost from Severn at Big Trout Lake.¹³²

After the incident at Eagle Lake, the men at Osnaburgh were reluctant to go inland without an increase in wages.¹³³ Thomas had intended to establish two outposts, but he was able to get only six volunteers, sufficient for one post at Moose Lake. Beioley (probably Joseph Beioley), its master, had a poor trade "owing to the Canadians being so numerous in that Quarter who terrify the Indians to that degree that they are almost afraid to give us a skin."¹³⁴ Beoiley's location on Moose Lake is not mentioned.

Having no opposition from Hudson's Bay Company in the region east of Lake Winnipeg, the Nor'Westers concentrated a large force at Lake Seul in 1810-11. During most of the autumn of 1810, Haldane and 11 men were in Osnaburgh Lake, and at no time in the course of the winter was the lake free of Canadians, although there is no indication that they constructed a post.¹³⁵ The Indians to the northwest brought most of their furs to the "Severn people,"¹³⁶ probably at Big Trout Lake.

Haldane resided at Lake Seul during the winters of 1810-11 and 1811-12.¹³⁷ Charles McKenzie was his assistant during the latter winter, when there was much starvation among the Indians.¹³⁸ The Canadians also had a post in 1811-12 at Bad Lake.¹³⁹

There were no incidents between the Canadians at Lake Seul and their opponents at Osnaburgh, and there is no mention of their visiting in the Osnaburgh Lake. However,

Haldane seems to have continued his practice of intimidating the Indians west of Osnaburgh.¹⁴⁰

In 1811-12, George Budge was the master at the outpost at Moose Lake, and faced formidable opposition from a Canadian house located at the end of Sturgeon Lake, not more than a day's journey away.¹⁴¹ The Canadians appeared at Moose Lake in November, but did not remain.¹⁴² The natives, being in a starving condition, did little hunting, and Budge lost many of his debts.¹⁴³ In 1812-13, he experienced the same problem for the same reason. By March, he had received only 40 MB.¹⁴⁴ Moose Lake outpost was not retained in 1813-14, because Thomas considered the Sturgeon Lake-Moose Lake region to be "nearly exhausted."¹⁴⁵

The Indians in the Osnaburgh-Lake Seul region, like those at Moose Lake, suffered from starvation those two winters and trade declined. The Osnaburgh-Lake Seul area was also rapidly becoming exhausted, and in the period between 1813 and the union of the two companies, the inhabitants were either starving or stricken by disease, especially measles. There were no outposts in the immediate vicinity of Osnaburgh in either 1813-14 or 1814-15, the number of men at Osnaburgh having again been reduced.¹⁴⁶ The Canadians, under the command of a Mr. McPhall, were at Crow Nest Lake, in the latter winter, and made 12 packs of furs and leather.¹⁴⁷

An outpost from Osnaburgh was established at Sandy Narrows by James Slater probably as early as the winter of 1811-12. There is no direct reference to Sandy Narrows in the Osnaburgh journal of 1811-12, but Slater's Indians are said to have gone to the Canadians at Bad Lake.¹⁴⁸ Slater's and Albany's posts to the west of Lake Winnipeg were ordered by the London Committee, in the spring of 1811, to be transferred to the newly created East Winnipeg district under the charge of William Hillier.¹⁴⁹ The region east of

Lake Winnipeg to "the height of Land at Osnaburgh" was also ceded. All the Canadians in Albany's employ were transferred,¹⁵⁰ leaving Albany with a small complement of men. The territory which it retained by this time was exhausted as a result of many years of exploitation. The Committee directed that Albany's energy should be directed toward Lake Superior and the Pic to draw off men from Hillier's opponents on Winnipeg River.¹⁵¹

Despite these regulations, Slater was again at Sandy Narrows in 1812-13, for William Thomas says in his Osnaburgh journal in the spring of 1813: "James Slatter & 4 men in a Big Canoe with 16 Packs of Furrs arrived from Sandy Narrows."¹⁵² Slater probably returned in 1813-14.¹⁵³ He definitely wintered there in 1814-15, for Davis writes in his Osnaburgh journal for 1 July 1815: "Mr. James Slater, David Sanderson, Andrew Robertson and James Corrigan arrived from Sandy Narrows in a large canoe with 18 Packs of furs and Leather."¹⁵⁴ Because Sandy Narrows House was 18 days' journey from Osnaburgh, the master at Osnaburgh recommended, in 1813-14, that it should be transferred to the Northern Department, which was done in 1815,¹⁵⁵ but it was not reoccupied in the winter of 1815-16.

From the Osnaburgh journal of 1812-13, we learn that the Canadians had a post that year at the end of Sturgeon Lake closest to Osnaburgh¹⁵⁶ and another "at the back of Gloucester," which had an excellent trade.¹⁵⁷ Lake Seul was open, though probably not under Haldane, who is no longer referred to in the Osnaburgh journals. In a letter written from Minnitaki Lake in June 1813, Charles McKenzie does not mention Haldane's name, and states that McAulay had been transferred to Red River Department. Thomas Thomas says that Albany's inland activities induced a Mr. "Halden" to remove from Lake Seul to the Pic in 1812-13.¹⁵⁸

McKenzie passed part of the summer of 1813 at Fort William, and left in charge of two canoes. When he arrived at Lake Nipigon, a Mr. Dorion took the canoes and "went towards Martins Falls with them." McKenzie resided the winter at Minnitaki Lake with a Mr. Luths, who was probably his superior.¹⁵⁹ He probably remained for the summer, for he writes: "I am likewise to pass the Summer here, tho' it is scarcely worth while, having made, with upwards of 30 Indians, but 170 lb. Beaver - & 15 Packs in all - we were put more to our wits end this last winter than usual for provisions our Autumn & winters fisheries having failed."¹⁶⁰

In the summer of 1815, McKenzie was made master of the Lake Seul district, and William Harris, who had been the previous winter in the Hudson's Bay Company's service, was his assistant.¹⁶¹ McKenzie resided at Lake Seul in 1815-16, making 15 packs of furs.¹⁶²

The East Winnipeg department, beset by discipline problems and the troubles at Red River,¹⁶³ failed to extend its presence into Albany's former territory west of Osnaburgh. The superintendent of the Southern Department, Thomas Thomas, in 1813 recommended to William Auld, his counterpart in the Northern Department, that Albany should be permitted to found an outpost at Red Lake to "divert the attention" of the Canadians from Osnaburgh. This suggestion was not acted upon immediately, but the inroads made by the Canadians into Gloucester's trade in 1813-14 made it indispensable.¹⁶⁴ As the plans for a factory on the Winnipeg River were abandoned in favour of one at the more northerly location of Playgreen Lake (Norway House),¹⁶⁵ it was agreed that Osnaburgh district, formed in 1814 as part of Albany Inland district, should be permitted to extend its authority as far west as Ball Lake.

James Slater left Osnaburgh with four men, in August 1815, to winter at "Escabitchewan" (Ball Lake), and he was

subsequently reinforced.¹⁶⁶ Slater found the Ball Lake region exhausted and had a poor trade.¹⁶⁷

Another settlement was founded by Edward Mowat at Red Lake, which by 1815 also had been overhunted. Nor'Westers, under William Harris, were sent from Lake Seul to oppose Mowat.¹⁶⁸ In response, John Davis, at Osnaburgh, stationed William McKay in "the Marsh" to protect the debts given at Osnaburgh to those hunting in that region, and obtain "a few skins" from the Lake Seul Indians.¹⁶⁹ At the Marsh, the Indians were starving and did little hunting.¹⁷⁰ McKay and his three men caught few fish, and by March they had expended all their provisions. At the end of April, no longer able to endure "such extreme hunger," they returned to Osnaburgh, but did not have the strength to carry their furs with them.¹⁷¹ Despite these hardships, Davis considered the outpost a success, because many of the furs procured would have gone to Lake Seul.¹⁷²

In 1816, the Red Lake district was created, and Slater was appointed its master. He selected Red Lake as his headquarters, and retained Escabitchewan as an outpost. In his journal for 1816-17, the first journal for Red Lake, he does not give his location. At the end of September 1816, eight Canadians led by William Harris settled "not the distance of 8 yds" from his warehouse.¹⁷³ The Nor'Westers, being numerically superior, were constantly on the move during the winter; however, their toil was attended with little success. Slater notes in his journal for 1 March, "Mr. Harris is my neighbour with five men and a Clerk, and as there is but little to be made at this place we have passed the Winter without much disputes."¹⁷⁴ Each post obtained nine packs of furs.¹⁷⁵

Edward Mowat was placed in charge of the outpost at Escabitchewan by Slater, and was instructed that if the Canadians settled beside him and were belligerent, he should

immediately repair to Red Lake, where a united stand could be made.¹⁷⁶ The Canadians were not at Ball Lake this winter, but despite his freedom from competition, Mowat made only 12 packs of furs.¹⁷⁷

Slater wrote in his report for 1816-17: "The two posts Red Lake and Scarbechewan were separate from Osnaburgh and made a separate District. The Houses are merely temporary residences hastily put together for a winter dwelling as people were not left there in summer there was no Gardens."¹⁷⁸

The exhaustion of the region between Osnaburgh and Lake Winnipeg necessitated the exploitation of less hunted areas to the north. According to James Swain's 1815 report for Severn, an extensive tract of land between Merry's House, a Canadian post, and Osnaburgh had rarely been visited by Hudson's Bay Company men and the "whole produce" of the region was "carried away" by the Canadians.¹⁷⁹

In the summer of 1814, an outpost from Albany was founded at Attawapiscat Lake by George Budge. His men were inexperienced; only one understood the Indian language of the region, but could not speak it fluently.¹⁸⁰ Seven Canadians in two canoes appeared at the end of August and settled beside Budge.¹⁸¹ The latter dealt harshly with those who were inclined to trade with his opponents. Once, when he was alone at his house, he threatened an Indian with a cutlass.¹⁸²

Only two Canadians were at Attawapiscat Lake in September, and they were engaged in putting up stockades to screen their house from view.¹⁸³ At the beginning of November, William Thomas, Budge's successor, erected a watch house "as close as possible to the Canadian House."¹⁸⁴ It was manned by two men in November.

Throughout the autumn, there were only a few Canadians at Attawapiscat Lake, and Thomas received no information upon the location of the others. He and Budge kept a sharp lookout at their house, not permitting any of the residents

"to stir without sending someone with them."¹⁸⁵ Finally, in January, Thomas learned that some of the other Canadians were five days' journey to the northward, where they had been taken by Severn natives.¹⁸⁶

Budge, a man and a guide immediately went in search, and found them residing "in a large Lake on the head of Weenesheew River" (Winisk Lake), about 70 miles to the north of Attawapiscat Lake. On his return to Attawapiscat Lake, Budge was given seven men and extensive provisions to oppose them. The day after his departure, 17 January, Thomas' opponent, Mr. McKenzie, reinforced his outpost, commanded by Mr. Dorion, who had two men; three days later, another man departed, leaving only two Canadians with McKenzie.¹⁸⁷ A few other Canadians resided in a "small Log house" about 30 miles to the westward of Attawapiscat Lake, directly in the track of the Indians.¹⁸⁸

Finding that both houses at Attawapiscat Lake together had only a handful of men, some Cranes Indians, who came in February to trade, became insolent and troublesome, demanding everything they desired. Thomas could not pacify them, and they destroyed and threw about everything in his house, and loudly complained about the ill-treatment which they alleged they had received the previous year at Martin Fall. They then went to the Canadian house

and behaved in a most riotous manner breaking open their shop demanding and destroying what they pleased, when Mr. McKenzie sent over to beg of me to come and try to passify them, which I endeavoured to do to no purpose, for they did just as they pleased, and went between both houses all day with their Knives never out of their hands, making use of the most diabolical language, and trying to aggravate us in every shape possible, frequently attempting to stab us,

& killed 3 of our dogs before our eyes, saying they would think no more of killing white men than they did dogs. the Canadian man received a severe stab in his breast and my hands was cut in many places, endeavouring to take their knives from them, towards evening they broke open my warehouse, and it was with the utmost hazard of my life I could keep them from taking and destroying every thing they saw. all this we were obliged to submit to or have massacred every one of them which might have been effected, but I wish if possible to avoid such a measure thinking still to set them off.

The Cranes passed the night about one-quarter of a mile away, and reappeared the following afternoon. They cut Thomas' hat to pieces, tore the coat off his back, and broke open his trunk and destroyed everything in it. Then they went to the Canadian house, where they committed similar acts. Thomas received a severe stab wound in the hand while trying to defend a Canadian. The Indians left the following day, after being given large quantities of ammunition and rum.¹⁸⁹

Thomas had at least one man stationed in the watch house throughout the year, and the Canadians were followed.¹⁹⁰ He departed at the beginning of June with 21 bundles of furs from his two posts.¹⁹¹ The trade of the Canadians is not mentioned.

When he was dispatched to "Weeneshe Lake" (Winisk Lake), Budge was instructed by Thomas to settle as close as possible to the Canadians so that no one could visit them without his knowledge.¹⁹² Budge took these instructions literally. He found that Dorion had built his post on an island, the "store and fish-house parallel with N.W. Corner of his own [house], leaving a small passage betwixt for his own convenience with

about two Cords of wood opposite his Store house, making a square with the front open towards the Lake."¹⁹³ Budge decided that he would build where the cord wood was placed. Despite Dorion's protests, he settled so close to Dorion "as to leave no aperture between his and the Canadian house." The Canadian continually requested him to leave enough room for a passage, but he always refused.¹⁹⁴

At the end of January, the Canadians began "to build their Cordwood in a Triangular direction beginning at the corner of the two house and terminating at the front of their own." Budge did not raise any objections while the work was in progress; but subsequently, finding that he had to make a circle when he emerged from his house, he informed Dorion that he would remove the wood and use it himself. When Budge tried to do this, a scuffle between the men at the two posts ensued, in which a number of blows were struck with bludgeons. Budge's men emerged victorious, and removed a large quantity of wood to their house.¹⁹⁵ No further incidents occurred during the winter, as the Canadians acknowledged Budge's superiority. Both masters returned together to Attawapiscat Lake in the first week of June.¹⁹⁶ The extent of their trade is not mentioned.

In 1814-15, Canadians resided "in or near Waynuska Lake", according to the reports of some natives. This post obtained the hunts of a number of hunters who annually voyaged to Severn.¹⁹⁷

The two posts in Red Lake district, Red Lake and Ball Lake, were reoccupied in 1817-18. James Slater was opposed by seven Canadians at Red Lake, where despite a declining trade, competition was still animated. One less pack of fur was received by Slater than in the previous year.¹⁹⁸ Mowat passed both summer and winter at Ball Lake, and was also opposed, but the location of the Canadian house and its master are not stated in Slater's journal, nor are any

details of the competition.¹⁹⁹ We do learn that some Canadians resided at Slave Fall (on Winnipeg River, in the province of Manitoba), three days' walk from Wipenaban Lake, and cut off Mowat's trade from that region.²⁰⁰

Slater removed his headquarters, in 1818-19, to Ball Lake and Mowat resided at Red Lake.²⁰¹ The Canadians were not at Ball Lake that winter; however, many of the lake's hunters traded with their house at Bad Lake.²⁰² Mr. Calder was left in charge of Ball Lake for the summer, and Slater returned to Albany with little to show for his efforts. The Canadians were also at Lake Seul.

A new house, "In Length 18 feet and the same in breath,"²⁰³ was constructed but Slater in September 1819 for the men at Ball Lake, the old one having "gone to Ruins."²⁰⁴ Outposts were maintained at both Red Lake and Big Lake (Sand Lake). Edward Mowat, with five men, was at Big Lake, but his trade was severely injured by the Canadian and Hudson's Bay Company posts at Lac la Pluie and Portage de Lisle.²⁰⁵ There were no Canadians on Big Lake, although there were two houses, one for each company, within two days' walk (probably the ones at Portage de Lisle). Mowat obtained 678 MB.²⁰⁶

The Nor'Westers were again at Bad Lake, this time opposed by an outpost from York under James Robertson, who had five men. Both posts seem to have done poorly,²⁰⁷ as did the Canadian one on Lake Seul, whose master, William Harris, having three men,²⁰⁸ could not make four packs. At Whitefish Lake, about 90 miles southeast of Ball Lake, William Clouston passed the winter, opposed by Canadians, and there was another Hudson's Bay Company post 60 miles south of Ball Lake.²⁰⁹

The Lake Seul-Red Lake region suffered from an outbreak of measles during the winter of 1819-20. Thomas Saunders, also called Thomas Sanderson, one of Marcus Calder's four men at Red Lake, died, as did several of the best hunting

Indians, and consequently little hunting was done.²¹⁰

Charles McKenzie was still master of Lake Seul district for the North West Company in 1818-19,²¹¹ and continued in this capacity until the union of the two companies. He resided at Lake Seul post, which served as a supply base for the settlements inland, and was maintained throughout the year.²¹² About 30 Indians were attached to it in 1818-19,²¹³ but the number was reduced by disease the following winter.

When Slater returned to Ball Lake at the beginning of September 1820, he discovered that the Nor'Westers, having arrived 12 days before, had debted many of the hunters and had purchased most of the wild rice harvested. Mr. Morrison, the Canadian master, had a clerk, five men and a 15-year-old boy.²¹⁴ He constructed a house which was covered with "Earth;"²¹⁵ its location is not stated in Slater's journal, but it seems to have been close to Slater. The Canadians were supplied from Lake Seul.

Although the competition was not too intense at Ball Lake - few Indians visited the lake - Slater ran short of merchandise, and could not adequately supply his outposts at Big Lake and Eagle Lake.²¹⁶ Despite this and his late arrival, he did get two-thirds of the Ball Lake trade.²¹⁷ In the spring, the Canadians cleared a piece of ground to plant potatoes, and left a clerk and two men for the summer. Slater left Mowat and two men.²¹⁸

Before Slater's arrival at Ball Lake in 1820, William Harris, with five men, settled on Red Lake and debted most of its Indians and those in its vicinity.²¹⁹ Instead of sending Calder back to Red Lake, where he could accomplish little, Slater positioned him at Eagle Lake in order to prevent its hunters from going to the Canadians at Ball Lake.²²⁰ Calder unopposed by Canadians succeeded in debting all the Indians of Eagle Lake. By the end of May, he had expended all his merchandise and could not give debts for the spring hunt. He obtained six packs of furs, about

700 MB.²²¹ The Nor'Westers at Red Lake made eight packs.²²²

Mowat, accompanied by four men, arrived at Big Lake too late to debt most of the Indians. Many had traded at Poratge de Lisle.²²³ As the Canadian master at Portage de Lisle the previous year had been shot and killed by a native, Mowat and his men passed an uneasy winter. Mowat's fears were heightened by a shortage of trading goods; he thought that if additional supplies were not received, he would be killed in the spring, for the inhabitants of the region were accustomed to receiving what they demanded.²²⁴ There were no incidents with the Indians during the spring, though Mowat does say that the shortage of goods had "created much trouble" with them and had "spoiled them for the year to com."²²⁵

Ball Lake was closed in the autumn of 1821, after the union of the two companies. It was again open in 1823-24 under Nicol Finlayson. As there is no mention of house-building, it is probable that either the Hudson's Bay Company or North West Company house was reoccupied.²²⁶ After this winter, it was closed, and no post was subsequently maintained there.

In the latter part of 1812, a post was established by the Hudson's Bay Company on the Pigeon River, four miles above its mouth, but country provisions being scarce, it was abandoned in the spring. It was relocated at the mouth of Berens River, and was occupied by "Traders from Jack River." The buildings were "all of a temporary nature." It was maintained for only one winter.²²⁷

In 1814-15, the Canadians had two posts of a "temporary nature," one situated on "a lake not too distant from the Sandy Narrows & another at the Jack Head in Lake Winnipeg." Trade was not as rewarding for the Nor'Westers as it had been at the turn of the century; only one canoe of merchandise per

- 11 Taken from Long Lake Journal, 1816-17. (Hudson's Bay Company, B.177/a/2/70.5b.)

annum was brought into this region, as opposed to three or four previously.²²⁸

Donald Sutherland, in the summer of 1816, founded an outpost, which he named "Great Rapid Berens River" post, from Norway House. It was, according to his 1819 map of Berens River district, near Big Fall on Lower Lake (Family Lake),²²⁹ and consisted of one building surrounded by pickets.²³⁰ At the end of September 1818, some Nor'Westers built "a small house to put there goods in about 600 yds" from Sutherland's pickets.²³¹ Sutherland, in response, constructed a "little house" 12 feet square above them to watch their activities and conduct a fishery at the falls.²³² Soon afterward, the Nor'Westers erected a house below the fall beside Sutherland's house.²³³

Competition was spirited and the Canadians ranged as far as Jack Head. There was at least one altercation in which the Nor'Westers were given "a good drubbing."²³⁴ Robert Sutherland and a man tended the house for the summer, after Sutherland had left with 12 packs of furs.²³⁵ It is not certain whether the Canadians did as well.

The Canadians did not reoccupy their house the succeeding autumn, nor were they in the Berens River region. Two outposts from Berens River (Big Fall) were founded by Sutherland in the late summer of 1819, one on Bad Lake, where the Nor'Westers had wintered the previous year,²³⁶ and the other on Sandy Point Lake (Barton Lake). A considerable number of the inhabitants of both lakes died of disease, and as a result little hunting was done. The post at Bad Lake, established by James Robertson with four men, lost "the amount of the Servants wages,"²³⁷ and Robert Sutherland, with three men at Sandy Point Lake, had a "very poor" trade.²³⁸ Sutherland fared better, as there was no illness in his area. The three posts returned 21 packs of furs.²³⁹

The outpost at Sandy Point Lake was retained during the winter of 1820-21, and many of the furs obtained by Robert Sutherland were trapped by his own men.²⁴⁰ James Robertson was sent with four men by Donald Sutherland to Jack Head, where the Canadians resided this winter, but he stopped at the lower end of Berens River.²⁴¹ Robertson contended that he did not have sufficient men and provisions to settle at Jack Head, and if he did go there, the Berens River Indians would follow him and probably trade with the more numerous and better supplied Canadians.²⁴² Robertson's post injured Sutherland's trade.

At the end of January, a party from Sandy Bar House, led by a Mr. Holmes, apparently built a house near the Nor'Westers at Jack Head.²⁴³ The Canadians were unopposed during the winter at Iron Island.²⁴⁴

Great Rapid Berens River House was in operation in 1820-21, as was the post on the lower part of Berens River, which that winter was manned by men from Sandy Bar House. Both the post on Berens River and the Canadian one at Jack Head, which was unopposed that year, injured Sutherland's trade,²⁴⁵ and Sutherland and the master of Sandy Bar House exchanged heated letters on this matter.²⁴⁶ Sandy Point Lake was Sutherland's only outpost. Despite the competition he experienced, he returned to Norway House with 28 packs of furs from Great Rapid Berens River, Sandy Point Lake and Berens River.²⁴⁷ After the union of the companies, Great Rapid Berens River and the two outposts were closed.

Osnaburgh, 1816-1821

Throughout Osnaburgh's pre-1821 history, its relations with its hunters were on the whole cordial. There was only one recorded incident. In the summer of 1816, a number of Cranes Indians demanded additional rum and when John Davis

refused, they assaulted his post. Two Indians broke through the stockades and were wounded by gunfire.²⁴⁸ After this attack, Davis had two sides of the stockades "taken down and reset in a smaller compass by which means the place is strengthened and more easily defended two log houses are erected with loop holes and are placed at opposite angles on the stockades so as to sweep round the whole place."²⁴⁹

There were no outposts from Osnaburgh in 1816-17. The Canadians, after an absence of two winters, had a house under Mr. Davis at Sturgeon Lake, drawing away some of Osnaburgh's southern trade.²⁵⁰ It was open at least until the winter of 1819-20.²⁵¹

A small outpost from Osnaburgh was founded at Crow Nest Lake, in the autumn of 1817, by George Atkinson Jr., with four men and a boy.²⁵² Atkinson reached the lake some days before the Canadians, and finding that the old house in which the latter had resided in 1814-15 was unoccupied, he burned it to the ground. Davis reproached him for this and for his lack of tact in his dealings with the Indians.²⁵³ A party of Nor'Westers, commanded by a clerk named McFould, settled "alongside" Atkinson.²⁵⁴ The trade was conducted fairly, and McFould received eight packs of furs,²⁵⁵ and Atkinson six.²⁵⁶ The following year, Atkinson, having seven men and a boy, was unopposed,²⁵⁷ but experienced a poor trade²⁵⁸ and did not return in 1819-20.

Charles McKenzie, in 1819-20, had four posts in his district besides Lake Seul. Only two can be identified, Cat Lake, where three men wintered,²⁵⁹ and Big Lake.²⁶⁰ Cat Lake was retained in 1820-21.²⁶¹

William McKay, at Osnaburgh, had no outposts in 1819-20, but he established two in August 1820. At the request of the Crow Nest Lake Indians, William Nourse and four men and a boy who served as an interpreter resided on their lake.²⁶² In February, George Atkinson Jr. replaced Nourse as master.²⁶³

The returns were disappointing, only five bundles of furs being obtained.²⁶⁴

George Atkinson Jr. had originally gone in the summer of 1820 with three men to Moose Lake.²⁶⁵ Soon after his arrival, three Canadians settled beside him, and throughout the winter encouraged his men to desert. A Mr. Christie replaced Atkinson in February.²⁶⁶ By the beginning of March, Christie and his men were starving, and they were forced to leave at the end of April with only 258 MB.²⁶⁷ The Canadians were also at Little Sturgeon Lake.²⁶⁸

As Osnaburgh was situated on a part of the lake which was wanting in wood for firewood and grass for the cattle, McKay on the advice of Robert Sanderson, began to construct new buildings, in the spring of 1821,²⁶⁹ at the narrows of Osnaburgh Lake, about seven miles from the post. After visiting the new site in June McKay wrote,

The Houses at present finished consist of a log built dwelling & Warehouse another Dwelling house of the men is building and I propose to add to these a third Dwelling House for the Clerks resident at the post a House for the reception of the Fish intended for winter use and another for the Cattle.²⁷⁰

The new establishment was occupied for about a year. James Slater, McKay's successor, thought that it was "badly situated," and he returned, in August 1822, to the old post after making a few minor repairs.²⁷¹

After the union of the two companies, the two outposts were not reoccupied. Instead, James Nourse seems to have wintered on Cat Lake in 1821-22,²⁷² and the following year, Edward Mowat returned with six men.²⁷³ The natives, suffering from starvation, did not hunt in 1822-23²⁷⁴ and so few furs were procured that Cat Lake was abandoned.

Lake Severn District, 1814-1821

In the winter of 1818-19, some Indians in the upper part of the Winisk River recommended to John Work, at Severn, that a house should be established in their territory.²⁷⁵ Work departed, in May 1819, on a voyage of exploration to determine whether the Winisk River was navigable. He passed through King Fisher Lake and Vermillon Lake (probably the modern Wunnummin Lake), and came into the latter lake "a little below where Mr. Tods House was four years ago." He continued in nearly a southeasterly direction all day, and at about sundown, he reached the lower end of the lake where "many rivers" flowed into it. "Mr. Tods House was at the upper end of the lake, and consequently not the best place for getting fish."²⁷⁶ A few days later, he went through Wapicapa Lake (Wapikopa Lake), and finally travelled northward along Winisk River until it emptied into the sea.²⁷⁷

Donald Gun, who is described as "an active young man" conversant with the Indian language of the interior and having a little knowledge of the trade, in August 1819 left Severn for the interior with a party of seven men. He had an "excellent supply of goods" and more than adequate provisions,²⁷⁸ and after an unexpectedly difficult passage, founded Badger River House²⁷⁹ on Wapikopa Lake. After constructing his post, Gun neglected to store fish for the winter, and by January he and his men were short of provisions. Their late arrival in the autumn induced many Indians to take their debts at other establishments, including an outpost from Albany at Cotowabisco Lake (Attawapiscat Lake). This outpost had been abandoned three years before and reoccupied that year.²⁸⁰ The Canadians had posts at Achego Lake (Sachigo Lake), Deer Lake and Sandy Lake.²⁸¹ Achego Lake was five days' walk to the westward of Big Trout Lake, and Deer Lake was the same distance

southwest of Big Trout Lake House and west of Badger River House.

When Work visited Badger River House in February, he found that the men were so short of provisions that he was required to transfer three of them to Big Trout Lake House, where country supplies were plentiful.²⁸² Before Gun could depart for Severn in June, the woods near Badger River House caught fire and all the houses, including one which had recently been completed, were burned. However, all the furs and merchandise were saved.²⁸³ Gun and two men passed the summer at Wapikopa Lake, restoring the houses and obtaining provisions for the winter from the natives. Eleven packs of furs were received in 1819-20, but some of the furs came from hunters who hitherto had patronized Severn and Big Trout Lake.²⁸⁴

The ensuing winter, Mr. McDonald, the master of Big Trout Lake, was transferred to Badger River, and Mr. Ermatinger replaced him.²⁸⁵ Country provisions at Badger River House were again scarce, though more furs were received than in the previous winter.²⁸⁶ Badger River House was abandoned after the coalition of 1821.

Martin Fall District to 1821

After Martin Fall was closed, the new post on Gloucester Lake served as a supply base and trading post. In 1818-19 it was abandoned and Martin Fall was reoccupied. Because of the series of rapids and falls on the Albany River, only six to eight packs of supplies could be conveyed from Albany to Gloucester, hampering the competition against the Canadians inland. With the re-establishment of Martin Fall, the Hudson's Bay Company began to employ larger boats carrying 10 to 12 packs per man.²⁸⁷

At the end of June 1818, men under the command of John Davis repaired the buildings at Martin Fall and set up new palisades.²⁸⁸ In February 1819, construction was begun upon "a house 22 feet by 20 to be divided in the middle for the purpose of doing the business of Red Lake and Osnaburgh Districts."²⁸⁹

There were no outposts from Martin Fall in 1818-19, but the following August, William Christie and four men left for Attawapiscat Lake.²⁹⁰ A Mr. Smith was master there in 1820-21.²⁹¹ There was no opposition at Attawapiscat Lake in either winter; the Nor'Westers had left the lake some time after 1814-15.²⁹²

The Canadians, in 1819-20, were at Little Sturgeon Lake (Young Sturgeon Lake), "to the Southward of Maminescar."²⁹³ For the Hudson's Bay Company, a Mr. Atkinson and four men resided at Moon Lake.

The Region Between Henley and the Pic River to 1821

Alexander Henry the Elder does not mention a post at the mouth of the Pic River when he passed in 1775.²⁹⁴ The North West Company maintained an establishment there some time after 1784. In 1799, it was in charge of a Mr. St. Germain, who was succeeded by Jean-Baptiste Perrault. The latter resided there until the end of the 1801-02 season, serving as "Clerk in Charge of the Two departments, to wit: -la riviere noir and la riviere blanche." The Rivière Blanche department included the region extending up the Pic River to the headwaters of the Albany River. During his last year at the Pic, he was opposed by a Mr. Chevalier of the XY Company. In addition to the Pic, Alexander McKenzie of the XY had a post inland up Pic River. Perrault wrote that McKenzie's men were inexperienced and "collected only 15 packs from that River, and the northwest got 45."²⁹⁵

While at the Pic, Perrault constructed a "fort" on an island in Lac de Wabichkiwāga²⁹⁶ (Lake Wapiscuacow, modern McKay Lake). Perrault on a voyage inland in 1808, passed an unoccupied fort built by J.-B. Bouvier, a little to the southward in the lake. J.-B. Bouvier was employed by the North West Company after 1804 on English River and in Saskatchewan, so the fort was in existence before this date.²⁹⁷

In 1802-03, the North West Company post at Pic River was manned by three men and was unopposed. The winter was particularly severe, and an Indian who had previously rendered valuable service to it sent two of his daughters to beg assistance, which was refused. Reduced to starvation, the family waited for an opportunity to take provisions by force. While one man was away, the members of the family surprised the other two, killing one and wounding the other who succeeded in escaping. The third man was then killed, and the Indians removed all the provisions at the establishment.²⁹⁸

The following year, a new establishment was made near the former site; its master was "a clerk who was much too young and unexperienced [sic] for such a charge," and permitted himself to be directed by one of his subordinates, Mr. Comptois. A Mr. Roussin settled for the XY Company near this post. During the course of the winter, the man who had committed the murders came with his son-in-law to trade. After consulting together, Comptois and Roussin resolved that the young man as well as his father-in-law should die, although he had not been involved in the crime and in the past had saved Comptois' life. Both Indians were "butchered." On his arrival at Grand Portage in the spring, Comptois was placed in irons and dispatched to Detroit, where he was jailed. However, he was soon liberated and never came to trial.²⁹⁹

We learn from the North West Company documents published by W.S. Wallace that in 1807-08 three clerks, Henry Munro, William Harris and Philo Lewis, were assigned to Pic department. In 1808-09, Mr. C. Chaboillez was master, followed by Alexander Mackenzie and in 1810-11 Pierre Rocheblave.³⁰⁰

In the summer of 1810, Mr. Otis, a merchant of Michilimackinac, settled at Rivière de la Tête and dispatched Jean-Baptiste Perrault with two men and a small outfit to winter up the Pic River. When Perrault passed Pic River post, he was warned by Rocheblave that he would not tolerate any interlopers. Nevertheless, Perrault started up the river, followed closely by one of Rocheblave's clerks, Mr. Morrison. Perrault constructed a log house "on the right shore opposite the Bay of Wabissipinikan [the northern end of McKay Lake] where the fishing was good at all seasons," and Morrison and four men erected "a small house 15 feet square" near him.

Morrison placed his fishing nets on both sides of Perrault's, making it impossible for him to catch any fish. When Perrault went hunting, Morrison sent his men ahead to beat the bushes and scare the game away. The Nor'Westers, who went about armed, always accompanied Perrault and his men and prevented their contact with the Indians. By Christmas, Perrault had only some wild rice left.

In February, Perrault requested Rocheblave to sell him some provisions. Rocheblave agreed to do so only if he abandoned his house and gave him his trading goods as a pledge for payment. Perrault and his men passed the remainder of the winter at the Pic, and Rocheblave, by charging Perrault an exorbitant price for his maintenance and purchasing his goods at the price current at Michilimackinac, succeeded in acquiring all his merchandise.³⁰¹ Rocheblave remained at the Pic until he was

succeeded by John Haldane in 1812-13.³⁰²

After the incident at Eagle Lake in 1809-10, the attention of John Hodgson at Albany turned to the region immediately north of Lake Nipigon which hitherto had been neglected by Albany's masters. John Davis was given ten men, and instructed to settle at "Lake Wepiscuacow or somewhere thereabout." He possessed the title "Master of the South River District." Provisions and articles of trade were wanting at Albany, and Hodgson could not outfit the expedition as well as he desired.³⁰³ Davis departed from Henley at the beginning of August 1810, and after a "tedious and toilsome" journey of 25 days, stopped at Minaquagamyshish Lake (Fernow Lake), four days' voyage from Lake Wepiscuacow where six Canadians were residing that winter.³⁰⁴

While proceeding on his journey, Davis had resolved upon settling on Mininguagamy Lake (Pine Lake), and informed the Indians of his intention. However, as he learned that Mininguagagamyshish, also called Little Pine Lake, laid more in the track of the beaver hunters, he selected it. He calculated that he was far enough distant from the Nor'Westers to be relatively free from strong competition. On 26 August he constructed a tent "half way up the Lake." The first week was employed in building a "small house to lodge the goods in" and making nets. The construction proceeded slowly, as the men spent most of their time trying to catch fish.³⁰⁵ In the middle of October, the carrying place to the "two Lakes" was cleared, and a "stage to hang fish on" was erected.³⁰⁶

Provisions were so scarce that in December three men were sent to Albany and two to Henley. The Canadians had two houses, besides

Wepiscuacow Lake, "a short distance" from Little Pine

Lake.³⁰⁷ One may have been on Cross Lake (Klotz Lake) in charge of a Mr. Vermett; the other cannot be identified.

According to an Indian's report, a "new company" was in opposition to the Nor'Westers

at Wapiscuacow Lake and was underselling them.³⁰⁸

There was no contact between the Canadian and the Hudson's Bay Company men that winter. Despite the fact that many of the Indians were starving and could not hunt, Davis left Little Pine Lake with 38 bundles of furs.³⁰⁹

In May, Jean-Baptiste Perrault arrived at Davis's house, and was welcomed by Davis, as two of his Canadian men had previously given a good account of him.³¹⁰ Davis promised him employment. Perrault was presented to Thomas Vincent at Albany, and was offered £40 for his services as an "interpreting clerk."³¹¹ He engaged himself for one year.

Davis arrived at Henley on 17 July with Perrault and 11 men, and left Mr. Stewart and three men there for the winter.³¹² Davis' destination was Manitoonamago Lake, but because of the shallow water he did not go beyond Keche-Mininquagamy Lake (also called Lac des Epinettes and Pine Lake, the modern Chipman Lake), which he reached in the middle of August. A "small house to lodge the Goods in" was immediately constructed, followed by a master's dwelling house and a mens' dwelling house.³¹³ Davis does not give his location on the lake.

The Canadians, during the summer, had removed from Wapiscuacow Lake to Keenogooomeg (Kenogamisis Lake?), "a short days journey" from Davis. In the latter part of September, two Canadian traders, Morrison and McBean, visited Davis.³¹⁴ They requested the return of two Canadians whom they claimed were deserters. Davis asserted that they were not with him, and if they were he would not surrender them unless the Canadians could show warrants for their arrest. He gave this answer to illustrate that he could not be bullied; the two traders had spread a report among the Indians that they would take his men prisoners and would shoot him when he left his house.³¹⁵

During their stay, McBean and Morrison unsuccessfully

tried to seduce Perrault from Davis's service; Davis was obliged to offer him an additional £10 in wages to ensure his loyalty.³¹⁶

Two days after this visit, Davis and a man surveyed the road to the Canadian settlement.³¹⁷ Davis intended to settle beside this house, but adequate supplies did not arrive from Albany before the water froze.

At a strait "between the entrance to Grand Lac des Epinettes [Pine Lake] and lac du Coude," Perrault built "quite a large house, for it is the custom of the Messrs to build commodiously." It served both as a fishing station and fur-trading post where Perrault gave debts to some Indians with whom he previously had been acquainted. They were requested not to come to Davis' house; rather they were to put their furs "en cache," because the Canadians were roaming throughout the region.³¹⁸

Before leaving Davis's post, McBean had promised that he would return to Pine Lake in opposition. He reappeared on All Saints Day with two canoes, one large and one small, and marked out a site on "the other side of the building our men had put up for their Firewood." It was, according to Perrault, three arpents distant from the Hudson's Bay Company post.³¹⁹ McBean had at least five men with him during the winter.

Two weeks later, McBean, "quite unexpectedly and without any provocation," kicked and beat Davis in the woods. Davis struggled free, ran to his house and loaded his pistols. He then went to the Canadian house and challenged McBean to a duel, which the latter declined. Thereupon, he warned McBean that he would always go about armed, and would shoot him if given "just cause."³²⁰ There were no other quarrels the remainder of the winter, though both sides followed each other closely. McBean endeavoured to persuade Davis's men, especially the Canadians who were dissatisfied with their lot, to desert.³²¹

Throughout the winter, Davis suffered from lack of provisions, while his opponent was adequately supplied from Keenoogomeg.³²² Two Canadians resided at Manitoonarmago Lake (Burrows Lake and Manitoonamaig Lake) and were visited in February by Perrault.³²³ This house and the one at Keenoogomeg intercepted a number of the hunters going to Davis's post. Between January and June, Davis stationed men for varying periods of time at a number of lakes in his vicinity, including Lake Mininguagamy-shish,³²⁴ Elbow Lake (Ogahalla Lake) and Flint Lake³²⁵ (modern Flint Lake), in order to trade and fish. At one time in May, he had only an "old useless Canadian" with him at his post.³²⁶

The winter was unusually long and severe, and some of the Indians were required to eat their furs. Davis did not collect many of his debts. Henley and Davis's posts together returned 10 packs of furs.³²⁷ McBean left Kecheminguagamy Lake at the end of June with only two "small" packs,³²⁸ having five men with him when he departed.³²⁹

The Hudson's Bay Company had a post at the Lake Washcobar (Kassagimini Lake?) well before the spring of 1813 when John Davis journeyed there from Henley. There is no information in the Henley journals when it was first established, though Davis does indicate in the journal of his voyage that he had been there a number of years before. He says that on his first voyage, he found the Canadians in occupation of a Hudson's Bay Company house built some time before. While surveying the lake, he discovered a small canoe which he thought had been discarded by the Indians. The Canadian master, who is not identified, claimed it as his own. Thereupon an argument ensued, and the Canadian seized a gun from Davis's canoe.³³⁰ Davis succeeded in wresting it away, and obtained possession of the small canoe. It is possible that Davis subsequently wintered for some

years at Lake Washcobar, perhaps until he was placed in charge of Henley in 1812.

Both companies had establishments on Flint Lake during the winter of 1812-13, though it is not known whether either of them had been there previously. In 1812-13, Joseph Vermett with two men, John Hubbard and Joseph Garney, opposed Charles Swain, who had the year before deserted to the North West Company, and two men. As the Hudson's Bay Company post was better supplied, Swain encouraged Vermett and his men to desert. Vermett and Hubbard yielded to Swain's enticements but Garney remained loyal.³³¹

Strangely, Swain journeyed to Albany, in January 1813, with a number of men who brought intelligence about these desertions. He was detained at Albany and was examined by Thomas Vincent and promised £28 per annum until he could be put forward as a witness against the North West Company. Garney subsequently accused Swain of stealing merchandise from the Hudson's Bay Company's warehouse.³³² It is not known whether these charges were proven and what course was taken by the company in the Flint Lake episode.

As he was alone at Flint Lake, Garney hid his merchandise and furs. Davis visited the lake at the end of March and wrote in his journal,

Found the Canadians had left the place in appearance some time since, we found our House locked, which I forced and enter'd but found nothing in it but two broken guns and other such useless and trifling articles, which we carefully removed to their Shell of a House, we then went in search of our Goods hid under the snow and found the mice and damaged some of the Blankets and Cloth, the rest was undamaged, though very deficient in quantity.³³³

After making an inventory of the goods and furs, Davis departed for Lake Washkobar, leaving Donald McPherson and Samuel Henderson to spend the remainder of the spring at Flint Lake. The Canadians, who probably had been searching for Indians, returned and "took up there abode peaceably in their own Shell of a House." Fear of the Canadians kept the natives "far out of the way."³³⁴

The Canadians also had settlements, in 1812-13, at Keenoogomeg and Manitoonarmago. McBean, described by Davis as the "principal clerk for the North West Company, in these parts," resided at Keenoogomeg.³³⁵

Donald McPherson, of the Hudson's Bay Company, and six men wintered, in 1813-14, at Manitoonarmago Lake. They found inadequate country provisions and obtained seven packs of furs while their Canadian opponents received only three.³³⁶ In his journal, Davis noted in the autumn, "the Canadians are opposing Mr. McPherson strongly at Manitoonarmago and Keenomeg."³³⁷ It is not clear whether Davis meant that the Canadians were competing from these posts or that the Hudson's Bay Company had settlements on both lakes.

McPherson, William Harris and six men, in July 1814, departed from Henley for Wapiscuacow Lake and Long Lake,³³⁸ where Canadians had passed the previous winter.³³⁹ Harris settled at Wapiscuacow Lake and McPherson at Long Lake. In the course of the winter, two of McPherson's men deserted. McPherson and his men suffered from want of provisions, but his trade was at least equal to his opponent's.³⁴⁰ Neither Harris nor the Canadians at Wapiscuacow Lake was visited by many Indians.³⁴¹ Tate, who succeeded Davis at Henley, desired that McPherson should re-open the post at Flint Lake,³⁴² which apparently had been closed at the end of the previous winter. McPherson, however, could not spare any men.

By 1815-16, Henley had been reduced to a mere supply

depot for the inland posts, and there were only two Indians hunting for it. At the end of 1816, the better hunter of the two died.³⁴³ James Tate left William Scarth, with one man and a boy, at Henley in 1816-17 to guard the supplies deposited there in case of emergency.³⁴⁴ Supplies were again deposited at Henley by Tate in the summer of 1818, but no one was left.³⁴⁵ In the course of the winter of 1818-19, Henley was burned to the ground by an Indian.³⁴⁶ A few months later, Governor Thomas Vincent instructed John Davis, at Martin Fall, to re-establish it on a small scale.³⁴⁷

John Train wrote upon passing through Henley in August 1819, found only the barn and warehouse standing, the latter in a very ruinous state I examined the cellar, but so much earth had fallen into it, that I could not discover any of the remains of the Indian women & children, the dwelling house is burnt to the ground.³⁴⁸

Tate wrote in his 1819-20 report, Henley is now only a packet post the ground is uncultivated no one having resided there for the last two years - there are no buildings of any description now standing having been burnt down by the Indians. Two men have been sent there to build a small house for the convenience of the packets. A good many furs might be procured in this Quarter but there are no Indians to hunt them.³⁴⁹

McPherson returned to Long Lake in 1815-16, and was again plagued by desertions. By the latter part of September, he had only three "dependable men."³⁵⁰ Taking advantage of their numerical superiority and their opponents' low morale, nine Canadians forcibly entered McPherson's house and began "abusing" him and his men. Having only three men present with him, McPherson thought it prudent not "to come

to an engagement with them;" he was apprehensive that they were looking for a pretext to plunder him.³⁵¹ The following morning, after all his men had returned, McPherson "challenged all the Canadians for the insult." The Canadian master, Mr. Nelson, replied that he would defer the encounter to a later date.³⁵²

There were no further incidents during the winter months, but Nelson continued encouraging McPherson's men to desert. At the end of December, another man did go over, and several times all the men threatened to desert together.³⁵³ One Canadian was engaged by McPherson; however, it is not certain whether he was one of Nelson's men. Finally in March, the Canadian master promised that he would not accept any more of McPherson's men.³⁵⁴

Before McPherson could leave Long Lake, Nelson, on the evening of 5 June, appeared with five men at his house and presented a warrant for his arrest. McPherson "defended" himself, but having only one man with him, he was soon taken and placed in handcuffs.³⁵⁵ He was conveyed to Montreal the next day. Before leaving, he entrusted his 13 packs of furs to William Clouston, the only one of his men whom he trusted.³⁵⁶

There are few details in McPherson's journal relating to his establishment, and he does not give its location on the lake. It is possible to glean the following facts about it: there was a house covered with grass, built the previous year, which now served as a men's house,³⁵⁷ and a new house, also covered with grass, was added in September 1815.³⁵⁸

Two outposts were established that winter by McPherson, one at Lesser Lake, (also called Little Long Lac and Keenogumyshish, the modern Kenogamisis Lake), and the other at Cat Lake. On 17 December, Jacob Daniel, who had previously attempted to desert, was dispatched with Edward McKay

to Lesser Long Lake "after two Canadians" who had gone there the day before.³⁵⁹ They wintered beside the Canadians. In the course of the winter, McKay deserted.³⁶⁰ Various men resided there but none could be trusted for an extended period. McPherson wrote, on 25 May, that Daniel had given his opponents "all the information that possible he could in regard of the manner in which I conducted the Trade, he even went so far as to wash their shirts and cut wood for their fires."³⁶¹

Early in the autumn, Robert Dudley settled beside the Canadians at Cat Lake. Dudley did a better trade than his rivals, and Nelson continually sent Hudson's Bay Company deserters to encourage him to follow their example,³⁶² but he did not yield. He made three packs of furs.³⁶³ The outpost at Wapiscuacow Lake was not re-occupied that winter.

When James Tate, McPherson's replacement, arrived in September 1816 at Long Lake post, which he indicates was not more than two hours' paddling into the lake, he saw but the "bare walls" standing; everything else had been "destroyed or carried away" by the Canadians, he thought, who had returned in the latter part of July.³⁶⁴ In October, a Nor'Wester, in return for a "chicken shirt," informed him where some of the stolen goods were hidden, and they were recovered.³⁶⁵ The two houses were repaired and a "shop & a hangard" were added.³⁶⁶

The new Canadian master, Solomon Mittleberger, was disinclined to quarrel with Tate, though he did compete actively. Tate got the better of the trade by having his men secretly visit the hunters' tents.³⁶⁷ This does not reflect too highly on the ability of Mittleberger, who had eight men, while Tate had only five.³⁶⁸ Tate, unlike his predecessor, kept his men well in check and there were no desertions. He wrote in his journal in March,

Although I had no written instructions for prohibiting intercourse between the servants of the Company and their opponents, experience pointed out to me the consequences arising from permitting [sic] such Intercourse these two years past, as such I put an early stop to it, and the present there is not a man under my direction who will even speak to a Canadian, without my permission, every person appears to be perfectly satisfied with their situation, it's true business leads me to have frequent interviews with my neighbour, but I'll pledge myself that it shall never prove in anywise detrimental to promoting the interest of my employers.³⁶⁹

Both companies had outposts at Big Lake (Fleming Lake), but at no time did more than two men reside at either. Robert Dudley, the founder of the Hudson's Bay Company's post, was recalled at the end of January, because Tate had "cause to doubt" his conduct, and was replaced by William Clouston.³⁷⁰ The Canadians made only two small bundles;³⁷¹ the extent of Clouston's trade is not stated. None of the outposts at Cat Lake and Lesser Long Lake was open.

On a journey of exploration in the spring of 1817, James Tate says for 27 May,

course NE 1 1/2 miles through a river to what is called the head of Manitamego Lake, NE B N, 10 miles, a river 1 1/2 miles long to a larger body of the aforesaid Lake...N B E 5 miles, the Lake about 1-3/4 miles broad E B N 3 miles to T. Boar's House N E B N 1/2 mile to Morrison's House where we incamped...³⁷²

He notes for 17 April:

1 1/2 miles to Lake of the Islands 5 miles to Little Pine Lake - river the Lake 1 1/2 miles distant laying South & North Mr. Davis's House on a point on the East side of the Lake, about 2 miles from the front of it.³⁷³

The Canadians, bested in the trade in 1816-17, had ten men stationed at Long Lake the succeeding year, all of whom were "capable of doing business at Indians tents" and of speaking the "Indian tongue."³⁷⁴ Mittleberger was so lavish in his expenditure that Tate observed that in his career as an inland fur trader he had never seen such extravagance. In addition, the Nor'Westers did not hold the Indians accountable for previous debts.³⁷⁵

Tate, on the other hand, that winter had no person except Jacob Daniel who could do "business at Indian tents." In order to be competitive, Tate was forced to give extensive debts, for which he later was sorry.³⁷⁶ Neither house did an extensive trade, the region in the vicinity of Long Lake by 1817-18 being almost exhausted. The intense competition led to a number of incidents, and in the spring the two masters exchanged letters accusing each other of dishonest practices.³⁷⁷

Both companies re-occupied their outposts at Big Lake. Tate had not intended to retain his that winter, but did so because the Canadians established a "permanent" post there.³⁷⁸ There was one incident. According to Tate, Nicol Finlayson, in charge of the outpost, "was knocked down four times" by a Mr. Payette and robbed while collecting a debt in December from a hunter at a neighbouring lake (Lake Mechy Paughgagan).³⁷⁹ Subsequently, Mittleberger accused Mr. Taylor, Finlayson's assistant, of trying to kill Payette.³⁸⁰ Despite the efforts of both houses, few furs were received, because Big Lake by this winter also had few fur-bearing animals.

Tate, in 1818-19, was not given any additional men who could converse in the language of the region, and was again at a disadvantage. Mittleberger had "in all 13 of them on this quarter, all old good hands save one who only came from Montreal last summer."³⁸¹ He had wisely returned at the beginning of August, and had debted most of the Indians before Tate's arrival in the middle of September. Mittleberger again gave exhorbitant prices, prompting Tate to remark, "the profuse manner in which they deal with the Inds. has in a great measure aleniated [sic] their [the Indians'] minds from us - as we have neither or can afford goods to copy with them."³⁸²

An outpost was established by William Taylor, who had with him one man and a son of Jacob Daniel to act as an interpreter, at Raw Bone Lake (Esnagami Lake).³⁸³ It was intended to intercept the hunters coming from the Martin Fall region, and "either to punish them, or send them back" to Martin Fall.³⁸⁴ Nevertheless, Taylor was unable to apprehend any of them.

When he stopped at Henley house in August 1818 on his journey to Long Lake, Tate sent Finlayson and three men to Flint Lake. Finlayson was instructed to "observe the strictest secrecy in the establishing of this post," and if he saw any "strange Indians," he was to bribe then not to divulge his location to the Canadians.³⁸⁵ Having taken an out of the way route to hide his movements, he reached his destination late in September. He then was required to spend much of his time fishing, and as a result could construct only "one dwelling House and warehouse."³⁸⁶ In order to keep his presence a secret, he paid high prices for his furs.³⁸⁷ In February Tate, who was sick, recalled him to manage Long Lake post and replaced him with William Taylor.³⁸⁸ At least one man returned with Finlayson. Taylor now had only two men: one man was engaged in collecting

debts and the other, who was sick and incapable of working, was at the house. Taylor requested an additional hand to help him around the post,³⁸⁹ but none was sent. The trade was poorer than had been expected.

Having outposts at both Raw Bone Lake and Flint Lake, Tate did not have sufficient men to oppose the three Canadians residing at Big Lake until March, when Finlayson and two men were sent. It is probable that a new establishment was founded, for Tate remarks that the men had orders "to make an outpost there."³⁹⁰ Finlayson was left at Long Lake for the summer, and seems to have spent most of his time looking for Indians at a distance from the lake.³⁹¹

The London Committee had written to Thomas Vincent as early as May 1817 that Tate was unfit for the command of his district.³⁹² However, he was not replaced until 1819-20. John Train, his successor, arrived well after Mittleberger, who had already debted most of those usually hunting for him.³⁹³ There were no disputes, and neither house had a good trade.

Train remarks about his post when he arrived in September: "Our men's house is in bad state, the side being nearly down, but can only prop it up, for the present, as I want my men off to their different wintering Grounds."³⁹⁴ He says in his report for 1819-20:

Long Lake is the principal post in this District - the house is in a very ruinous state and will require a great deal of repairs this fall, particularly the men's house the front of which will have to be taken down. There is no ground in cultivation as no one can live here in the summer in consequence of no fish being to be got at the time from the Lake, and in the

absence of the Men in search of a livelihood, in all probability the Indians would not be worth while to plant anything but potatoes as the Garden which is cleared round the house is of a very small extent.³⁹⁵

The outpost on Flint Lake was retained only because an Indian family, which had taken a large debt at Long Lake, indicated that it would hunt there. Finlayson and three men resided there. It was not open the following autumn.³⁹⁶

Raw Bone Lake outpost was reoccupied, in 1819-20, by William Taylor and two men.³⁹⁷ While there were few Indians, they were all good hunters, and Taylor, having no Canadian opposition, expected to obtain all their hunts. Tate calculated that if it were closed, its trade would go to the Canadians at Big Lake and Winter Lake, who were unopposed at both places.³⁹⁸ Train says of Raw Bone Lake Post: "the house is in a very good state but there is no land cultivated."³⁹⁹

During the summer, John Berdie, who apparently was alone, built "a very good small house" at Long Lake post.⁴⁰⁰ The Canadians again arrived well before Train.⁴⁰¹ The winter passed without incident. On his way back to Henley, Train died.⁴⁰²

William Taylor, with two men, again wintered on Raw Bone Lake in 1820-21.⁴⁰³ A new post was founded by Finlayson and two men at Pyacketchewan (Pagwachuan) Lake. To prevent the Canadians from trailing him, Finlayson left Long Lake at night.⁴⁰⁴ He reported in December that he had no prospects for trade, most of the region's inhabitants having fled to the Pic and Lake Nipigon because of the murders which had been committed among them the previous summer.⁴⁰⁵

After the union of the two companies, both posts at Long Lake and their various outposts were closed. There is a break in the Long Lake journals between 1821 and 1828,

when a post at Long Lake was already in operation.⁴⁰⁶

Lord Selkirk's mercenaries camped at Point Meuron when they captured Fort William in the summer of 1816. After Fort William's return to the North West Company in the winter of 1816-17, the Hudson's Bay Company founded a post at Point Meuron, a little up-river. In 1817-18, its master was Mr. Geasson. It served as both a trading post and a provisions depot for those voyaging to Lac la Pluie and Red River.⁴⁰⁷ Mr. McDonnell, in 1820-21 succeeded Geasson, who was dismissed from the service.⁴⁰⁸ McDonnell wrote in 1820-21 that the North West Company's establishment at Fort William received the "whole" of the region's trade, and he did not have the "least prospect of getting any share of it." He had no men and had inadequate goods and provisions to compete with Fort William.⁴⁰⁹

McDonnell gives the following description of his establishment.

The buildings (situated on the South side of the narrow isthmus of a large point about a league round formed by the winding of the river, on the north side, & about 3 leagues from Fort William) consist of a dwelling house 30 feet x 14 divided into two rooms and a Kitchen, well glazed floored and lofted, with a small cellar in one end. - A Store 50 x 21 covered with Cedar Bark, well floored and lofted, with a Shop in one end. - The Shell or frame of a large house, two stories high, raised, 40 feet by 24. - A Canoe house 40 x 20. - A Blacksmith's shop and four other small houses which used to be occupied by the servants, or others residing at the post. - A large Bastion two stories high, but neither ball nor weather proof, & a large cellar with the roof tumbled in. - There is a platform for drying corn on, and some Board, sawn, with pickets prepared for enclosing the place.⁴¹⁰

Point Meuron was abandoned after the coalition of 1821.