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THE COUNTRY-BORN IN THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT: 1820-50

by

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The Country-born often known as "English speaking half-breeds", were the second largest community in the Red River Settlement before Confederation in 1870. Of mixed Indian and British ancestry they traced their origin to the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. The century and a half of experience in the fur trade that followed the voyage of the Nonsuch gave rise to a cultural tradition that incorporated ways of the old and new worlds. After 1820 this tradition accompanied the Country-born to Red River where, subjected to new influences, it flourished in the way of life of a relatively sedentary community among a mosaic of communities which reflected different ways. The years from 1820 to 1850 marked a period of cultural adjustment for the Country-born and determined the role that their community would play in the development of the Settlement at the fork of the Red and Assiniboine rivers.

During the foundation years, from 1820 to 1826, the fundamental issue facing the different communities was the nature of the relationship between the fur trade and the Settlement. For business and philanthropic reasons the Hudson's Bay Company fostered the development of settled communities in Red River. The appearance of illicit fur traders, however, placed their policy in jeopardy. It took all of

Governor George Simpson's administrative ability to establish a détente among the interested parties. It was in this same period that Anglican missionaries established a mission among the Country-born and experimented with various techniques of persuasion.

The Hudson's Bay Company and the Anglican mission were the agents of British civilization that made the greatest impact upon the Country-born. This was most apparent in the years from 1827 to 1834. In their respective spheres of influence the Company and the mission encouraged behavior derived from British example. The response of the Country-born varied. In many areas they mirrored British practises. Yet in other areas practises originating in the trading post survived. In brief the Country-born maintained practises from the trading post that had proved rewarding. They accepted new ways in areas in which they felt their former way of life had been deficient. As a result their community constituted the largest bastion of support for local institutions derived from British practises.

Members of the Country-born community enjoyed close relations with persons belonging to other communities in Red River. Many were intimate with the Métis. Others had a similar relationship with the Indian villagers at St. Peters. Still others were in close association with the Kildonan Scots. Individuals with contacts outside their community served as cultural bridges. They explained one to the other.

The fact that most of these "cultural bridges" came from the Country-born gave this community an essential role to play in the development of the Settlement as a whole. They were the amalgam that made the Red River experience possible. The behavior of the Country-born during the troubled years from 1835 to 1850 confirms this assessment.

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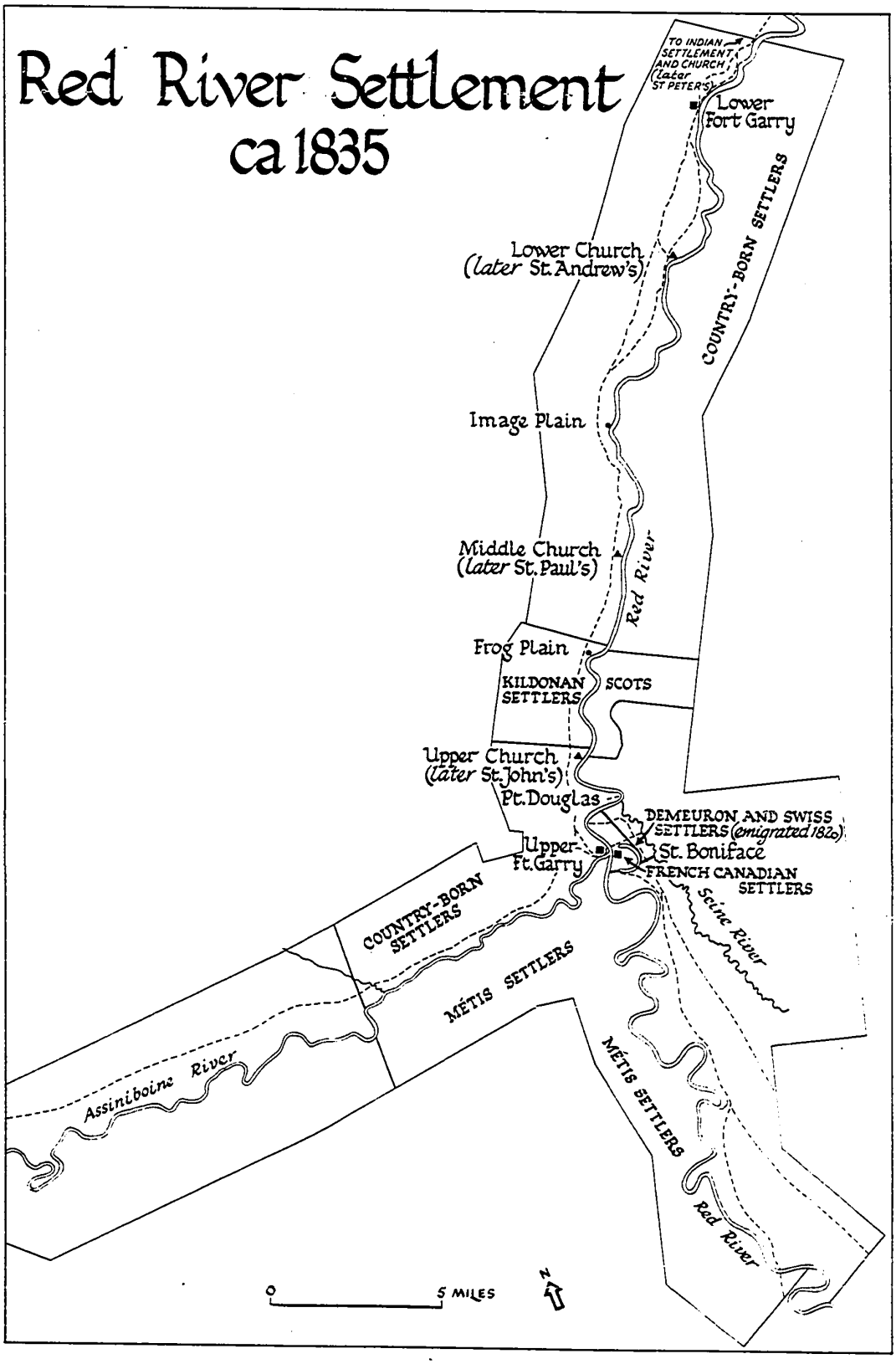
Red River Settlement
ca 1835
TO INDIAN SETTLEMENT AND CHURCH (later ST PETER'S)
Lower Fort Garry
COUNTRY-BORN SETTLERS
Lower Church (later St. Andrew's)
Image Plain
Red River
Middle Church (later St. Paul's)
Frog Plain
KILDONAN SETTLERS
SCOTS
Upper Church (later St. John's)
Pt. Douglas
DEMEURON AND SWISS SETTLERS (emigrated 1820)
St. Boniface
Upper Ft. Garry
FRENCH CANADIAN SETTLERS
Seine River
COUNTRY-BORN SETTLERS
MÉTIS SETTLERS
Assiniboine River
MÉTIS SETTLERS
Red River
0
5 MILES
N

INTRODUCTION

Historians of the part of the Canadian West known as Rupert's Land before Confederation, when not attracted to the many facets of the fur trade, have tended to direct their attention to the Red River Settlement. The dramatic events surrounding its origin and the role it played in determining the course of events that witnessed the realization of a second transcontinental nation in North America have been extensively examined. In terms of the Settlement's development in the half century preceding Confederation, academic curiosity has been aroused by the existence over 1000 miles from the edge of the advancing frontier of European settlement in North America of an ostensibly "civilized community" composed predominantly of individuals of mixed Indian and European ancestry. In attempting to understand the cultural development of Red River, historians have emphasized institutional structures, practises and values originating in Great Britain and in eastern Canada. Factors deriving from the history and geography of Rupert's Land have by no means been ignored but they have not received equal attention. It is a major contention of this thesis that they deserve closer scholarly examination. For it was in and around the trading posts of the various companies, in the closing decades of the eighteenth century, that the circumstances of geography

and history combined to provide the opportunity for the appearance and development of mixed-blood peoples in not one but two cultural traditions.

In view of the distinctions made in this study between the two mixed-blood peoples in Red River, the Métis and the Country-born, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of these terms. In the one definitive work dealing with the mixed-bloods, Marcel Giraud's Le Métis Canadien, the term Métis is synonymous with "mixed-blood." When Giraud wished to differentiate between the mixed-bloods of the two cultural traditions in Rupert's Land, and the context of his writing did not make the distinction clear, he used the adjective "écossais". "Scots" is not satisfactory on two counts. First, in view of the various regions of Great Britain from which servants and officers originated, England, Wales, Ireland, the Orkney Islands and the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland, in an age when such differences in region of origin were significant to those involved, and in view of the fact that a majority of the servants and a substantial number of the officers were Orkneymen and not Scots, the term métis écossais is scarcely accurate. Secondly the term could suggest that the mixed-bloods originating in and around the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company were a variant from the "parent" métis culture rather than a product of a tradition with its own separate origin and development. While there were many similarities between the two traditions and much contact between the mixed-bloods of each tradition in some

areas, it is a fundamental contention of this study that, in at least one region, the Red River Settlement, the two traditions continued their separate development after 1821.

Giraud's use of the term métis is followed in Western Canada today where one encounters the French pronunciation as well as the anglicized "Meetis." Individuals recognizing their Indian and European ancestry often term themselves "Métis." In rejecting the traditional English equivalent, "Halfbreed," they reflect, in part, the pejorative sense of the term, real or imagined, in the past and today. This current usage underlines the problem in terminology for the historian of Red River.

Among the English language historians who have given some attention to the Red River Settlement there has been a tendency to use the term Métis in a more restricted sense. Although one can find examples of the term used in a sense closely equivalent to "mixed-blood," the trend has been to limit it to those mixed-bloods associated with the "French" tradition in the fur trade, the Roman Catholic missionaries and a way of life centering upon the buffalo hunt. This usage is followed in this study. For those mixed-bloods associated with the "Bay" tradition, historians have often used the term "Halfbreed." Again instances emerge where the term has signified "mixed-blood" and thus has included the Métis. With this dual usage historians reflect the ambiguity of the word found in English language documents

emanating from this era. In these documents, of which the vast-majority were written by the British-born for the information and enjoyment of readers of similar origin, "Halfbreed" could signify either one or both of the mixed-blood communities. In the same documents one can detect both a pejorative and a descriptive use of the word. In a few documents originating from mixed-bloods the term is used infrequently.[1] In one instance a variation, "half-an Englishman", was written in a strikingly belligerent and defensive manner.[2] In other instances the euphemism "countrymen" sufficed.[3]

The term "Country-born" offers a solution to this problem in terminology. Originating among the British-born residents of Red River, possibly as a polite affectation, the term is not entirely satisfactory as its use suggests social class connotations.[4] Apparently the term had

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[1]See P.A.M. Red River Settlement (hereafter R.R.S.), Red River Correspondence, 1845-47 (hereafter R.R.C.), James Sinclair et. al., to A. Christie, August 29, 1845.

[2]Church Missionary Society, North West American Missions (hereafter, C.M.S.A.), Incoming Correspondence (hereafter, I.C.), Joseph Cook to the Lay Secretary, July 29, 1846.

[3]Public Archives of Canada (hereafter, P.A.C.), M.G.19, E6, Vol. I, Thomas Cook to Rev. John Smithurst, January 30, 1853.

[4]See H.B.C.A., E.18/7, testimony of Rev. David Anderson the Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land, before the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company, June 4, 1857.

particular reference to the mixed-blood children of British-born officers. Nevertheless, as the term defines a community distinct from the Métis, as it would have been recognized and understood by the community it designated, and as the term avoids the confusion in meaning and the pejorative sense associated with "Halfbreed", "Country-born" appears to be adequate to describe the second mixed-blood community in Red River. "Country-born," in short, signifies the English-speaking mixed bloods of the Red River Settlement.

The more prominent tradition among the mixed-blood peoples of Rupert's Land, encompassing by far the greater number of individuals, originated in the region of the Great Lakes during the French regime. From Detroit to Chegouamigon the fur trade flourished in the century following the destruction of Huronia by the Iroquois. In this fur trade, a world of shifting politico-commercial alliances, the participants, Indian and European, found themselves inexorably linked in mutual interdependence. In time, around the major trading posts, a peculiar way of life emerged.[5] It owed as much to Indian tradition as to the French heritage.[6] Its essential

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[5]See Marcel Giraud, Le Métis Canadien (Paris, 1945) Troisieme Partie, Chapitre I, "Le Foyer Meridonial," for an examination of the origins of the Métis in what can be termed the "French tradition" in the fur trade.

[6]G. I. Quimby, Indian Culture and European Trade Goods (Madison, 1966), gives a thorough examination of the impact of the fur trade on the Indians in the region of the Great Lakes. Harold Hickerson, The Chippewa and Their Neighbours: A Study in Ethnohistory (Toronto, 1970) provides an excellent history of the Ojibway in this period, particularly to the south of Lake Superior.

elements were carried over the height of land into Rupert's Land, first by French traders and later by the "pedlars" who succeeded to the control of the Montreal-based trade following the conquest of New France. The "French tradition" continued to flourish in and around their posts.[7] A significant and dramatic development was the appearance of roving bands of French Canadian "freemen" who, with their Indian and mixed-blood wives and children, hunted the buffalo on the plains bordering the North Saskatchewan, Assiniboine and Red Rivers. Living somewhat apart from the company employees in the trading posts and from neighbouring bands of Indians, they were, nevertheless, conscious of their dual heritage. They were the Métis.[8] Siding with the North West Company in its struggle with the Hudson's Bay Company, the Métis emerged from the closing decades of the competition with the concept of themselves as the "New Nation." They saw themselves not only as a distinct cultural entity in Rupert's Land but, by virtue of their origins, as its paramount community.[9] They stood distinct from the Country-born who expressed the other fur trade tradition in Rupert's Land.

This second tradition originated in the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company at the "bottom of the Bay" and along

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[7] W. J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760 (Toronto, 1969), "Epilogue," most succinctly describes the survival of the French experience in the fur trade.

[8] Giraud, 429.

[9] Ibid., 531.

its western shores. With many similarities to the way of life that evolved around the French posts in the Great Lakes region, the Bay tradition with its own set of circumstances and sequence of experience remained distinct.[10] Before the Hudson's Bay Company's penetration of the interior in force, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, its Country-born, with a few notable exceptions, appear to have been culturally indistinguishable from the "home-guard" Indians. It seems likely that the latter term arose, in part, as a cognomen for mixed-bloods about the Company's posts. Conscious of the opposition of the directors to "whoring" in their posts,[11] the writers of the various post journals appear to have avoided any direct reference to the mixed-blood children of officers and servants. The use of the term "home-guard" was justified in the cultural sense as such individuals fulfilled the traditional role of the Indian trapper and, at the same time, performed necessary services that were derived from the Indian way. As hunters and guides the "home-guard" Indians were essential to the Company's trade. In these capacities they were more closely associated with the trading post and more dependent upon it than bands living at a greater distance. With the Company's move inland to

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[10] Ibid., Troisième Partie, Chapitre II, "Le Foyer Septentrionale."

[11] E. E. Rich, The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870 (London, 1958), I, 496.

the regions of the Red and Saskatchewan Rivers, the Country-born emerged as distinct from the "home-guard" Indians. They became a recognized component of the trading post establishment.

The Hudson's Bay Company's expansion into the interior strained its manpower resources to the limit, both in terms of numbers and in terms of knowledgable officers and servants who were capable of carrying on the trade in the interior. While the phrase, "the sleep by the frozen sea" is a questionable description of the Company's activities during its first hundred years in Rupert's Land,[12] it does contain a kernel of truth when one examines the difficulties encountered in moving into the interior. The techniques of the fur trade in terms of direct relations with the Indians had been mastered. Problems encountered inland in this area proved soluble. What the Company had not developed was a body of European officers and servants capable of providing the necessary provisioning and transportation services.[13] In the face of increasing competition from the Montreal-based traders this problem assumed considerable urgency. It was at this point that names appear on the "Lists of Servants" that have their parish of origin noted as "Hudson's Bay."[14]

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[12] Ibid., 589.

[13] Ibid., 533.

[14] Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter, H.B.C.A.), A.30/1-17, Lists of Servants.

It would appear that the Company had turned to the mixed-blood sons of officers and servants to fill their labor requirements. Indians had proved inadequate as servants. They retained an independence of action that could prove disastrous to the conduct of the trade.[15] Though the Country-born sons of officers and servants occasionally proved difficult to handle, their economic dependence on the trading post and their social ties with its residents appear to have made them more amenable to the ways of command that existed in the Company's service.

The factors that brought the Country-born into the Company's service in increasing numbers were accentuated with the outbreak of war between Great Britain and France. The demand of the Royal Navy for sailors and the attractions of privateering cut heavily into the Company's traditional source of labor in the Orkney Islands.[16] With the introduction of the York boat on the inland waterways the Orcadians had proved invaluable. More tractable than the Scots or Irish and apparently more capable of enduring the privations of life in Rupert's Land, they had become essential to the Company's successful conduct of the trade.[17] As the Company

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[15] See Richard Glover, "Introduction", in E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland and Hudson House Journals, 1775-82 (London, 1951), First Series, lxv.

[16] E. E. Rich, The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870 (London, 1959), II, 150, 269.

[17] Richard Glover, "Introduction", in E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland and Hudson House Journals, 1775-82 (London, 1952), Second Series, xxxvi to lvii.

encountered increasing difficulty in finding adequate recruits among the Orkney Islanders they turned to the Country-born sons of officers and servants. By 1800 the "Lists of Servants" indicate that a significant number of Country-born were associated with the trading post as employees and not simply as "home-guard" Indians.[18] Thus a social element distinct from the European and the Indian emerged in and around the posts of the Company. Yet through ties of friendship and kinship they remained linked to both worlds.

The association of numberous mixed-bloods with the trading posts of the Company as servants is in contrast to the Métis, who living as "freemen" remained apart from the posts of the Montreal traders. This highlights the differences between the two cultural traditions.[19] These differences survived the demise of the North West Company and the monopolistic control the Hudson's Bay Company enjoyed after 1821. The French experience in the fur trade survived in part in the way of life of the Métis. The Bay tradition as it existed previous to the signing of the deed poll in 1821 endured among the Country-born who had been associated with the Hudson's Bay Company. Both traditions emerged in Red River and continued their separate but related development until the flow of settlement from Canada after Confederation

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[18]Rich, II, 268.

[19]Giraud, Troisième Partie, Chapitre III, compare sections II and V.

inundated the plains region of Rupert's Land.

With the end of the competition in the fur trade in 1821, the reconstituted Hudson's Bay Company found that it was able to pare its manpower requirements significantly.[20] Many officers and servants with mixed-blood families chose to retire to the Red River Settlement. In the Company's view the Settlement not only offered a haven for retired officers and servants with their families but it could prove to be a less costly means of dealing with the "hangers-on" about the Company's establishments.[21] Thus Country-born families without a British-born head were encouraged to migrate to Red River. If they were unwilling or unable to function as Indian trappers there was no room for them in or around the trading posts, in a period of monopolistic control and efficient business practises. The Métis who had been associated with the posts of the North West Company found themselves in similar circumstances. Thus the mixed-bloods of both cultural traditions were to meet in Red River.

The establishment of the Red River Settlement by Lord Selkirk in 1811, and the end of the competition in the fur trade a decade later, ushered in a new era for the mixed-blood peoples of Rupert's Land. With the active encouragement of the Company, mixed-bloods of both traditions migrated to Red River to settle amidst the remnants of Lord Selkirk's

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[20] Rich, II, 484.

[21] H.B.C.A., A.6/20, Governor and Committee to Governor George Simpson, March 8, 1822.

colonization efforts. As the migration continued the mixed-bloods soon outnumbered the few hundred Highland Scots crofters, the discharged soldiers of the Meuron regiment and the Swiss townspeople who had preceded them.[22] The Métis, influenced by the Roman Catholic priests from Lower Canada who established the mission of St. Boniface on the east bank of the Red River opposite the point where the Assiniboine flows into it from the west, squatted on river lots to the south and west of the mission. Their kindred, who looked to the Bay tradition and came under the auspices of the Anglican missionaries, settled to the north of the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, down the Red River. By the middle of the nineteenth century the mixed-bloods in Red River constituted over four-fifths of a population that numbered 5,391 persons.[23] They responded to the challenge of circumstances and events to develop communities different in nature from each other and from the other communities in the mosaic that was Red River.

Of the two mixed-blood communities in Red River, the Métis have long attracted the attention of historians. Their heritage with its roots in French Canada and the western

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[22] Chester Martin, Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada (Oxford, 1916), remains an excellent account of the events of this period.

[23] P.A.M., Red River Census, 1849. The Country-born in Red River would number approximately 2,000 persons.

forests and plains, their way of life with its focus on the buffalo hunt and armed encounters with the Sioux, and their losing struggle for survival as a community under the leadership of the enigmatic Louis Riel, constitute the elements of a national tragedy and ensure their place in the history and literature of the West and of the Canadian nation. The social and cultural importance of the buffalo hunt to the Métis has been central to the findings of historians. As the major means of integrating individuals into a cohesive community with a strong identification with its interests and sufficient discipline to act effectively as a unit, the buffalo hunt became the focal point of their community life. Far more than an economic activity or an opportunity for social interaction, the hunt embodied, in its own particular "life style", the values, attitudes and modes of behaviour of a distinct cultural entity.[24]

The almost equally numerous though less flamboyant kindred of the Métis, the Country-born, have not as a community received the same attention from historians. In part this springs from the nature of this community. Whereas the Métis suggest a degree of unanimity in terms of behavioral patterns and the attitudes and values that underlay them, particularly as they were expressed in the annual trips from

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[24]In addition to Giraud's work see the treatment of Métis in Alexander Ross, The Red River Settlement (Minneapolis, 1957).

river-lot cabins to the plains for the summer and autumn buffalo hunts, the Country-born manifested much more diversity. In part because of their heritage from the Company's trading posts and in part because of circumstances and influences they encountered in Red River, the Country-born found the focus of their social activity revolving around the neighbourhood in which they resided. At no time did a single activity such as the buffalo hunt involve large numbers. Nor did the Country-born reflect the unanimity in patterns of behavior and in accompanying attitudes and values that seemed to mark the community life of the Métis. This cultural diversity among the Country-born was manifested most clearly in the variety of their economic activities, the varying patterns of their social relationships and in the multiplicity of their relations with the other communities in Red River.

The bulk of the Country-born practised year around farming on their river lots. Short trips to the plains for buffalo and to the region near the mouth of the Red River for wild fowl, fish and, in winter, trapping were interspersed with the numerous activities associated with farming. Others served as tripmen on the York boats of the Company and private freighters on their annual voyages to York Factory or the interior. Leaving their casually tended farms at the spring break-up, they were absent from the Settlement until autumn snows heralded the coming of freeze-up. Others among the Country-born found occasional employment as skilled tradesmen in the British sector of Red River. Still others

provided most of the Settlement's private freighters and merchants. A few retired officers with mixed-blood families capped the Settlement's social pyramid as gentlemen farmers. While most of this class appear to have been content to enjoy the fruits of a remunerative career in the fur trade, a few were serious farmers.

This diversity in occupational patterns was marked by a similar diversity in their social relations within the community and with other communities. The legacy of the rank structure in the Company's service survived in such designations as "Principal Settlers" and "lower orders."[25] Together with a coalescence of factors such as wealth, education, family connections and place of residence, rank in the Company's service tended to structure social relationships. Similar factors defined relationships between the Country-born and members of other communities. In view of the diversity apparent in the behavior of the Country-born as individuals and groups the reader may well wonder if in fact a community did exist. The answer to this question is to be found in those features in the lives of the Country-born that established a bond amongst them and set them apart from others in Red River.

The fundamental bond linking the Country-born was

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[25]For an example of the usage of these terms see H.B.C.A., D.4/8, Simpson to the Governor and Committee, June 5, 1824.

their shared experience in the trading post and later in Red River. This does not imply that there was a "cultural unity" in terms of patterns of behavior, attitudes and values. The "world view" of an educated British officer differed significantly from that of an illiterate Cree-speaking mixed-blood who survived as a "hanger-on" around a Company post. In relatively frequent contact with each other they probably had little use or respect for the other's "life-style." The essential feature of their shared experience in the trading post was that, while each was "different" from the other, he was not "strange". The behavior of each could be predicted by the other. The shared experience of the Country-born in Red River was marked by a similar development. While new influences such as the Anglican mission provided additional common experience their significance lay in the individual's acceptance of the different ways of others. This applied within the Country-born community and to relations with other communities.

Accepting this line of argument the reader might well ask why the Country-born in Red River did not fragment, with individuals identifying themselves with the other communities who most closely reflected their particular style of life. To an extent this did happen. Some families were intimately involved with the Métis. Others were associated with the Indian village near Netley Creek, and still others with the Kildonan Scots north of Point Douglas. Yet while individuals might in effect move into other communities and in essence

become Métis or Indians, the Country-born element in Red River continued. The explanation for their survival as a community is to be found in a composite of factors including place of residence, kinship connections, the legacy of familiar shared experiences in the past, and similar shared experiences in the present. The generation following the signing of the Deed Poll in 1821, ending the competition in the fur trade, saw the emergence and development of the Country-born in a manner that allows them to be examined as a community.

The history of the Country-born has significance beyond the limits of this thesis. W. L. Morton has effectively documented the socio-economic crisis facing this and the other communities in the Settlement during the two decades preceding Confederation in 1870.[26] But what happened to the Country-born after this date? Were they destined to suffer the fate that marked the lives of their kindred, the Métis, after the Battle of Batoche? Were they destined to be dispersed northward to live as trappers, fishermen and hunters or to remain on the fringes of white society inescapably trapped in the endless spiral of disease, drunkenness, prostitution and petty crime? Or was their fate to merge with the newcomers with little social disruption and suffering? If they adapted to the ways of the newcomers did they descend to the bottom rungs of the social ladder or were they

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[26] W. L. Morton, "Agriculture in the Red River Colony," Canadian Historical Review, XXX, December, 1949

able to maintain social positions similar to those they had enjoyed in Red River before the coming of the Canadians? The answers to these questions, of concern to all scholars interested in the process of social change, have their beginning in understanding the nature of the Country-born community during the residence of its first generation in Red River.

CHAPTER I

THE BAY TRADITION

To the European living at the dawn of the nineteenth century Rupert's Land was a harsh and inhospitable region. Vast expanses of forest and plain, a severe climate and the presence of savage bands of nomadic hunters and warriors called forth images of the land that God had allotted to Cain.[1] For the inhabitants of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading posts no such simple view existed. Passing along the inland waterways on their trips to the coastal depots and living in posts in different regions during their service in the Company's employ, they were familiar with the variety of land and peoples that influenced the circumstances in which different posts sought to fulfil their functions in the trade. Yet in spite of the varying environments of the different posts, the basis for a similar way of life, encompassing the inhabitants of all the posts, did exist.

In topography, climate and vegetation variety was the keynote of Rupert's Land. The rock strewn forests and

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[1] See Eric Ross, Beyond the River and the Bay (Toronto, 1970), for a view of the geographical knowledge of British North West America available to a sophisticated Briton in the early years of the nineteenth century. See also John Warkentin (ed.), The Western Interior of Canada (Toronto, 1964). The reader should also note E. G. R. Taylor, "Introduction", E. E. Rich (ed.), Letters Outward, 1679-1694, London, 1948.

rivers of the Canadian Shield contrasted sharply with the dank cold lowlands bordering the south and west coasts of Hudson's Bay. The Great Plains to the west were another world. In the southern region where the dry heat of summer belied a winter of intense cold, the slough-dotted prairie of almost limitless sky and grass extended ever westward, rising to meet the forested foothills of the Rocky Mountains. There, prevailing Westerlies, blowing over the mountains from the Pacific, offered some respite from the extremes of a mid-continental climate. To the north of the prairie, in the Parkland, brush in sheltered river valleys and coulees gave way to extensive tracts of poplar while farther north vast forests of spruce heralded a land of greater precipitation and lower temperatures.

The social reality of the region varied as extensively as the physical. In the lowlands by Hudson Bay and in the forests of the shield and the northern Great Plains, small family-bands of nomadic Cree, Saulteaux and Chipewyan hunter-trappers pursued their precarious livelihood.[2] While admirably adapted to their harsh and uncompromising world they were frequently faced with the threat of want and, on occasion, starvation should the balance of nature in their lands, of which they were an integral part, be disturbed.

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[2]An extensive body of anthropological literature on these Indians can be found in various scholarly journals although a history as such does not exist.

In such areas the mutual interdependence of the trader and the Indian created a relatively uneventful and stable relationship. This relationship was humanized through the ties of kinship and occasionally friendship that developed over long years of association.

On the prairies the relationship between the Indian and the trader was quite different. There, where the horse and the gun met and combined to establish the basis for the cultural explosion associated with the Plains tribes, the fur trader was virtually excluded.[3] The buffalo gave the Plains Indians more security than their woodland brethren and made them less dependent upon the trading post. The turbulent Plains Cree, Blackfoot, Assiniboine, Gros Ventres and Bungi or Plains Saulteaux thus embroiled the inhabitants of the trading posts of the neighbouring Parkland in their war-like escapades.

Residents of trading posts in this region and some of the forested areas beyond, in the years before 1821, found their lives further disrupted by the commercial rivalry between the London-based Hudson's Bay Company and the various trading concerns originating in Montreal. While the exigencies of the moment could lead to cooperation between rival traders, the long term trend emphasized competitive advantage. As the

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[3]Among the numerous works on the Plains tribes historians should note F. R. Secoy, Changing Military Patterns of the Great Plains (Locust Valley, N.Y., 1953).

North West Company emerged dominant in the Montreal-based trade in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the competition increased in intensity, reaching its zenith with the tragic loss of life on the Hudson's Bay Company's Athabaska expedition in the winter of 1815-16 and at the "massacre" of Seven Oaks in the Selkirk Settlement a few months later.[4] The more fortunate residents of the Company's posts by Hudson Bay and in its immediate hinterland experienced little of the disorder that broke the monotony of life in the trading post for their fellows inland.

The particular function of a post in the overall scheme of the fur trade influenced the circumstances in which the inhabitants found themselves. Provisioning posts bordering the lands of the turbulent plains tribes as well as those functioning as regional and coastal depots were inhabited by relatively large numbers for at least part of the year. During the winter provisioning posts could carry a complement of between fifty and a hundred residents of which half would be adult males.[5] During the summer the number of adult males could be less than ten. The reverse was true for the coastal depots where the inactivity of the winter months contrasted sharply with the arrival and

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[4]Rich, II, 326, 334.

[5]At any given time several men at a post would be absent, manning outposts or transporting goods and furs between posts or between Indian encampments and various posts.

departure of the fur brigades during the brief shipping season. At outposts from major trading establishments an officer or possibly a senior servant and three or four men with their families would constitute the complement. At all the Company's posts the number of inhabitants was such that every one was acquainted with everyone else. At the same time a richer variety of social experiences could be found amongst the residents in and frequent visitors to the major establishments.

While the varying physical and social circumstances in which the inhabitants of each of the Company's posts found themselves were instrumental in shaping different "realities" of day-to-day life in the various establishments, it is equally true that the basis for a similar way of life, linking the residents of the different posts, existed. The vehicle for this common experience was the fur trade. The fur trade has been viewed productively from several scholarly viewpoints. Historians have tended to examine it in terms of Western European expansion and the emergence of Canada as a second transcontinental nation in North America.[6] Anthropologists have emphasized the impact of the fur trade upon the different Indian peoples and noted their varying

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[6]H. A. Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada (Toronto, 1962), remains a noteworthy example.

responses in different periods.[7] Few scholars, however, have concerned themselves with the inhabitants of the trading posts who drew upon two cultural heritages to establish the basis of a community life around the numerous activities that marked the conduct of the fur trade.[8]

In essence the community life of the inhabitants represented various cultural elements from Great Britain adapted to a novel set of physical and social circumstances. In the process of adaptation in which cultural elements of the indigenous peoples of Rupert's Land appeared,[9] the goal of profit played a major role in determining which elements of both cultures would be sustained. The resulting pattern

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[7] See A. D. Fisher, "The Cree of Canada: Some Ecological and Evolutionary Considerations", Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology, I, Nov., 1969, 7-19.

[8] Secondary works treating this subject are limited largely to introductions to published documents. See particularly Glover, "Introductions", E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland . . . , First Series, Second Series.

[9] While a significant body of material on the Indians of Rupert's Land exists I have not chosen to infer an Indian contribution to the way of life of the trading post from this material. As anthropologists exhibit a wide range of disagreement in many areas it would be folly at this stage for an historian to attempt a synthesis in conjunction with the documents. An example of disagreement among anthropologists can be seen in the discussion bearing on the concept of an "atomistic personality". See Victor Barnouw, Acculturation and Personality among the Wisconsin Chippewa, Memoir 72, American Anthropologist Association, 1950 and Harold Hickerson, "Some Implications of the Theory of the Particularity, or 'Atomism' of Northern Algonkians," Current Anthropology, VIII, 1967, 313-327.

of community life emphasized the preponderance of British ways. The structure and organization of the fur trade with its London metropolis and the presence of British-born officers and servants who constituted an overwhelming majority of the adult males in the trading posts' population ensured as much. As the community centered its activities around those of the fur trade and as the "company of men" was a principal focus of its social life it is readily apparent that behavioral practises derived from Great Britain would be encountered with greater frequency than those of the Indian. Broadly speaking the posts of both the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company reflected their British legacy. Nevertheless the differences between the two companies in terms of their organization and technique and differences between the inhabitants of their respective trading posts in terms of their styles of life owe much to the previous century of separate and different experiences in the fur trade. The Hudson's Bay Company had a century's residence on the shores of Hudson Bay before it penetrated the interior. The North West Company incorporated the French experience that preceded the demise of the French Empire in North America with the outlook of the Scots Highlander who flocked to the New World in the half century following Culloden.[10] Each of the two separate experiences constituted

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[10]Eccles, Chapter 9, and Giraud, Troisième Partie, Chapitre 1.

a distinct cultural tradition in Rupert's Land at the dawn of the nineteenth century. The particular product of past experiences and present influences in the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company constituted the Bay tradition.

As noted previously scholarly works examining the social and cultural life of the trading post have not been extensive. In part this situation has arisen because the documents do not lend themselves to such an inquiry. References to subjects that interest the social historian are often meager and infrequent. Much further research into ways of life exhibited in specific posts in particular regions over a limited period of time is required before a detailed picture of the way of life of the inhabitants of the Company's posts can emerge. Nevertheless a rough impression of the Bay tradition, the "cultural baggage" that accompanied the Country-born to Red River, can be garnered by examining three aspects of the trading post community that appear with some clarity in the documents. The first aspect of significance is the manner in which the community structured itself socially. It would appear that three distinct though interrelated means of regulating social interaction were derived by the inhabitants from their cultural heritages and their day-to-day experiences. The second aspect derives from another noteworthy feature of the lives of the inhabitants of the Company's posts apparent in the early decades of the nineteenth century, the existence of two relatively distinct

sets of values around which the adult males oriented their lives. By examining what appear to be the "focal values" in the two sets of values and some of the accompanying attitudes and practises an impression of the styles of life of the inhabitants should emerge. The third aspect of importance in the socio-cultural complex of the trading post was the nature of family life. As the family was the major means of enculturating the young in the ways of the trading post it played an important role in determining the ways of the Country-born who migrated to Red River. From an examination of these three aspects of the community life of the trading post some insight into the Bay tradition should emerge. This was the "raw material" from which the Country-born in Red River were fashioned.

The obvious influence of British practise was apparent in at least one of the three means used to structure the society of the trading post. The pyramidal social hierarchy, derived in large measure from occupational status, reflected the chain of command necessary for the successful conduct of the trade. At the same time it incorporated significant values and attitudes found in Great Britain. Among such values and attitudes were fundamental assumptions about the nature of society and the individual's relationship to it. Society was assumed to be organic and hierarchical in nature. Reciprocal rights and responsibilities governed the relationship between the community on one hand and the individual

or groups within the community on the other. Particular rights and responsibilities were determined by position in the social hierarchy. In turn social merit as demonstrated in terms of family connections, behavior, achievement and socio-economic circumstances determined social rank. Such concepts of the nature of society and the individual's role within it, often ill-defined in detail, appear to have been the intellectual foundation for the social hierarchy of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading posts.[11] It was the reality of daily life in the conduct of the trade and the social life of the community that spelled out the particular criteria for each status position as well as the nature of the relationship between individuals in different social positions.

The formal means of structuring the trading post community, a pyramidal hierarchy from laborer to Indian trader, was occupational status. Unskilled youths occupied the base of the pyramid. The bulk of them were British-born, principally from the Orkney Islands, although during the era of the Napoleonic Wars a number of mixed-blood sons of officers and servants were enlisted.[12] The Orkney youths proved to

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[11]Such assumptions constitute a continuous thread linking the correspondence of the Governor and Committee in London, the officers in the field and, at a later date, the Anglican missionaries of the Church Missionary Society who appeared in the Red River Settlement.

[12]See H.B.C.A., A.30/-14, Lists of Servants.

be excellent servants. Inured to a life of hardship by the harsh climate and endemic poverty of their native islands, malleable to the ways of Rupert's Land by virtue of their age and interests, they were without peer in performing the manual tasks necessary for the successful conduct of the trade.[13] The dangers and hardships they faced, particularly when "tripping", were eloquently described by Chief Factor William Auld in a letter to the Governor and Committee in London in 1811:

> Your local ignorance (forgive me Hon^ble Sirs, I call God to witness the purity and sincerity of my respect) of the nature of those dreadful interruptions while you can make no allowance for the shortness of our year - you calculate by your own - we reckon by a very different method. Your rivers never freeze; ours are only a short while open; . . . . Nor is it all proper and legitimate [during the summer]. Tho'ice does not impede navigation the stream may flow long after it is incapable to work in. You are Honble Sirs not to imagine that ever a pair of stockings, trowsers or shoes cover the legs and feet of the people in bad waters (Rapids). Be the season ever so cold they are ever ready to plunge in either to wade the vessel thro' the tortuous fissures of the rocks or drag her by force over the shallow places [?]. I entreat you to dismiss from your minds the sparicely-dressed [sic] wherry-man with his plush breeches and his silver badge nor conceive the descent [sic] of the solitary bargeman at London Bridge with that thro' the shallow horrors of rocky chasms as at all synonimous [sic]. Here the slightest mistake is big with fate. Allow a wrong stroke [?] and the vessel is overwhelmed in an instant - even allow the wretches appear on the surface - universal silence reigns around - no human aid is near - the dashing echoes of swiging [sic] waves overpower the faint screams of despair.[14]

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[13] See the assessment of the Orkney servant given in Glover, "Introduction," E. E. Rich (ed.), Cumberland . . . , Second Series.

[14] H.B.C.A., A.11/118, William Auld to the Governor and Committee, September 26, 1811.

In addition to the hardships and dangers involved in transporting furs, provisions and trade goods between posts and between the trading post and Indian camps, the youths were given the menial tasks of filling the ice house, packing furs, securing the ever necessary supplies of wood for fuel and lumber, tending crops and a myriad of other mind-dulling tasks. Although they were assigned to the bottom rung of the occupational ladder a few of them, like Peter Fidler and William Tomison, demonstrated the alertness of mind or the quickness of eye and hand that led to rapid promotion.[15] Others like the Birston brothers, Magnus and Alexander, and Peter Corrigal progressed at a slower rate to the senior ranks of the servants.[16] Some like the Folster brothers, John and William, appeared content to round out their days in the Company's employ at a rank little removed from that which they held on enlistment.[17]

Above the unskilled youths, at various levels in the hierarchy, were semi-skilled and skilled tradesmen. The skills of both the old and new worlds were represented. Trades such as that of the blacksmith and boatbuilder shared a status similar to those of the interpreter and steersman. In the List of Servants in Hudson's Bay in 1800 James Anderson

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[15] J. G. MacGregor, Peter Fidler: Canada's Forgotten Surveyor, 1769-1822 (Toronto, 1966), and Glover, "Introduction", E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland . . . , First Series, xxx.

[16] H.B.C.A., A.30/14, Lists of Servants.

[17] Ibid.

blacksmith, age 27, earned £25 a year while a workmate, Henry Lena, steersman, age unknown, contracted for £30 a year.[18] The lower prestige of other skills is revealed in the fact that another James Anderson, age 23, a tailor, earned £14 per annum.[19] It appears that the vast majority of servants skilled in old world trades had been hired by the Company precisely for these capacities. They had not acquired their skills in Rupert's Land.[20] Thus they tended to be a decade older than the unskilled youths when they made their appearance in the trading posts.[21] Much more than years and occupational skills separated skilled tradesmen in their mid-twenties from youths in their late teens. For many tradesmen employment by the Company served the purpose of building a "stake" before returning home. This aspiration suggests that in comparison with many of the British-born unskilled youths they may have enjoyed better socio-economic circumstances in their homeland and have had stronger ties with their families in Great Britain.[22] It appears that some of them made a

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[18] Ibid., A.30/10, Lists of Servants.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., A.30/1-14, Lists of Servants, noting the various trades listed for individuals on first enlistment.

[21] Ibid., noting the ages associated with various trades when the individual first enlisted.

[22] Little private correspondence between active or retired servants in Rupert's Land and their families in the homeland has come to light. One example is P.A.C., MG 19, E7, Vol. 4, Margaret Inkster to her son, John Inkster, June 13, 1843.

conscious effort to sustain British ways while younger men, perhaps as a result of a closer association with mixed-blood youths, were attracted to alternatives presented in Rupert's Land.[23]

While the Company often depended upon Indian hunters, guides and occasionally steersmen and interpreters, European servants were preferred as they proved more amenable to the Company's direction and control. This problem is graphically illustrated in the Brandon Post Journal. On February 1, 1804, the officer-in-charge noted: "I see my hunter [an Indian] will do nothing as he is busy Courting a young wife."[24] A month and a half later, on March 18, 1804, another entry noted:

> the Little Man and Hunter still drunk. the latter wanted to stab James Anderson but was prevented by a little Girl. what could I say to him as our living depends on his hunt, and he knows it.[25]

In view of such circumstances and the fact that mixed-bloods residing in or near the post could prove to be as difficult to manage as the Indians, youths who showed an interest and an aptitude in vocations associated with Indian ways were

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[23] In opting for the "ways of Rupert's Land" few British-born servants followed the example of their French Canadian counterparts who became "freemen". A notable exception was Magnus Spence whose name appeared with some frequency in H.B.C.A., B.22/a/17-21, Brandon House Journals, after 1810.

[24] Ibid., B.22/a/11, February 11, 1804.

[25] Ibid., March 18, 1804.

encouraged. Several servants like James Gaddy "1st" and John Johnson "1st" ended their careers in the Company's service as steersmen and interpreters.[26] The few like Magnus Birston who combined important and relatively scarce skills originating in both cultural heritages occupied positions of pre-eminence among the Company's servants in Rupert's Land.[27]

The social pyramid of the trading post was capped by officers of various ranks, from youthful writers and apprentice clerks to the officer in charge, the Indian trader. Before the Company's reorganization of the fur trade that began in the second decade of the nineteenth century a significant number of men who had had experience in a wide variety of skilled trades were to be found in the ranks of the officers. Their value can be attested in an example taken from the List of Servants, York Old Factory, 1814-15. In commenting upon James Monkman, an Outpost Master at God's Lake, the writer noted:

> Exceedingly active, might be useful in a variety of business as junior Trader, under Store Keeper, Canoe-builder, Foreman or parties employed in the woods or on the waters, or in building Craft, is moreover an excellent seaman.[28]

In many cases it would appear, if competence in the written language is an indication, that distinctions in terms of

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[26] Ibid., A.30/10, Lists of Servants.

[27] See the assessment of Magnus Birston in Ibid., A.30/14, Lists of Servants.

[28] Ibid., James Monkman.

class origin between some officers and many of the servants were not significant.[29] However in later years more pronounced distinctions emerged.[30] This development reflected the lengthening transportation routes and the quickening tempo of the competition taxed the administrative and leadership resources of the Company's personnel in Rupert's Land.[31] In turn this increased the emphasis placed upon the officer's pre-eminence in the trading post community.

With increasing privileges went increasing responsibilities. The trader was responsible for the successful conduct of the trade in his region as well as the welfare of the individuals under his charge. His interest extended not only to the inhabitants of the post but to the Indian bands in the surrounding hinterland. In a letter of 1811, to the Governor and Committee in London, William Auld spoke for not

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[29]An examination of the marriage register for the Anglican Mission in Red River indicates that many of the servants were illiterate, but a surprising number were not. A noteworthy example is Peter Corrigal, an Orkneyman, who spent several years on the Saskatchewan as a canoeman, bowman and steersman. On retirement he became a teacher in the Sunday School at the Anglican mission in Red River. See Ibid., Peter Corrigal and C.M.S.A., I.C., Rev. David Jones to the Secretaries, January 31, 1827.

[30]After 1810 the Company took greater pains to recruit young men for the ranks of the officers. An indication of the skills and qualities of character looked for can be found in the comments in H.B.C.A., A.34/1, Governor George Simpson's Servants Characters and Staff Records, 1822-30, and E. 18/7, The Parliamentary Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company, June 23, 1857, the testimony of Edward Ellice.

[31]Rich, II, 290-294.

a few of his compatriots:

> Identifying myself with the natives of these territories, your legitimate subjects, I am irresistibly pressed forward to advocate their cause and to proclaim their wrongs. You have already been apprised [sic] of the oppressions under which they groan from the merciless Traders of Canada. You are now to be informed that your Servants of every rank, your Chief Factors and Traders alike with myself are utterly disqualified for wringing from the bloody sweat of these poor Creatures any more advantages worth a moments consideration and we recoil with horror at the thought of these advantages [sic] being rejected at the judgement seat of Heaven where your Honours as well as ourselves must deliver in the accounts of our government. There distinctions of Color cease and it will avail but little if we transgress the rights of our coppered Indians to satiate rapasious [sic] Tradesmen of a fairer hue. . . . We may drive them to desparation [sic] by depriving them of the means of wretched existence which our policy and avarice has made them in a great degree dependent on ourselves. . . . You, our honourable Employers are in possession of the solemnly recorded sentiments of all your Traders of the horrible degradation of our disgraceful cupidity has entailed on no dispicable [sic] portion of our fellow creatures till we made it [sic] so. leave not then, we implore you, incompleat [sic] your good intentions towards them. make them men secure by a fair communication, by a reciprocity of kind and conciliatory favours. . . .[32]

With particular privileges and responsibilities went a style of life that revealed the Indian trader's concept of himself as a man with few peers. His status was demonstrated in myriad ways that emphasized the "social distance" between himself and the servants. The absence of physical labor involved in his employment, his competence with the written language, his preeminence in the trading ceremony and the cherished privilege of separate living and dining quarters were a few of the ways that served to reinforce his status

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[32]H.B.C.A., A.11/118, Auld to the Governor and Committee, September 26, 1811.

in the trading post.[33] His style of living became the epitome of the "good life" in Rupert's Land.

Isolated from the homeland except for the annual supply ship and from neighbouring posts by distance and other factors, officers and servants experienced difficulties in maintaining the traditional ways and means of command. The necessity of working together within the close confines of the trading post made it difficult to maintain the "social distance" necessary for command. Neither were many of the traditional aids, legal and otherwise, available to facilitate the reestablishment of satisfactory relations should a clash occur. A servant could not quit or be dismissed until the arrival of the annual supply ship at the coastal depot. Thus in the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company the principal means of dealing with the refractory servant was a transfer or a fine.[34] This method contrasted sharply with the means of discipline used in the posts of their rivals, the "pedlars" from Montreal. The contrast was shown in an entry in the Brandon House Journal for Sunday, September 27, 1801: "Mr. Geo. McKay [officer in charge at the XY post] stabb'd one of his ablest men in the belly, cut his cheek intirely

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[33] After 1820 such distinctions were accentuated and formalized. See P.A.C., MG 19, Supplementary Series 2, Vol. I, Northern Department Council Minutes, Resolution 16.

[34] See the comments in the H.B.C.A., A.30/1-14, Lists of Servants and B.22/a/19, Brandon House Journal, February 23, 26, 1816.

[sic] open and gave him a large cut in the back."[35] In the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, after 1800, little physical violence marked relations between officers and servants. This suggests an effort was made by the British-born involved to carry on with the ways and means of command found in the homeland.

In disputes between officers and servants each party justified his actions by reference to the rights and responsibilities associated with what can be termed the master-servant relationship. In such clashes each party emphasized his rights and the other's responsibilities. By no means did the servants show to disadvantage. One example appears in the Brandon House Journal, May 23, 1803:

> when their [sic] is a little hole on their [servants'] Shoes, or a little hard by getting wet, its thrown away, and another pair demanded, if you find fault with this carelessness, the answer you will get is no less than this, "The Company allows us Shoes and I'll be d____d if I stir a foot out of the House until I get Shoes."[36]

It is equally noteworthy that the same guidelines served to effect reconciliations between conflicting parties. In a dispute in 1812, involving physical violence between the officer in charge at Brandon House and a senior servant, the dispute was resolved when the provoked servant agreed to perform the services which the officer demanded while the

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[35] Ibid., B.22/a/19, September 27, 1801.

[36] Ibid., B.22/a/10, May 23, 1803.

officer agreed to overlook the pummelling he had received. Each of the disputants gave some sign of recognition of the other's rights as well as his own responsibilities.[37] While several factors of varying significance tended to break down the rigidity of the formal social structure, it would appear equally true that a conscious effort was made by both servants and officers to sustain many of the practices associated with a hierarchical and authoritarian social structure and thus sustain many of the values and attitudes that underlay them. Both officers and servants found these practises functional in the trading post although the circumstances might appear somewhat incongruous when compared to those in Great Britain.

Another factor serving to emphasize distinctions between servants and officers was the far larger proportion of the British-born who were not Orkneymen in the ranks of the officers. Scots, Lowland and Highland, Englishmen, Welshmen and the occasional Irishman were found in greater proportion among the officers.[38] Differences in origin within the ranks of the servants could lead to incidents which were disruptive of the trade and the peace of the community. In a previously cited letter to the Governor and

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[37] Ibid., B.22/a/186, January 5, 1812.

[38] A. M. Johnson, (ed.), Saskatchewan Journals and Correspondence (London, 1967), xxxii.

Committee, William Auld noted:

> Be not, however, unprepared to hear of insurmountable difficulties in getting Orkneymen to mingle with the Irishmen, to protect a person from that part of the United Kingdom from the little malicious insults of the rest of the men I was forced to make him my own servant and two of the 3 Highlanders who came with us last year from Stornoway I kept there to screen them from similar treatment. I am afraid that the stupid bigotry of our old servants with their generally quiet dispositions may prevent any union. . . .[39]

It is difficult to determine to what extent differences in regional origin were a factor in relations between officers and servants. As little direct evidence suggests the existence of any problem it appears that differences in regional origin between officers and servants lent emphasis to distinctions determined by other factors rather than functioning as determinants themselves.

While certain features of the fur trade and the circumstances in which it was conducted tended to emphasize the rigidity of a social structure derived from a hierarchy of occupational status, other features had an opposite effect. Perhaps the most significant was the premium placed upon the number of persons involved. The difficulty and expense involved in transporting goods and in provisioning posts underlined the fact that only a limited number of men could be profitably employed at any particular post.[40] The

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[39] H.B.C.A., A.11/118, Auld to the Governor and Committee, September 26, 1811.

[40] For this reason families were not encouraged in the Company's service. It is for the same reason that there is a paucity of information in the official journals referring to families and family life. See Johnson, xcix.

implications of this feature of the fur trade were far-ranging. In general it can be said that it altered many of the criteria that the British heritage would designate as "correct".

An obvious example of this change was the alteration of emphasis placed upon technical competence. With a premium attached to the number of employees at a particular post, breadth of knowledge rather than knowledge in depth was emphasized. This applied within trade areas and on a broader basis as well. Thus the blacksmith at Albany in 1800, William Bews, also functioned as an armourer.[41] The boat-builder at Brandon House in 1800, James Inkster, labored as a carpenter, a cooper and a cartwright.[42] In such circumstances it seems likely that unskilled youths were encouraged to acquire a similar breadth in new world skills. In 1800 youthful Hugh Linklater, a Country-born servant, received a significant advance in wages when he demonstrated his competence as a "fine steersman and Beaver and Buffalo hunter inland."[43] Because of the seasonal nature of some occupations it seems likely that the acquisition of additional skills was encouraged. Skills such as those of the canoeman, steersman or guide melded well with trades associated with

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[41] H.B.C.A., A.30/10, Lists of Servants.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

life at the trading post. Other skills such as that of interpreter and one of the old world trades proved easily compatible. Thus the emphasis on the breadth of knowledge and competence tended to moderate the distinctions implicit in a social structure derived from a hierarchy of occupational status. In addition such an emphasis provided much opportunity for an individual to "get ahead". For the able and ambitious servant such as Edward Mowat (Moad), George Flett and Magnus Birston several avenues were open leading to relative wealth and recognition which, perhaps, would have been beyond their grasp had they remained in the homeland.[44]

Another example of the moderation by circumstances of the rigidity of the formal social structure can be seen in the transportation aspects of the trade. The premium on numbers was such that all servants, no matter what their rank, were required to lend a hand to the oar, tow-rope or gunwale in rowing, towing and manhandling the York boats and their cargoes along the inland waterways and around and over the obstacles that impeded navigation.[45] In this manner many of the distinctions of status within the ranks of the servants were obliterated for at least part of the year. In

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[44] Ibid., A.30/14, Lists of Servants.

[45] In preferring Orkneymen over Highland Scots as servants, an officer at York Factory noted:

> Independent of their being rather refractory Subjects, they [the Highland Scots] are Unwilling to work at anything but their Trade, and expect to go as passengers in our Boats to the Interior. . . .

Ibid., A.11/118, ? to William Smith, September 13, 1837.

such situations additional criteria outside of those denoted by occupation would be used to define "social merit". One's willingness to "pitch in" and "pull his own weight", to share the hardship of the voyage and the pleasure of the leisurely carouse at its end, qualities of comradeship if you will, would be the important determinants of a person's worth. Such qualities suggest the operation of another means, separate from occupational status, for structuring the society of the trading post.

The use of occupational status as one means of structuring the society of the trading post emphasized the link with the British fount. In so doing attitudes favorable to tradition and authority were encouraged. Circumstances in which the fur trade was conducted in Rupert's Land led to adaptations that appear to have moderated the rigidity of the structure. Nevertheless the essence of tradition and authority remained. Not only were large numbers of the inhabitants familiar with such a social structure by virtue of their British birth, but the means proved functional in the social life of the trading post. Coexisting with the occupational basis of defining social worth and, to an extent, influencing its operation was the structure that emphasized the fellowship of the adult males in the trading post. Whereas the gradations of rank tended to emphasize tradition and authority, the structure derived from the fellowship of workmates emphasized a rough equality and

cooperation in existing circumstances. For many in the trading post this was perhaps a more meaningful way of evaluating their own behavior and the behavior of others.

The nature of service in the fur trade focussed attention upon the society of the adult males of the trading post. The fact that most were far from the families and communities into which they had been born and raised and the fact that the nature of work in the trading post placed an emphasis on cooperative effort served to heighten the importance of the society of one's workmates. Criteria that stressed manly accomplishments constituted the means of determining an individual's position in this group. Physical strength and endurance as well as quickness of wit, eye and hand were paramount.[46] To the extent that these qualities were reflected in the social structure derived from occupational status, these two means of structuring the community complimented each other. But one could demonstrate his abilities in other areas as well. An individual's ability as a fighter, his capacity with the grog pot and his success with women appear to have been areas of achievement that could call forth the accolades of his fellows.[47] Yet the

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[46] Ibid., A. 30/1-14, Lists of Servants. Note the comments respecting the abilities of various individuals.

[47] Comments on this aspect of the behavior of servants and officers are very limited in the documents. However, the comments of the Anglican Missionaries in Red River Settlement with respect to the conduct of some of the retired officers and servants suggests that such behavior was a factor. See C.M.S.A., I.C., Correspondence and Journals of the

interests of the group held sway. In work and in other activities the individual had to demonstrate his loyalty to his mates. Individual achievement was evaluated against the criteria that determined a good fellow among comrades.

The remunerative aspects of service with the Company were not the only attraction for many of its employees. While no doubt most individuals were initially attracted to the fur trade by the wages that were promised, many men may have decided to make a career in the trade on the basis of additional factors. It seems significant that on a day-to-day basis the remunerative aspects of work were not emphasized. Servants and officers contracted for a period of years for a particular annual wage. At the end of the contract period, providing the individual's services had proved "satisfactory", a new contract that was mutually acceptable would be signed should the officer or servant wish to continue in the Company's service. In such circumstances the attractions of service in the Company's employ, on a day-to-day basis, would stress the social pleasures that could be enjoyed. It seems that the sense of camaraderie enjoyed by many in the fur trade was as strong an attraction as the wages and the living allowances offered by the Company.

Membership in the adult male society of each trading post was fluid. Death, retirement, the appearance of new

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Rev. John West, the Rev. David Jones and the Rev. William Cockran, 1820-1838.

recruits and transfers between posts served to change the membership in the company of men at a particular post. Yet a core of old hands remained who formed friendships that extended over many years. If marriage practises in Red River at a later date bear any relevance to practises in the trading post it seems highly probable that the Country-born children of such servants formed marriage connections with each other. Thus bonds of friendship would be strengthened by kinship. At the same time the sense of camaraderie, particularly amongst the servants, also had an impact on the manner in which the formal rank structure functioned.

On occasion the sense of camaraderie expressed by the adult males of the trading post could prove disruptive. This situation arose when servants and officers were ranged into opposing interests. The sympathies of officers were with their brethren in confrontations with servants. The writer of the Brandon House Journal in January, 1812 reflected this in his comments on the situation in Swan River:

> January 15. . . . Mr. Garrioch complains for want of men at Swan River and what is worse - the few that he has got are very refractory it appears the infection [insubordination] is spreading that began or rather broke out here last year and untill [sic] some steps are taken effectually to crush that spirit of disobedience and contempt of [?], it will not cease.[48]

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[48] H.B.C.A., B.22/a/18b, Brandon House Journals, January 15, 1812.

Servants would cabal should the interests and welfare of the individual have a bearing on those of the group. An example appears in the Brandon House Journal in 1810:

> February 24 to The Hon^ble Committee Hudson's Bay Company. A dispute having arisen late last night between Mr. Hugh Heney [officer-in-charge] and Mr. Archibald Measson [servant] came in the Tradesman House, and fell asleep, about 1/2 an Hour after come in Mr. Heney in the aforementioned House (with his Brace of Pistols on him) and enquired if Mr. Meason was there to which the men answered in the affirmative (yes) and in Bed. The Men on the Instant disarmed him and told him it was not Customary for Masters to go amongst their Men armed and also said they would no longer be under his subjections or Orders. . . .[49]

Yet the expression of the sense of camaraderie was not limited to a reflection of the "class" basis of trading post society. On occasion and in particular circumstances servants could view the officers as "one of us". While officers were apparently viewed as being "different" and were expected to be so, celebrations on the return of the York boats from their summer voyage to the coastal depot and at Christmas and New Year's or the common threat posed by an unruly band of Indians, or a competitor could elicit a sense of their common interest. This is evident at Brandon House in the months immediately preceding the seizure of the post by the North West Company on June 1, 1816.[50] Needless to say it is

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[49] Ibid., B.22/a/18a, Brandon House Journal, February 24, 1811.

[50] Ibid., B.22/a/19, Brandon House Journals, 1815-1816.

likely that the sense of camaraderie varied extensively. Servants who served but a short period in Rupert's Land were perhaps affected little by the bond that linked their fellows who had spent the better part of their lives in the fur trade. Yet they would no doubt realize that the "pleasantness" of their stay in Rupert's Land would depend upon their recognition and acceptance of the various criteria used to determine a man's worth as a workmate. The social structure that arose from the association of adult males in the trading post was as important in regulating social interaction as was the structure derived from occupational status.[51]

From the documents it is obvious that a third means, interrelated with the others, was used by the inhabitants to structure their community. The kinship connections that resulted from the marriages of officers and servants to Indian and mixed-blood women created links within the post, with other posts and with surrounding Indian bands.[52] The

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[51]Glenbow-Alberta Institute (hereafter, G.-A.I.), James Sutherland Correspondence (hereafter J.S.C.), James Sutherland to John Sutherland, August 13, 1827, offers an excellent example.

[52]The precise pattern of family connections in the trading post are difficult to deduce. Occasionally individuals are identified in such a manner in the Journals that family connections become apparent. More often, however, individuals, particularly wives and children, are not identified with sufficient clarity. The wills of some officers and servants provide insight into some family connections. As an example, H.B.C.A., A.36/1A, Officers and Servants' Wills, 1763-1863, the will of William Thomas, died November 27, 1818, identifies his wife as the daughter of John Best. However the number of individuals who bore identical names (e.g. "William Sinclair", "William Flett",

significance of kinship as a means of regulating social behavior appears to have been related to the length of time a particular post had been in existence. Posts on Hudson Bay and in the immediate hinterland inhabited for at least four generations reflect extensive intertwining of family connections. Those in the interior, having existed for but a brief period, reflect more diffuse patterns.[53] In such posts it appears likely that marriages between British-born servants and officers and Indian women would occur with much more frequency than in posts by Hudson Bay. There, particularly after 1800, the tendency was for British-born individuals to marry mixed-blood women who were daughters or sisters of men employed in the post. By the same token evidence suggests that while mixed-bloods married into Indian bands there was a definite trend towards marrying their "own kind"[54] who lived in close association with the trading post.

"James Spence") makes it difficult to follow them through the documents. Neither do the use of Indian names necessarily indicate an Indian rather than a mixed-blood wife. See Ibid., A.36/1B, Officers' and Servants' Wills, 1816-1873, the will of George Atkinson Sr., for an example. Although such difficulties diminish with the appearance of the marriage register at the Anglican Mission in Red River, they do not disappear.

[53] The marriage registers of the Anglican Mission in Red River suggest that men employed on the "Saskatchewan" were more apt to have Indian wives than their compatriots employed in posts to the east.

[54] This impression emerges from an examination of the various lists of children in the schools of the Anglican mission in which the nature of their parentage, European, Indian or "Half-caste" is noted. See C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 29, 1830.

While information is scant in terms of identifying family connections, particularly along the female line, the impression that emerges from the limited materials available suggests a relationship between family connections and the rank structure. It appears that officers and skilled tradesmen who acquired "country wives" chose their partners from among the daughters of their predecessors. Further it seems that in such marriages the distinctions between officers and senior ranks of the servants were obliterated.[55] An officer who sought a suitable husband for his mixed-blood daughter could not limit his efforts to the ranks of the officers. Numbers dictated that senior servants be considered. As in many cases the class origins of these men did not differ significantly there would be few barriers to such a match, particularly in view of the social circumstances that surrounded the inhabitants of the various posts.

While family connections between officers and between officers and senior servants appear to have been extensive and relatively important in view of the extent to which they were related to the rank structure the same was not as true for servants in the lower ranks.[56] Two factors may have a

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[55]This was apparent in the marriages of the children of William Sinclair, Thomas Thomas, James Bird and William Hemmings Cook.

[56]To an extent the absence of extensive family connections in Rupert's Land may indicate the maintenance of family ties originating in Great Britain in Rupert's Land. For instance it would appear that brothers often served together

bearing on this distinction in the extent of family connections between the senior and junior ranks of the servants. The first factor was wages. A senior servant could earn over three times the annual wage of an unskilled youth. At this level the senior servant approached the wages of junior officers. The relatively low wages of the unskilled youth served to limit his "eligibility" as an attractive mate. Less able to afford the good things in life in terms of the post storeroom, he would find it difficult to keep a mixed-blood daughter of an officer in the manner to which she had become accustomed. In addition his interests might tend towards a temporary liaison rather than the more permanent marriage au façon du nord. It appears that for a variety of reasons the strength of kinship connections noted among many of the senior servants and officers did not apply in the lower echelons of the trading post society.

While family connections tended to reflect the rank structure they also in time strengthened the cohesiveness of the community. Whether they liked it or not the British-born or the mixed-blood sons of some education who identified with many British practises found themselves linked with individuals who reflected different styles of life. An example can be seen at Brandon House in the first decade of

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in the Company's employ and remained closely linked in Red River. For examples see Alexander and Magnus Birston Srs., John and James Inkster, Srs. and John and William Folster.

the nineteenth century. The officer in charge, John MacKay, had Mary Favel as his country wife. Her brothers, "Hump" and John (Jack) were frequent employees of the post as hunters and tripmen.[57] Others found themselves in a similar situation. The significance of family connections as a means of enabling individuals to accept the "differences" exhibited by others is apparent. The cultural gap was vast between an educated British-born officer and his brother-in-law who could be a Cree-speaking mixed-blood who lived as a sometime hunter and tripman. Nor can it be supposed that this gap was reduced significantly with the passage of time. What is important, however, is that the differences that each revealed to the other were no longer "strange". Each would maintain his own values and style of life and at the same time not feel threatened by the ways of others. Partially through kinship connections the cultural diversity manifested by individual behavior in the trading post was made tolerable and familiar to all the residents.

The formal means of structuring the society of the trading post, the hierarchy of rank stemming from occupation, the informal means arising partly out of work associations engendering a sense of camaraderie and partly out of the web of family connections or kinship remained distinct but related. Together they served to regulate individual

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[57] H.B.C.A., B.22/a/9-17, Brandon House Journals, 1801-1811.

behavior and social interaction. The familiarity of individuals with the intricate functioning of each system in relation to the other gave the inhabitants of each post experiences in common. The apparent similarity of the way in which the various means of regulating social behavior operated in each post provided a bond of familiarity between the inhabitants of the posts as a whole. Further they were the framework that permitted the emergence of at least two relatively distinct sets of values in the lives of the inhabitants.

Given the nature of the documents, the variety of differences between individuals and changes in the outlook of a single individual during his own life time, it is impossible to set out in detail a hierarchy or hierarchies of values for the society of the trading posts. However, at least two distinct focal values seem to emerge from the documents around which the individual adult males of each post appear to have oriented their lives. As these values influenced the individual's perception of the world around him and accompanied the Country-born to Red River they constitute an essential element in explaining the particular development of this community in the Settlement.

The first of the two focal values which explain in part the attitudes and patterns of behavior expressed by large numbers of the British-born officers and servants as well as a notable number of mixed-bloods, was property. The

pervasiveness of this value in terms of other values, attitudes and behavior suggests the concept of the ethos of a man of property. Property was conceived not only as a means to financial security and material well-being but as the means of establishing an individual as a person of achievement and influence and as worthy of respect in his community. In addition it was an essential means of ensuring that one's children had an opportunity to enjoy similar economic and social rewards. Yet in Rupert's Land how did one express the ethos of the man of property? How did he secure his goal and pass on the benefits to his children?

Numerous sources attest to the care which Orkney servants devoted to their personal interests. As William Auld noted: "Orkneymen and Scotchmen are by nature cautious and careful, the lower-classes prudent in the management of their own property. . . ."[58] It was for this reason that the fine rather than physical coercion proved to be the most effective means of disciplining refractory servants. The wills of some of the officers and servants demonstrate that the accumulated savings of a life-time in the fur trade could be substantial. In the case of some officers savings amounting to thousands of pounds sterling were not unknown. Even the comments of some officers criticizing the unwillingness of the Orkneymen to take an aggressive stance in defense of

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[58] Ibid., A. 11/118, Auld to the Governor and Committee, September 26, 1811.

their employer's interests suggest, among other things, that many Orkneymen were well aware that pensions for disabled servants did not equal the salary of a healthy servant.[59] The savings from his years in Rupert's Land offered some protection for the individual and his family. They would not be dependent upon the charity of others. But the goal of the man of property went beyond financial security. It involved the style of life of the man of means and consequence. Perhaps it was the life of a shopkeeper, the owner of a fishing boat, a yeoman farmer or a landed gentleman that the individual servant or officer imagined for himself on retirement. Whatever his specific goal the ethos of the man of property shaped the reality of life that he perceived in the limited world of the trading post.[60]

In the years before the Red River Settlement achieved stability, it appeared to many that only in Great Britain could they realize their dreams. Thus it seems likely that the individual officer or servant would tend to emphasize British ways. From the documents emerges a time perspective that appears to be identified with the man of property. For him the present was the prisoner of the past and the future. The future imposed its presence through the

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[59] See related comments of Glover, "Introduction," E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland . . . , Second Series, xxxvi-lvii.

[60] G.-A.I., J.S.C., provides an excellent example of the expression of this ethos of the man of property.

goal to which he aspired. The pleasures of the moment were cast on the balance against future aspirations. For the man of property the enjoyment of a leisurely carouse following a lengthy voyage to the coastal depot or an extensive journey "tripping" to the Indians in winter had to be weighed against the cost. The dram or two offered by the officer in charge was agreeably accepted. But charges to one's account would be another matter. Other events and circumstances would be viewed in a similar light. The Orkney servant rarely demonstrated the degree of daring that often marked the behavior of the French Canadian voyageur either while tripping or confronting opponents.[61] Perhaps the lack of effective leadership from his officers was a factor. Perhaps, however, the present was also judged from the perspective of the aspirations of the man of property for the future.

The past imposed itself on the present in two ways. It was the yardstick by which he could evaluate his efforts to achieve his goal and it also embodied the justification for his particular course of action. It was the past that structured the chaos of the present. It defined current circumstance and indicated the means by which the quest could be furthered. Although most servants and officers enjoyed economic opportunities in Rupert's Land that would probably

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[61] Glover, "Introduction," E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland . . . , Second Series, xxxvi-lvii.

have been denied them at home,[62] the past remained a significant dimension in their time perspective. Its close relationship to the future made them respectful of tradition and authority. This outlook would serve to explain behavior that elicited William Auld's favorable comment: "They [Orkneymen] are very easily governed as they require no violent coercion to secure obedience. . . ."[63] The same outlook may well serve to explain the attachment of the man of property to his employer in Rupert's Land, the Hudson's Bay Company.

The fundamental bond between the Company and the man of property was economic. Service in the Company's employ furnished the financial means to acquire property. Both officers and servants who did not spend all their annual wage left the balance to accumulate with the Company or had the Company or another financial institution invest it for them. Little of the spirit of the entrepreneur emerged in these transactions as most appear to have chosen bonds, particularly British consols, bearing interest at three and one-half percent.[64] To the extent that the Company's long range interests were tied to the wages and gratuities received by its employees, officers and servants demonstrated an interest in its fortunes. However little of the élan exhibited by

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[62] G.-A.-I., J.S.C., James Sutherland to John Sutheraldn, August 24, 1817.

[63] H.B.C.A., A.11/118, Auld to the Governor and Committee, September 26, 1811.

[64] Ibid., A.36/1A-15, Wills of Officers and Servants.

the Nor'Westers emerged until an element of profit-sharing for the officers was introduced after 1810.[65] Before this date the Company did not offer its employees the opportunity of rapidly acquiring some "wealth." Its attraction to the man of property, whether officer or servant, was the promise of steady and secure progress over the length of a career in the fur trade towards his ultimate goal.

The loyalty of the man of property to the Company went beyond its usefulness as the financial means to his end. Its chain of command for the purposes of conducting the trade and the pyramidal social structure derived from this organization suggested the social circumstances in which the man of property would play a prominent role should he achieve his goal.[66] Although the particular circumstances of Rupert's Land tended to moderate the distinctions of rank found in the formal social structure, the essence of authority and tradition remained. Its relationship to the thought and ways of the homeland was self-evident. And as the homeland in the period before 1820 appeared to be the only environment in which the aspirations of the man of property could be realized, the Company's reflection of key elements from this world was significant. For the man of property images of

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[65] Rich, II, 292.

[66] Such a significance for the rank structure is suggested in such items that appear in the documents as the use or absence of the term "mister". The availability of "luxury items" to officers is also noteworthy in this regard.

that-which-was-hoped-for were to be found in the Company's service in Rupert's Land. In future years in Red River this view of the fur trade remained. The extent to which the policies of the Company and the actions of active officers sustained this image determined the extent to which former employees accorded the Company their loyalty and support.

The ethos of the man of property was expressed in the Company's trading posts through different styles of life. Among the servants, particularly tradesmen skilled in the crafts of the Old World, it manifested itself in disciplined and orderly conduct that emphasized the acquisition of wealth to ensure material well-being.[67] Among the officers who benefited from higher salaries and a prominent social position the ethos was expressed in terms of a manner or bearing that denoted a man of financial means and therefore a man of much social consequence. The tone and style of the correspondence of an officer such as William Auld suggest the concept of oneself as a discriminating man in terms of judgement and taste. Others as well saw themselves as men whose achievements were worthy of emulation and respect. They accepted their significant social responsibilities and expected to be treated in an appropriate manner by both inferiors and superiors. But for some of the men in the trading posts the realities of life in Rupert's Land

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[67]Glover, "Introduction," E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland . . . , Second Series, li.

extinguished the dream of retiring to the homeland to establish themselves as men of property.

The factors in the lives of the inhabitants of the trading posts that tended to dim the enthusiasm of the man of property and, in some cases, suggest the ways of men with a different hierarchy of values, were many and varied. In some cases it was the acceptance of family ties and responsibilities that made it impossible to return to Great Britain. Many retiring officers and servants had no such scruples, either abandoning their families altogether or depositing funds with the Company for their support after they had left. But for men such as Chief Factor James Sutherland such a course of action was not possible. Addressing his younger brother in Scotland, in 1817, Sutherland remarked:

> You may think that it is from an attachment to the country . . . [that I] remain in it, no [sic] it is from the attachment I have for my family as I am completely tired of the country.[68]

For others who had shared the dreams and aspirations of their fellows it was perhaps the boredom of the long winter months in the trading post that suggested an alternative way of life. A letter to Governor George Simpson and the Chief Factors from retired officer Henry Hallet, in June, 1822, detailed the dilemma of a man who had adopted the ways of many in Rupert's Land:

> You are aware, Sirs, that by remaining in the Indian country such a length of time the Coustoms [sic] and

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[68] G.-A.I., J.S.C., James Sutherland to John Sutherland, March 15, 1827.

> habits we imbibe are so different to those of the Civilized World, add to which the attachment most people form to it, that it will be almost impossible for me to return to my native Country.[69]

Habits associated with food, drink and women, tolerated in the trading post, but not in the man of property in Great Britain, as well as family ties, denied such men the fulfilment of their dreams. Although the ethos of the man of property may have remained in memory, many found that the "realities" of their circumstances suggested the life style of the man of pleasure among good fellows.

The man of pleasure in good company shared many of the values found in the ethos of the man of property. The enjoyment of material pleasures and the company of friends, concern for community recognition and, often, strong family ties were aspects of both worlds. The differences between them appear to have been the ramifications arising out of their different focal values. The acquisition of property and its attendant socio-economic benefits seems to have been, if not absent, at least far less important in the lives of many officers and servants.[70] For them the value to be

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[69] H.B.C.A., D.4/117, Henry Hallet to Simpson and the Chief Factors, June 25, 1822.

[70] Apparently the Orkneymen who enjoyed the good life never carried it to the degree equalled by the Canadians. In H.B.C.A., B.22/a/19, Brandon House Journal, July 30, 1815, Peter Fidler noted:

> the Canadians, as they like to flash and live well while they can, seldom thinking, of the time to come, indeed this is the case with the greater number of them - being very much like English Sailors in this respect.

emphasized was the companionship of kith and probably, in most cases, kin. This is not to say that such a value was of minimal importance to the man of property. In most instances it would appear to have been extremely important. However, the documents suggest that it was not the focal point in their lives as it was for the man of pleasure in good company. While mixed-bloods could be found expressing either of the focal values the documents leave the impression that the vast majority looked not to property but to the enjoyment of the physical and social pleasures in life. These men would emphasize the social aspects of work as opposed to the remunerative benefits that attracted his counterpart. Again it was not a question of either social enjoyment or financial gain. Both the man of pleasure and the man of property responded to both benefits that accrued from service with the Company. But each made one aspect of his work the focus of his energies.

For the individual to whom property meant little, work offered the opportunity to demonstrate his prowess before approving peers and to enjoy the conviviality of the social inter-play amongst his fellows. The body-punishing labor and mind-dulling tasks that constituted much of the activity involved in the conduct of the trade was relieved by the camaraderie of the men involved. His counterpart while enjoying to varying degrees this aspect of the circumstances in which he labored, took much pleasure in perceiving

his activity as a step closer to his goal as a man of property. The individual varieties of behavior reflecting the different focal values were numerous. On the one hand, representing an extreme expression of the man of pleasure in good company, was the spendthrift who indulged his desires to the utmost of his ability. In assessing the character of Francis Heron, George Simpson provides an example:

> I believe him capable of anything that is bad and consider him a very unfit man for promotion. - In business he is indolent and inactive yet speculative and full of wild theory and in private life he is gross, sensual and licentious.[71]

On the other hand his counterpart among the men of property was the miser. Again Simpson provides an example in a letter to Andrew Colvile.

> [Thomas] Thomas is a Wealthy man but so wretchedly penurious that he does not allow himself the bare necessaires [sic] of Life and his Thousand Acres of Land will experience no improvement beyond his own personal labor.[72]

While such extreme expressions of the values found in the trading post were not widespread they do serve to highlight the differences in attitudes and behavior found there.

It would appear that the life perspective of the man of pleasure differed significantly from that of his compatriots who aspired to be men of property. Two of these

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[71] H.B.C.A., A.34/2, Servants Characters and Staff Records.

[72] P.A.C., M.G. 19, E1(1), Vol. 24, Simpson to Andrew Colvile, May 20, 1822.

different perspectives that emerge with some clarity were those of time and the nature of service in the Company's employ. For the men of pleasure the on-going present was a predominant feature of his world. The past was the memory of things enjoyed in the present. The future was the anticipation of such pleasures. His time horizon seemed limited to the seasonal rhythm of the trading year. Retirement was a distant unpleasantness until injury, disease or old age heralded the end of a career in the Company's service. Only then might the memory of the profligacy of his younger years engender momentary regrets. Retirement for him did not offer the opportunity of fulfilling a long sought after dream; rather it could signify the end of a way of life.

Service with the Hudson's Bay Company was the basis of the good life in Rupert's Land. In the trading posts such necessities of life as food, lodging and some clothing were provided.[73] The individual did not have to concern himself with the daily cares that preoccupied those who were not employed by the Company. In addition he might hope that long years of faithful service would be rewarded with a small pension.[74] At the same time employment with the Company

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[73]The extent and quality of these items was occasionally a bone of contention between officers and servants. For an example see H.B.C.A., B.22/a/18b, Brandon House Journal, April 16, 1812.

[74]See references to George Flett and William Flett, in H.B.C.A., A.34/1, Servants' Characters and Staff Records.

offered more than financial security. It provided an entrée into a social milieu that in time through a web of friendship and kinship associations linked the individual to others in the trading post and, with some frequency, to members of neighboring Indian bands. In many cases it appears that similar ties with the British homeland suffered the stress of distance and time to wither and lapse. In contrast the man of property made some effort to maintain the social bonds that extended to the British homeland.[75] For his counterpart the full meaning of the good life was to be found in Rupert's Land. Their enjoyment of it was made possible through employment in the Company's service.

The differences between the two value systems were expressed in terms of different styles of life. It would appear that the man of property consciously emphasized Britain and things British. To him the homeland was the cultural fount that sustained his way of life. For many it was the only environment in which they could see themselves giving full expression to their aspirations. Even their mixed-blood children expressed an attachment to the distant homeland that many had not seen and never would see.[76] His counterpart, the man of pleasure in good company, focussed

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[75]For an example see G.-A.I., J.S.C.

[76]This was expressed most strongly by those educated in Great Britain. Note particularly Dr. John Bunn.

his attention and concerns on the trading post in Rupert's Land. The relevance of the homeland and its ways diminished with the passage of time.[77] The ways of Rupert's Land as they unfolded in the collective experience of the community over the passing years became central to his interests and way of life.

As the family was one of the principal means by which the values and life-styles expressed in the trading posts were inculcated in the young, the nature of trading post families was of the utmost importance in determining the "cultural baggage" that accompanied the Country-born to Red River. As is the case with much of the socio-cultural aspects of the Company's trading posts the documents do not lend themselves to a straightforward analysis. Glimpses of life outside the activities of the fur trade are few and far between. Nevertheless sufficient material exists to gain some appreciation of the nature of family life and the problems encountered in their connection in the changing circumstances of the trading post. In viewing these families it is necessary to keep in mind the stresses imposed upon them by their social environment. In addition to the difficulties in communication and understanding encountered in cross-cultural marriages other factors, such as the movement of Indian bands from one region to another, the transfer of

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[77] An excellent example would be the sons of Chief Factor James Bird by his Indian wife, Elizabeth.

Company personnel, with and without their families, between posts or between Rupert's Land and the British homeland and changes in the fortunes of the trade, arising from "natural causes" or the varying intensity of the competition, placed added stress on individual families, testing their ability to function successfully as social units. It was in this milieu that many of the children of British-born officers and servants grew to maturity.

The most obvious feature of cross-cultural marriages au façon du nord was their varying duration. Apparently a few in the years before the establishment of the Red River Settlement endured for the lifetime of the participants. Some scant evidence indicates that upon retirement a few officers and servants would return to their homeland accompanied by their native-born wife and mixed-blood children, for example officer John Stewart McFarlane who retired to Glasgow with his Country-born family shortly after the signing of the Deed Poll in 1821.[78] From the evidence gathered to date it would appear that this practise was not extensive. No doubt the problems in adjustment experienced by the few families who took this course of action led other British-born heads of families to consider alternatives. As a result more of the marriages endured for the length of the career of an officer or a servant. On retirement the family

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[78] E. E. Rich, (ed.), Colin Robertson's Correspondence Book, September 1817 to September 1822 (London, 1939), 231.

was either abandoned to its fate or steps were taken to ensure some form of continuing financial support. The General Ledger Book of Officers and Servants Wills, 1763 to 1863 suggests that a significant number of officers and some servants may have placed funds at the disposal of the Company sufficient to provide their families with necessary supplies on a yearly basis.[79] Many marriages were of short duration; some were limited to the length of a single trading season. Marriages were dissolved when circumstances separated the participants or when one partner found another paramour. In such situations the peace and good order of the trading post could be threatened. Entries from the Brandon House Journal for 1817 and 1819, kept by Peter Fidler, illustrate this point:

> Nov. 7, 1817. . . . Bohomme [sic] Montour took away the Wife belonging to the late Mr. Longmoor's son - Magnus Spence's Daughter one of our freemen [i.e. Spence] - but I understand with his consent.
> Nov. 8, 1817. . . . Longmoor's son went away for his country at the Saskatchewan . . . and debauched away the Wife of our Canadian Smith - 80

Two years later Fidler noted a similar incident involving his

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[79] H.B.C.A., A.36/1A, Officers and Servants Wills, 1763-1863. The failure of many officers and servants to provide adequately for Rupert's Land families when they retired to Great Britain led to the enactment of formal regulations to this effect after 1821. See P.A.C., M.G.19, Supplementary Series 2, Vol. I, Northern Department Council Minutes; Standing Rules and Regulations, Resolution 42.

[80] H.B.C.A., B.22/a/20, Brandon House Journal, November 7, 8, 1817.

son Charles, and the post's cooper, James Inkster:

> April 12, 1819. . . . Charles & James disputed much - to send the former down to the Forks [i.e. Red River Settlement] with Horses and to be out of the way. -
> April 13, 1819. Charles Fidler instead of going down to the Forks . . . went away to the Indian Tents and James Inkster's woman left her husband and followed him.
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> . . . . .
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> April 18, 1819. Sunday. Henderson went yesterday to the Indian Tent to bring home James Inkster's woman who lately run [sic] away. She says she will never return to him again - tho' he has always been very kind to her -
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> . . . . .
>
> April 27, 1819. Tuesday. Yesterday in the afternoon The Laughing Man and The Tobacco came here and brought back James Inkster's woman to him. he gave them for their trouble 1/2 a 10 Gallon Keg of Indian rum besides other things - Charles remains at the Indian Tents. . . . [81]

Charles's youthful escapade and the previous entry cited demonstrate the tenuous nature of relationships in many marriages au façon du nord.

Marriages of varying duration were found at all social levels in the trading post. Nevertheless those of short duration, in which in many cases there would appear to be little sense of emotional commitment beyond the gratification of physical needs, were found most frequently among the servants and in their lower ranks. In July, 1833, the Rev. William Cockran, one of the two Anglican missionaries at Red River provided a graphic account of the circumstances

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[81] Ibid., B22/a/21, Brandon House Journal, April 12, 13, 18, 27, 1819.

responsible for marriages of short duration:

> The most of them [Cockran's British-born parishoners] came into the country when they were youths without any fixed principles; as servants to the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company. They lived as the Heathen, adopted their manners and customs and in many instances they showed themselves more depraved.
>
> During the summer there are pleny of opportunities for the young voyager [sic] to give vent to his licentious passions [as] at every post he will find women who will do anything for hire. . . He has no principles to contend with; he therefore finds it easy to do what is most pleasant to corrupt nature and most popular with his companions. When the young voyager comes to his winter quarters, he finds he wants many things to fit him for this new existence . . . he applies to an Indian who has got some daughters, or two or three wives; here he is quickly served, ... He sleeps there, . . . thus the unfortunate voyager forms his connexion with the natives, and raises an offspring. He may continue here two or three years, and enjoy the benefit of his helpmate. He goes off in the summer, returns in the autumn, and perhaps finds the same young woman given to another. This does not distract his mind; he forms another connexion as speedily as possible; . . .[82]

With the officers and skilled tradesmen circumstances were somewhat altered. The superior financial resources of officers and older skilled servants appear to be a relevant factor in determining the longer duration of their marriages. Not only would they be able to acquire the more eligible women but they could provide greater economic security and material benefits for their native-born spouse. At the same time they would find it easier to transport their families to a new posting should they be so inclined. The longer duration and stability of their marriages possibly reflects some

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[82] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833.

concern for the real problem of venereal disease associated with "promiscuous" behavior.[83] No doubt individual concepts of "proper" behavior were a significant factor in determining a stable and enduring relationship.[84] While the duration of trading post marriages appears to be related to the social gradient of the trading post there are exceptions. In at least one instance a polygamous relationship existed.[85] In view of the expenses involved the possessor of two wives was probably an officer. Needless to say on retirement he remained in Rupert's Land.

The varying duration of trading post marriages au façon du nord suggests conclusions about the stability and cohesiveness of the families involved as well as the nature of parental influence in acculturating the young to the world in which many would live out their lives. The problems encountered within such families are indicated in another passage of Cockran's letter:

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[83]Glover, "Introduction," E. E. Rich, (ed.), Cumberland . . . , Second Series, xlvi.

[84]Although there was an absence of community-wide standards in this area, numbers of individuals reflected conventional British middle-class standards of the day. For an example note the reaction of Peter Fidler to his son's involvement with James Inkster's wife. It was a question of "right and wrong", not simply a question of difficulties between two servants affecting the post's operation. See H.B.C.A., B.22/a/21, Brandon House Journals, May 6, 1819.

[85]Rev. John West, Substance of a Journal (London, 1824), 104.

> The woman despises him [her husband] in her heart; calls him an old dog, neglects to please and never studies to make herself useful; the children, from having descended from women of various tribes, and neglected by their father in infancy, are without filial or brotherly affection. The voyager's house in every respect, is a house divided against itself.[86]

The larger community appeared to offer little assistance to the family in meeting various stresses and maintaining itself as a successful social institution. To this extent such families existed in a cultural vacuum. The larger community appeared to furnish few if any standards detailing "correct" roles and relationships in the family. Few if any conventions were apparent that facilitated a return to normal following a period of crisis for a particular family. Sanctions were limited to the threat or use of violence by a particular individual.[87] Many trading post families in their turbulent lives reflected the cultural vacuum that marked those areas of community life distinct from the fur trade and the company of men.

In contrast other families marked by marriages of long duration and extensive kinship connections seemed to develop their own conventions and sanctions for regulating behavior within the family and within the larger community.

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[86] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833.

[87] Again there is a paucity of information in the documents: but the use of physical violence in some families must have been known; else why would Fidler have commented on Inkster's kind treatment of his wife in the affair with Charles Fidler?

Particularly among the officers the British-born parent continued to play a major role. Men such as James Bird and William Hemmings Cook lived to see their grandchildren married. In such cases the extended family remained in part dependent upon the financial resources of its head. Through this means the British-born head of the family exerted a significant influence over his children and their children as well. While the examples cited above were no doubt exceptional it seems evident that the British-born husband and father in families marked by marriages of long duration would exert a meaningful influence. In time the extended family ties that developed from these marriages made a significant impact upon the young.

The varying duration of marriages au façon du nord suggests some conclusions about the variety of influences upon the young. In marriages of short duration there were frequent changes in the individual who fulfilled the role of husband and father. At the same time it is quite possible that these men had little interest in the children in such a family. As a result the influence of the male parent would be minimal. If the mother remained in close contact with an Indian band it appears that, culturally speaking, the mixed-blood children were Indian.[88] If such contact had

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[88]Even in the trading post many of the Country-born were more at home in the Cree language of their mothers than the English language of their fathers. Difficulties were experienced in communication following their migration to Red River. See West, 26.

been lost leaving few if any kinship connections the young became part of the world of the trading post; hangers-on drifting where chance and inclination might direct them. While in the lands bordering the Plains many might be able to function adequately as hunters, in the woodland regions they often failed to develop the habits and skills that would allow them to function successfully either as Indian trappers or as Company servants.[89] Even many mixed-bloods hired by the Company after 1800 proved difficult to handle. Peter Fidler noted this at Brandon House:

> February 26, 1816. Monday - Jno Favel [Country-born] refuses an order to travel . . . but I was obliged to threaten him before he would consent. These half-Breeds in general are very careless and don't mind fining them part of their wages, personal chastisement is the only thing with these kind of People, but the men from the old Country it [the fine] has a great effect on, . . .[90]

Eighteen months later Fidler's Journal records and entry in a similar vein:

> August 12, 1817. Tuesday. Lyons [mixed-blood son of a Jewish trader at Michilimackinac] was made free beginning of last August as he refused to accompany James Inkster, the Master then here, to the Elbow House . . . Humphrey Favil [Country-born] has been free [the] same time on account of bad behavior . . . - Jim Favil [Country-born] got his liberty from me as he refused to go down to Jack River when desired: . . . .[91]

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[89] This factor may help explain the migration of large numbers of Country-born, lacking a living British-born parent, to Red River after 1820. The absence of necessary skills may help serve to explain why numbers did not join the Métis at this time.

[90] H.B.C.A., B.22/a/19, Brandon House Journals, February 26, 1816.

[91] Ibid., B/22/a/20, Brandon House Journals, August 12, 1817.

While the actions of these young men may reflect the outlook of men who placed their social obligations and pleasures before their responsibilities, they do indicate that many of the young men raised in or around the trading post could not function particularly successfully as servants. The grim consequences concerned parents.

In families marked by some degree of stability and headed by a British-born parent, purposeful steps were often taken to ensure a place for mixed-blood children in the trading post when they reached maturity. The problem was especially important for the man of property. If his mixed-blood children were to find a place in the trading post commensurate with his aspirations means had to be found to counteract many influences arising in the larger community. While the problem of providing for mixed-blood daughters may not have caused as much concern as the problem of establishing sons in the trade, their lot was not ignored. Skills acquired from their Indian or mixed-blood mothers were often marketable in the trading post. Nevertheless, in the minds of several of their British-born fathers, their future well-being was related to a secure and stable marriage to a skilled tradesman or officer. For this reason British concepts of "correct" female behavior were encouraged but to find the means in a trading post was difficult. The officers at York Factory, in 1807, addressed the Governor and Committee in London on this point:

> We receive with sincere Gratitude your Honors permission to offer our Sentiments on this most interesting subject and feeling as we sensibly do for the present helpless condition of our Children beg leave to lay before you the following remarks.
>
> In the first instance, it is the anxious desire of every Parent that the Happiness resulting from Education and Religion should be imparted without distinction to the Children of both sexes and that the female youth in particular should experience that delicacy and attention to their persons their peculiar situation requires - Native women as attendants on these young persons seems improper - their Society would keep alive the Indian language and with it its native superstition which ought to be obliterated from the mind with all possible care -[92]

The Governor and Committee replied with primary texts and a school master, William Garrioch, but the effort came to naught.[93] The problem of educating the young was even more serious for Country-born sons. While some British-born parents, realizing the difficulties facing their sons, may have taken steps to have them brought up as Indians,[94] the overwhelming majority who took an interest looked to their own background. In and about the post they encouraged activities that emphasized the skills and habits of their British heritage. Fidler was no exception: "February 15, 1816. Cooper [James Inkster], Thomas and Charles Fidler keg making as I

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[92] Ibid., A.11/118, General Letter to the Governor and Committee, September 15, 1807.

[93] Rich, II, 296.

[94] Children knowingly left with the Indians to be raised in their ways were not necessarily reflections of "neglect" on the part of the British parent. Rather it could conceivably be a purposeful step based on the parent's assessment of what the future held for their children.

wish my Sons to learn everything that is useful -"[95] Later entries detailing Charles's involvement with Inkster's wife reveal an extremely disappointed father. The environment of the trading post was not conducive to the values and qualities of character that Fidler hoped to inculcate in his sons. Other officers, who perceived this difficulty and who could afford to, sent their sons to the homeland to be educated. With some notable exceptions such as the sons of William Sinclair and Thomas Bunn, the results were not encouraging.[96] Many sons of officers remained dependent upon their fathers for financial support. Several such as the sons of James Bird owed positions as writers and clerks to nepotism until the "new broom" in the person of Governor George Simpson swept the Company's service clean of employees whose skills and habits of life were not equal to those the Company believed it could find in recruits from the homeland.[97] Many Country-born sons of officers found themselves viewed as

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[95] H.B.C.A., B.22/a/19, Brandon House Journal, February 15, 1816.

[96] The British-born assessment of the Country-born focussed on their ability to function successfully as officers or servants in the fur trade. At the officer level such criteria as conduct, in private and in business, judgement and competence with the written language were used. Their very real deficiencies in terms of the needs of the trade were considered to be aspects of what can be termed their "Indianness".

[97] H.B.C.A., E.18/7, Parliamentary Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company, the testimony of Edward Elice.

"second raters" by more recent arrivals from Great Britain.[98] Even more tragically some of them may have accepted this assessment. In such circumstances even those mixed-blood youths who had acquired the ethos of the man of property from their fathers would find that the possibilities for achieving the goal were remote. Nor was the future bright for those youths who expressed less concern for the ethos of the man of property and were more attuned to the ways of Rupert's Land.

The signing of the Deed Poll in 1821 ended the period of violence that had marked the closing decade of the competition between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. In the years that followed numerous retired officers and servants and their mixed-blood families set their course for Red River. The British-born who had served the old Hudson's Bay Company viewed their future in this agricultural settlement in the context of their British heritage. But at the same time they and their families were the product of a cultural tradition that stretched back over a century in Rupert's Land. While the trading post functioned as an outpost of commercial empire, consisting of a relatively numerous transient population and remaining in continual dependent contact with the British homeland, it did represent a unique adaptation of British ways to new

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[98] Ibid., A.34/1, Servants' Characters and Staff Records, comments of Simpson.

environmental circumstances. The major determinant in directing this adaptation was the fur trade.

The Bay Tradition, the way of life in the different posts of the Hudson's Bay Company, manifested itself in the similarity in social structure, in value systems around which individuals oriented their lives and in aspects of behavior associated with family life. At the same time individual lives reflected the diversity of interests and aspirations that would be expected in communities whose environment often differed significantly and whose inhabitants reflected varying regional, class and ethnic origins. The cultural baggage that accompanied the Country-born to Red River included elements held in common from the fur trade experience as well as the variety of differences derived from individual thought and experience.

Among the elements held in common by the inhabitants was their familiarity with the various means of structuring their community. The pyramidal hierarchy of rank that constituted the social structure was known and accepted no matter whether the individual attached significant importance to it or not. The pre-eminence and leadership of the officer was recognized and accepted. Should the Country-born encounter a similar structure derived from similar criteria in Red River, familiarity would make a positive response possible. The same can be said for the other means used by the community to structure their society. The camaraderie

of the adult males and kinship connections were interwoven with the rank structure to form a structural complex that would be carried to Red River. There, circumstances and influences may well have altered the structure to some degree. Yet such influences would be evaluated in terms of the existing complex with which everyone was familiar. Changes would occur but the direction of such changes was dictated by what had existed in the trading post.

Equally familiar to all the inhabitants were the two value systems that manifested themselves in the different modes of behavior of various individuals. Each person would be familiar with the different attitudes attached to the various tasks necessary for the successful functioning of the trade. Some would emphasize the remunerative aspects of work in the light of the goal of becoming men of property. Others would see more attraction in the social interplay that work offered rather than in its financial possibilities. The individual would have his own preference and note the preferences of others. At the same time he would be familiar with the interrelationship of the different value systems and the means by which the community structured itself. The rank structure, the camaraderie of the adult males and family ties were not distinct from the community's value systems. They were linked in a manner that was as familiar to the individual as the physical world in which he lived.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the trading post

community was its failure to find a satisfactory place for its young adults, particularly its males. The chaotic nature of life in some families had an impact on the young that was of cardinal importance in this respect. Yet this alone was not the cause of the difficulty. The nature of the fur trade itself and the demands it did and did not make on the populace bore a major responsibility. The fur trade could not absorb the younger generation in the numbers that the community produced. Nor could the community produce the young people who could function "successfully" in the Company's service. For better or for worse the Company still looked to the Orkney Islands for its servants and to England and Scotland for its officers. Perhaps Red River was to offer a solution to this problem. Or perhaps it merely delayed its emergence for another generation.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDATION YEARS, 1820-1826

The year 1820 marked the transition from the violence and turbulence of competition in the fur trade to the relative calm and stability of monopoly. At the fork of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, Selkirk's infant settlement, established eight years earlier, faced new problems. Those cast off by both companies mingled with those who remained from Selkirk's efforts to attract colonists. Retired officers and servants with their mixed-blood families were beginning to drift in from trading posts near and far. Most of them, however, would not appear until the relatively large scale migrations began three years later. In the Settlement, a couple of miles below the forks, north of Point Douglas, a few Scots crofters who, with their families, had been evicted from their Highland farms and saved from a future in the slums of one of the industrial cities of Great Britain by the philanthropic interest of the young earl, struggled against men and nature to wrest a living from their river lots. To the south on the east side of the Red, along the Seine, the Demeuron settlers indifferently troubled the soil. Recruited as soldier-settlers by Selkirk from the de Meuron and de Wattville regiments, mercenaries disbanded in Canada

after the War of 1812-14, the Demeurons represented many of the nationalities of Europe although predominantly German-speaking and Roman Catholic. Linked to the Roman Catholic mission on the east bank of the Red at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers and thus loosely associated with the few French Canadians settled about the mission and with the buffalo-hunting Métis on the plains to the south and west, the wifeless Demeurons looked forward to the coming of German-speaking Protestant Swiss townspeople and their families, scheduled to arrive in the summer of 1821. A scattering of British-born officers and servants with their mixed-blood families settled about the Company's post and the Anglican mission near the forks. The latter had been established by the Reverend John West in 1820, two years after French Canadian priests from Lower Canada set up their mission across the river. The mosaic of Red River was completed by the occasional bands of Saulteaux wandering through the Settlement to hunt, trap and trade.

The settlers had survived the frosts, drought and grasshoppers that had plagued their efforts to farm. They had also survived the animosities that arose between the several communities. The fur trade competition in its closing decade in the region of the Settlement was responsible in part for an enduring antagonism that was never far from people's minds in Red River. On June 19, 1816, Governor Semple, Selkirk's representative in the Settlement, and

twenty other settlers from Great Britain had fallen before the guns and scalping knives of a band of Métis under the command of Cuthbert Grant, an employee of the North West Company.[1] The memory of the "massacre" at Seven Oaks set the problems of the foundation years in a context that boded ill for the future should the populace fail to create institutions and conventions permitting each community some sense of fulfilment.

The major problem facing the Settlement during the six years following the signing of the Deed Poll in 1821 was the determination of its relationship to the fur trade. The Hudson's Bay Company's directors believed that this could be not merely satisfactory but mutually beneficial.[2] Many of their officers in the field were less hopeful and events were to confirm them in their pessimism. The missionaries both Anglican and Roman Catholic saw the Settlement as the base from which half a continent could be evangelized. With the Company they sought a stable and secure society modeled on European example but purged of its corruption and

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[1] Half of those who died at Seven Oaks were "Colony Servants" carried on the books of the Hudson's Bay Company. See H.B.C.A., A.30/15, Lists of Servants, noting the dates of deaths. This at least in part explains the enduring enmity engendered by Seven Oaks. The nature of Grant's relationship with the North West Company is set forth in a letter P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 24, Simpson to Colvile, May 20, 1822, in which Simpson relates a conversation he had with the Métis leader.

[2] Rich, II, 295.

godlessness.[3] With the settlers they shared the view that fur trade was secondary to their interests. To the settlers of the different communities the fur trade, quite naturally, was seen in terms of its benefits or hindrances to their aspirations. As a market for their produce and skills it was viewed favorably; as a vested interest denying them the fulfillment of just aspirations it was an unacceptable tyranny. A détente among the various interests in the Settlement was necessary for the establishment of a functioning society made up of different communities. The difficulties in accommodating these interests and determining what the relationship between the Settlement and the fur trade would be were significantly influenced by the legacy from the Selkirk period.

I. THE LEGACY OF THE SELKIRK PERIOD

The Earl of Selkirk and his relatives and friends on the Hudson's Bay Company's Governing Committee had a major influence on the affairs of Rupert's Land in the decade preceding the signing of the Deed Poll.[4] The Company's victory over the North West Company owed much to the business and administrative acumen of Selkirk's brother-in-law, Andrew Wedderburn (later Colvile), his other brother-in-law

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[3] G. L. Nute, (ed.), Documents Relating to the North West Missions, 1815-27 (St. Paul, 1942), Rev. J. N. Dumoulin to Bishop Plessis, September 10, 1818.

[4] Rich, II, 297.

John Halkett and their two close associates, Nicholas Garry and Benjamin Harrison.[5] The reforms and innovations of their "retrenching system" affected not only the manner in which the trade was conducted but aspects of life in the Company's trading posts only indirectly associated with the trade. The "ripple effect" of the retrenching system served to disrupt further the lives of many already experiencing severe difficulties in the trading post.

The retrenchment system emerged with the appearance of Wedderburn on the governing committee of the Hudson's Bay Company in the spring of 1810.[6] His advent was crucial in the Company's affairs. Having absorbed the XY Company in 1804 the North West Company dominated the fur trade. Outmanning and outmaneuvering its rival, it controlled the fur wealth in the Athabaska country and stood on the threshold of the Columbia. Elsewhere in Rupert's Land, even in the immediate hinterland of the coastal depots on Hudson Bay, their opponents were on the defensive. In Hudson's Bay Company circles two solutions were offered. In the field some officers advocated expansion utilizing the aggressive entrepreneurial techniques of their rivals.[7] At home on the governing committee, the view that was gaining increasing acceptance saw the fur trade farmed out to individual traders with

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[5] Ibid., 273, 344, 398.

[6] Ibid., 291.

[7] Ibid., 288.

the Company continuing its direct involvement in Rupert's Land by concentrating on the exploitation of its timber resources.[8] Wedderburn won support for a middle course. The Company would remain in the fur trade but rather than adopting the continuing and somewhat haphazard expansionist techniques of the Nor'Westers it would first lay the emphasis on establishing the Company's trade at existing posts on a sound financial basis.[9]

While cost-cutting was an essential feature of the retrenching system other reforms were equally important. In imitation of the Nor'Westers, officers were given a share in the profits.[10] The specialized functions of each post were better integrated into the overall scheme of the trade. Steps were taken to improve consultation between the Governor and Committee in London and officers in the field. At the same time, combining sound business interest with a genuine philanthropic concern for the welfare of their employees, an agricultural settlement was started in association with Lord Selkirk.[11] The settlement promised to be a source of produce and labor for the fur trade as well as a haven for retiring British-born officers and servants with mixed-blood

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[8] Ibid., 290.

[9] Ibid., 291.

[10] Ibid., 292.

[11] Ibid., 295

families.[12] It would also fit in well with Selkirk's view of the Settlement as a means of alleviating the sufferings of families in the Highlands of Scotland forced to leave their homes.

The response of officers, servants and their families to the retrenching system was mixed. Young officers could appreciate the promise of improved remuneration related to individual merit. Officers and servants alike recognized the effectiveness of measures that lent themselves to a more efficient and aggressive conduct of the trade. But for many the system heralded unwanted change and dislocation. It intensified competition. In many areas some sort of accommodation had emerged between the rival companies; the shattering of these prescribed limits rendered life more chaotic.[13] Violence or the threat of violence became commonplace. The new system also involved the evaluation of Company employees and the retirement of the least effective. Servants and officers alike had come to terms with their circumstances and evolved patterns of conduct and attitudes which expressed their best interests but not necessarily those of the Company. The holders of such "sinecures" who could not or would not change were vulnerable. Added

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[12] Ibid.

[13] This development can be noted in several post Journals. For an example see H.B.C.A., B.22/a/7-21, Brandon House Journals, 1800-19.

emphasis was placed on competence in the written language and book-keeping procedures. Those marginal in these areas were pushed beyond their level of ability. In assessing William Smith, Simpson found him "stupid and inactive neither good clerk nor Trader."[14] Others had developed personal habits that could not be sustained. The "grog pot" had taken its toll. Donald MacKenzie was seen as "Unsteady and superficial man, a Lieut. in the army, can bluster, drink and pilfer, neither a good clerk nor Trader."[15] George Bird, a Country-born son of James Bird, was "fond of liquor".[16] George Taylor, Country-born, had to "be watched otherwise he will take to his Bottle."[17] Still others found that the increased economy they were to display in dispensing goods threatened their position in a web of kinship that emerged around them, both in the trading post and in relations to surrounding Indian bands.[18] This aspect of the retrenching system, the evaluation of individual performances in the trade and the elimination of the inadequate, became dominant only after the

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[14] See H.B.C.A., A.34/1, Servants' Characters and Staff Records, 1822-30, entry for William Smith.

[15] Ibid., entry for Donald MacKenzie.

[16] Ibid., entry for George Bird.

[17] Ibid., entry for George Taylor.

[18] Ibid., entry for John Richard MacKay. This factor would probably explain the criticism of MacKay for "extravagance" in trading with Indians.

appointment of George Simpson as Governor of the Northern Department in 1821. Ruthlessly but fairly he pared the incompetent and the ineffective from the trade. Many British-born officers and servants and their Country-born children directed their steps to Red River nursing a sense of personal injustice and an animosity against the Company as it developed after 1821.[19]

The Country-born arrived in Red River to find unsolved the fundamental problem of the definition of the Settlement's relationship to the fur trade. The problem was obscured by the violence of the trading competition in the region of the Settlement. To Selkirk the fundamental problem was not the definition of the Settlement's relationship to the fur trade but the elimination of a body of men whose policies as he saw them reflected their determination to use any means to gain their ends.[20] The legacy of violence from this period, symbolized by the "massacre" of Seven Oaks, for years split the Settlement between "North West Company" and "Hudson's Bay Company," "French" and "English," Roman Catholic and Protestant, hunter and farmer. Seven Oaks had been an object lesson in what the fate of the Settlement could be should adequate means of communication and conciliation not be established. Yet the animosities engendered

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[19] H.B.C.A., D.4/8, Simpson to Governor and Committee, June 5, 1824.

[20] Selkirk's enmity towards the North West Company was a major block to ending competition in the fur trade. See Martin, 167.

there, the nascent nationalism expressed by the Métis in their conception of themselves as the "New Nation" and the denigration by the British-born of the Métis ways as French, Roman Catholic and nomadic, were explosive charges that required only an incident to set the settlement aflame.[21]

The memory of Seven Oaks was not the only legacy that confronted the Country-born on their arrival. A negative attitude toward authority per se had developed among the various communities. In large part this too derived from the violence of competition in the immediate region. The Kildonan Scots and the Demeurons saw the officers of the North West Company, the power behind the Métis, as responsible for their trials and tribulations.[22] The Métis saw the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company in a similar light.[23] In time a negative view of those in authority in one's own camp developed. The Métis with their burgeoning sense of themselves as the "New Nation" felt betrayed by the failure of the North West Company to uphold their interests in the

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[21]An assault on Cuthbert Grant while he was employed as a clerk after the end of competition led Simpson to take quick and effective action against those involved and to squelch any popular support in the British sector of the Settlement of the guilty parties. See H.B.C.A., D.4/3, Simpson to W. H. Cook, November 26, 1823, regarding the testimony of two of his sons at the trial.

[22]Alexander Ross, Chapters 1-5, in his sympathy with the Selkirk settlers suggests this view.

[23]See Giraud's treatment of "La Naissance du Nationalisme Métis," beginning 531.

accommodation with the Hudson's Bay Company.[24] The Kildonan Scots and the Demeurons were equally sensitive to what they believed was the preponderance given the fur trade's interests over those of the Settlement by the Hudson's Bay Company officers.[25]

These problems were accentuated by the claims of two conflicting authorities. All the rights and responsibilities of government as they were then understood had passed to Selkirk with the land grant of Assiniboia.[26] At the same time the rights and responsibilities associated with the conduct of the fur trade remained with the Hudson's Bay Company.[27] This division of authority created difficulties from the beginning. A partial resolution of this problem came with Selkirk's death when the various rights and responsibilities of government passed to his estate, whose leading executor, Andrew Colvile, was also the leading director on the Company's governing committee. Yet the clash in the early 20's between Chief Factor John Clarke, the Company's senior resident officer in Red River, and Andrew Bulger, the Governor of the Colony for the Selkirk estate, showed that

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[24]Note Grant's reaction to his former employers in P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 24, Simpson to Colvile, May 20, 1822.

[25]The grievances of the Demeurons eventually led to threats of pillage. See P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

[26]Rich, II, 301.

[27]Ibid.

the problem remained. A further step was taken in 1824 when the two offices were vested in the same person, Chief Factor Donald MacKenzie.[28] Finally in 1834 the Selkirk estate returned the grant of Assiniboia with its accompanying rights and responsibilities to the Company.[29] While the later years were relatively stable the difficulty of determining respective areas of responsibility on a practical basis had lessened the inhabitants' respect for and confidence in the governing structure. This also contributed to a negative view of authority itself.

This negative view of authority owed much to the behavior of those in positions of responsibility in the colonial administration. From the documents it would appear that this aspect of the problem reached its fullest expression during the years Alexander McDonell served as Governor of the Settlement from Semple's death to 1822. McDonell, the "Grasshopper Governor", and his relatives, who constituted most of the administrative officers of the Settlement, were held in low regard by the people. In the words of one "Principal Settler", Thomas Thomas:

> Governor Mr. McDonell is pretty universally disliked, I might almost say dispised [sic], every common settler speaks of him in the most free manner as a dishonest

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[28] Chief Factor Donald Mackenzie succeeded Chief Factor John Clarke as officer-in-charge at Red River in 1823. On Governor Pelly's departure he succeeded as well to his office.

[29] Martin, 223.

> man who loses no opportunity of cheating them, . . . [He is] an example of Drunkeness, Adultry [sic] and other vices. . . .[30]

These accusations appear to have been well-based on fact rather than mere gossip.[31] Thus in the minds of the settlers, all authority tended to be suspect. This together with the novelty of their circumstances and the question of the Settlement's relationship to the fur trade created an explosive mixture. "Community action" outside the existing structures could produce situations reminiscent of Seven Oaks.

The community that awaited the Country-born migrating from the interior, was eloquently described by the recently arrived Governor of the Northern Department, George Simpson:

> Take the Colony all in all, and it is certainly an extraordinary place, the Great folks would cut each other's throats if they could with safety; there is nothing like a social feeling among them and the best Friends to Day are the bitterest Enemies tomorrow: among the lower orders it is much the same, they have a certain feeling of pride, independence and equality among them which is subvertive [sic] of good order in Society: they are opposed to each other in little factions and every man in the Colony looks to his arms alone for safety and protection, he knows as the Indian does, that he has some lurking for to take advantage of him if off his guard, and to that general feeling may be ascribed the respect shown to each other as among such a congregation of Renegados there must be many whose conduct is more regulated by circumstances than correct principles.[32]

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[30] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 23, Thomas Thomas to Governor William Williams, June 12, 1821.

[31] Ibid., Vol. 24, Simpson to Colvile, May 20, 1822.

[32] Ibid.

For the Country-born the move from the trading post to the Settlement was to jump from the frying pan into the fire. The challenge of the foundation years in Red River was the need to create social institutions that would resolve the uncertainties facing the populace and promote the development of each community in its own traditions with due regard for the interests of the others. The leaders in this quest were the Company and the Missions.

II. THE COMPANY AND RED RIVER

The Settlement's relationship to the fur trade was of paramount importance to the directors of the Company in London, the officers and servants in the field and the settlers in Red River. The idea of a settlement was an integral part of Colvile's retrenchment system. The Selkirk years removed any romantic notion that it could be easily integrated into the Company's interests. Nevertheless the interest of several directors remained high.[33] They, like some of their officers and servants in Rupert's Land, saw the settlement as a source of provisions and employees better adapted to the trade and less costly than those available in Great Britain.[34] To men like Colvile, Halkett, Garry and Harrison it could fulfill in part their individual and corporate responsibilities. Faithful officers and servants who had given their

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[33] H.B.C.A., D5/1, Governor and Committee to Simpson, March 12, 1824.

[34] Rich, II, 294.

best years to the Company could, with their families, find a haven in Red River. Those with means could establish comfortable lives in familiar surroundings. Those in need could be assisted according to their circumstances.[35] At the same time the Company could fulfill its responsibilities to the British public who, through the government, had bestowed the rights associated with the Company's monopoly. The public expected the Company, in the context of the times, to take appropriate steps to promote the welfare of the people of Rupert's Land, Indian, Mixed-blood and European.[36] Those involved never questioned the validity of these goals. Yet they understood that the Settlement was their "Achilles heel". It was a major route into the heartland of the fur trade. As a sanctuary for competitors Red River could destroy the fur trade; not only in terms of profit but in terms of the peace and stability of Rupert's Land.[37] The violence of the preceding decade made clear what competition and excessive use of alcohol offered the inhabitants.

The Selkirk period in Red River had not determined whether the settlement would be an asset or a liability,

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[35]Seasonal work was often given to retired servants with large families. For an example see H.B.C.A., B.235/a/6, Winnipeg Post Journal, July 30, 1824.

[36]Ibid., A.6/20, Governor and Committee to Simpson, March 12, 1824.

[37]Ibid., B.235/a/4, Winnipeg Post Journal, September 30, 1822.

whether it would support the fur trade or harbour the seeds of its destruction. The directors of the Company envisaged a community modelled on British example.[38] Due allowance had to be made for the particular geographic and social circumstances existing at Red River but the fundamental ways and values, to their minds the benefits, of British civilization were to be provided. Farming would provide the economic basis of life by the sale of surplus production to the fur trade and, in the case of items like flax, wool, hemp and tallow, to the British market.[39] At the same time the social and political institutions of a British community, the pillars of an hierarchically structured organic community, would emerge. Behavior appropriate to these institutions would be expected and encouraged. The Company's officers and the missionaries of both churches would play major roles in establishing such a community and in its development.[40] The alternative was a lawless frontier settlement dependent upon the illicit trade in furs and regulated by "might" rather than "right".

To effect their concept of what Red River should be, the directors in London had to win the acquiescence of a sizeable element in the ranks of their employees and, among

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[38] Ibid., A.6/20, Governor and Committee to Simpson, March 8, 1822.

[39] Rich, II, 508.

[40] H.B.C.A., A.6/20, Governor and Committee to Simpson, March 8, 1822.

the inhabitants of the Settlement, the active, if not enthusiastic, support of key individuals in each community. The man charged with this responsibility was the recently created Governor of the Northern Department, George Simpson.[41] Responsible already for implementing the policies of the Governor and Committee in London with respect to the reorganization of the fur trade, Simpson was saddled with the challenge of Red River--a challenge that could make or break him. Simpson responded quickly and sensitively to the director's expectations, appreciating not only the well defined limits they placed on his authority but also the carrot-and-stick means that he could use.[42] He successfully met the challenge. In the eyes of the inhabitants of Rupert's Land he became a leader without peer in ability, power and influence, both in the management of the fur trade and the affairs of the Settlement. In the eyes of the directors in London, he was an employee without peer in resourcefulness, adaptability and devotion to their interests.[43] Simpson found ample scope for his abilities in Red River. Plots of

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[41] Rich, II, 409.

[42] A. S. Morton, Sir George Simpson (Toronto, 1944), 66.

[43] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 26, Simpson to Colvile, August 9, 1824, notes Simpson's appreciation for an accolade delivered by the Governor and Committee.

insurrection and counterplots, illicit trading in furs and smuggling, petty graft, corruption and scandal in local government, threats of attack by the Sioux to the south and clashes between opposing interests, the missionaries included, consumed his attention.[44] One event after another threatened to render his efforts futile. More than anything else Simpson needed time to prove that a relationship beneficial to both parties could be established between the fur trade and the settlement.

An accommodation between these interests could only be achieved with the good-will of the Company's officers in Rupert's Land. After 1821 many of these men were former wintering partners in the North West Company who had developed their negative views in the atmosphere created by events in the Selkirk period.[45] They were joined by officers whose careers had been spent in the service of the older Company.[46] Their greatest worry was that Red River would become a nest of free traders linked to the distant but advancing American

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[44]The events of this period are enumerated in numerous standard works. Also see Gene M. Gressley, "The Red River Settlement: Chaos and Emerging Order," North Dakota History, Vol. XXVII, 1960, 153-165.

[45]P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

[46]Ibid.

frontier.[47] Even without this development the Settlement could prove a costly liability by attracting Indians from near and far to eke out a hand to mouth existence about the Settlement rather than by trapping furs.[48] The resources of the fur trade would be stretched, perhaps to the breaking point, should the buffalo hunt and the crops fail.[49] Events would validate these views. Yet Simpson persevered. He won the acquiescence, if not the enthusiastic support of these men, first, by establishing his authority, and second by showing that means could be taken, not without cost, to meet effectively the problems envisaged by the officers. By the end of the foundation years several officers recognized the benefits the Settlement conferred not only on the fur trade but on the fur trader as a private person. The Red River Academy of the Anglican mission in particular was valued for the sound education it imparted to their children.

Simpson won the acquiescence of the officers by establishing his leadership over them. His effectiveness as an administrator was admitted and admired.[50] He also

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[47] Ibid., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 24, Simpson to Colvile, May 20, 1822.

[48] H.B.C.A., D.4/1, Simpson to Thomas Thomas, May 13, 1822.

[49] The fear of want and the possibility of starvation arising from a calamity of nature are found in many of the documents originating from experienced hands in Red River.

[50] Rich, II, 452.

established himself as a most able politician. It was he who did much to reconcile personal animosities between former North West Company wintering partners and Hudson's Bay Company officers. Men who had traded sword blows and pistol shots were subjected to Simpson's "stratagems in bows and smiles."[51] His success here established his ascendancy over the other officers. Simpson became a friend and a confidant to most of the officers, ever ready to offer favors and advice in private matters as well as business.[52] In bringing the officers under his influence Simpson could be as harsh as he was pleasant. In a letter to Colvile in 1823, Simpson recounted an incident that demonstrated his firmness:

> I found it necessary to show my power and authority and in full Council gave them a lecture which had the desired effect, made them look on each other with suspicion and restored their confidence in myself: . . . I found it necessary to act with firmness, convinced them that I could talk loud also, and made an example of Robertson [Chief Factor Colin Robertson] to begin with; . . . I have made such an exposure this season of his mal administration in the Saskatchewine and told him so many home truths in [the] presence of the whole Council that he is quite crestfallen and will I think give no more trouble.[53]

Simpson's various techniques of persuasion proved successful with the officers. They accepted his leadership and, for

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[51] As quoted in A. S. Morton, A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71 (Toronto, 1939), 626.

[52] In later years this particular aspect of Simpson's behavior was an essential feature of his influence both in the fur trade and in Red River.

[53] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

better or worse, they accepted the relationship between the Settlement and the fur trade envisaged by the directors in London.

In seeking to establish a "civilized" community in Red River Simpson and the men whom he represented placed much stress upon cooperation among the "higher orders" of the community and their acceptance of the social responsibilities implied in their position.[54] For this reason it had been necessary to have the Company's officers accept the Settlement. For the same reason it was essential to achieve a détente with another element of the populace, the "Principal Settlers."[55] It was not enough simply to appoint them to governmental positions or encourage their active leadership in the economic, social and religious life of the Settlement. The Principal Settlers in their behavior, public and private, had to demonstrate that they accepted the responsibilities placed upon them by circumstances. Only in this fashion could the general populace lose its distrust of those in authority. The principal settlers for the most part were

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[54]On arriving in Red River, Rev. D. T. Jones, hoping to avoid problems encountered by his predecessor, attempted to resign from the Council of Assiniboia. The Governor and Committee apparently refused to accept this course of action. Jones recalled this incident in C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journal, November 12, 1835.

[55]Initially the term "Principal Settlers" referred to persons, largely retired officers, who had received relatively large grants of land in Red River. In time in included those involved in the local government.

retired British-born officers. At first glance they appeared admirably suited for the role Simpson and the directors envisaged for them. Familiar with the usages of command, sensitive to the problems and interests of the fur trade, linked by ties of kinship through the marriages of their mixed-blood children with each other and to a lesser extent with the Métis and the Indians,[56] they seemed to possess the necessary prerequisites for leadership in Red River. Unfortunately for Simpson the legacy of the previous decade had left its mark. As former fur traders they had their doubts about the viability of a Settlement sustaining itself in Red River. A few may have had bitter memories of the violence of the competition that were associated with the Métis.[57] Many had a personal sense of injustice directed against the Company arising out of the reasons that had led to retirement. Not a few had acquired habits of intemperance that compromised the "lower orders" concept of them as community leaders.[58] Their

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[56]The marriage registers suggest close links among the principal families as well as with several of the servants' families. It would appear that some officers had married au façon du nord, Métis women. It is difficult to determine the extent to which kinship connections were maintained. In Red River the documents would suggest there was little intermarriage between the two.

[57]C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, February 2, 1832.

[58]In part the demise of the ill-starred Buffalo Wool Company came about as a result of this factor. See H.B.C.A., D.4/3, Simpson to John Pritchard, June 5, 1824.

willingness or ability to accept the social role envisaged for them was notoriously absent. As John West saw "few possessed any active spirit of public improvement."[59] Simpson was more direct in his comments:

> Our council [Council of Assiniboia] are really worse than nothing. McDonell [ex-Governor Alexander McDonell] is disaffected and the bitterest Enemy to the Executors in this place; Thomas [retired officer Thomas Thomas, H.B. Co.] is timid and weak as a child, Cook [retired officer William Hemmings Cook, H.B. Co.] is like Thomas but Drunken and without either body or mind, Pritchard [retired officer John Pritchard, N.W. Co.] is froth, Matthey [Captain Frederick Matthey, Demeuron] is discontented and designing, wishes to be popular among his Countrymen and hostile to the Company and Executors, Logan [retired officer Robert Logan, H.B. Co.] has been associated with McDonell in his speculations while in power, indeed they are nothing more or less in my opinion than a pair of Thieves and stick to each other like Wax and Mr. Jones [Rev. D. T. Jones, C.M.S.] altho' well disposed wants experience, in short there is not one Man among them who has any pretension to the title he bears, they have no public spirit nor general view towards the Welfare and good Government of the place but are entirely influenced and actuated by Self in every thought, word and action.[60]

Again Simpson had recourse to his "stratagems" and, on occasion, used rather forceful means to create attitudes in the minds of the principal settlers commensurate with his aims. Direct confrontation and humiliation before one's peers as well as advice, encouragement and favours were utilized.[61] It remained to be seen whether such techniques of persuasion would prove successful.

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[59] West, 60.

[60] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 26, Simpson to Colvile, May 31, 1824.

[61] Ibid., Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

Of all the communities in Red River during the foundation years the acquiescence of the Métis was most essential to success. Though the Demeurons proved troublesome, threatening violence should they not be given unlimited credit on demand at the Colony store,[62] they retreated before the forceful stand taken by Simpson and the Colony Governor, Robert Pelly.[63] The Métis were a different matter. Their numbers were already approaching the preponderance in the Settlement's population that they would maintain in future years.[64] At the same time as buffalo hunters and thus suppliers of essential provisions and as a bulwark against the Sioux threat to the south, they were invaluable both to the fur trade and the Settlement.[65] Thus the idea of a civilized community on the British model had to be modified to incorporate half the populace who followed the hunt and not

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[62] Ibid., Vol. 26, Simpson to Colvile, May 31, 1824.

[63] Ibid.

[64] As the Red River census, apparently taken every year, was conducted by English-speaking clerks in the Company's service and as Métis families were absent from the Settlement for varying lengths of time it is difficult to determine their precise numbers. A rough estimate would give them somewhat over 50 percent of the Settlement's population. See H.B.C.A., E.5/1-11, Red River Census Returns. Also see holdings of P.A.C., M.G.9, E3, Vol. 1-2, Red River Census Returns.

[65] During this period many expressed a genuine fear of an attack by the Sioux from the south. The murders of Métis families on the plains west of Pembina gave cause for concern. See Simpson's account of a confrontation with the Sioux at Pembina, P.A.C., M.G. 19, E1(1), Vol. 24, Simpson to Colvile, August 16, 1822.

agriculture. At the same time the Metis possessed a burgeoning sense of "national" identity that distinguished "French" from "English", Roman Catholic from Protestant, North West from Hudson's Bay, Native-born Rupert's Lander from European-born and the hunter from the "ground-troublers".[66] Simpson's relations with the Métis reflect the experience of the trader with the Plains Indian. Rather than master and servant or the strong and weak the image of European diplomacy suggests itself as an analogy. An atmosphere of rough equality marked the relations between the two. Simpson gave recognition to their emerging sense of a corporate identity; in return for which the Metis accepted the Company's structuring of Red River and the nature of the Settlement's relationship to the fur trade.[67] It was Simpson who secured the position of Warden of the Plains for the legendary Métis leader Cuthbert Grant.[68] At the same time he took steps to assist Grant in pressing his claims against the McGillivrays, the leading merchants in the defunct North West Company.[69] It was Simpson

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[66]Similar ethnocentric definitions were reflected in the British sector as well. It is interesting to note that while some criteria would serve to draw all mixed-bloods together others acted as a barrier.

[67]The fundamental basis of this relationship was the role of the Métis as provisioners to the fur trade. Should the buffalo hunt fail or the Settlement and the fur trade be unable to absorb their production relations were strained.

[68]Rich, II, 416.

[69]P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 26, Simpson to Colvile, May 31, 1824.

as well who at an early date attempted to secure a seat on the Council of Assiniboia for the recently created Roman Catholic Bishop at St. Boniface, the Rev. J. N. Provencher.[70] Nevertheless the Métis proved troublesome. On frequent occasions their problems threatened the peace of the Settlement. Yet Simpson and the officers who surrounded him, in cooperation with the leaders of the Métis, proved capable of finding adequate solutions.[71] While the Métis proved difficult to govern in essence they accepted the Company's plans for Red River and their role in these plans. However their acceptance was conditional. As the role envisaged for them appeared to sustain and enhance their way of life they accepted the pattern that emerged. Yet should an alternative that appeared to serve their individual and corporate interests more fully present itself, the Métis would seek an alteration of their position. Such an alternative was suggested by the illicit trade in furs that emerged in this period.

The greatest threat to those who envisaged the development of Red River in the light of British example was the

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[70] Ibid., Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

[71] This was the principal factor behind Simpson's suggestion that an officer of the Company be appointed to succeed Governor Pelly. See Ibid., Vol. 26, Simpson to Colvile, May 31, 1824.

illicit trade in furs that appeared in the Settlement during the foundation years.[72] This trade constituted far more than a commercial rivalry between small entrepreneurs and a giant corporation. In part it was a vehicle of social and political protest. In a sense it represented a dynamic conservative response to the new order emerging in Rupert's Land after 1821. In technique, organization and outlook it sustained the ways of the fur trade as it functioned during the competition.[73] At the same time it offered an alternative to those who worried about their position in the Company's new order of things.[74] In addition the challenge to authority pleased those who had experienced the petty tyrannies of the past.[75] Initially Simpson and the Company's officers were hampered in their efforts to meet this challenge by the lack of agreement between the officers in Rupert's Land and the directors in London concerning the precise definition of the Company's rights in the context of Red River. The rigid enforcement of the letter of the charter by Chief Factor

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[72] Ibid., Simpson explained why Red River could be a threat to the fur trade.

[73] While many settlers apparently dabbled in the trade the real threat came from a relatively few skilled entrepreneurs.

[74] The documents suggest financial backing for some traders may have come from Principal Settlers who, at the time were unsure of their position in Red River. H.B.C.A., B.235/a/4, Winnipeg Post Journal, September 25, 1822.

[75] Ibid., October 9, 1822.

John Clarke, combined with his exploitative treatment of the settlers in the Company store had nearly proved disastrous.[76] It was the directors who drew the line between furs on one hand and leather and provisions on the other.[77] With this definition of the Company's interests the opposition was limited to the few who possessed the means and abilities to trade profitably in furs. At the same time Simpson was better able to select and apply the carrot-and-stick techniques that would prove successful. Flagrant violations of the Company's rights were met forcefully.[78] At the same time Simpson encouraged the individuals involved to seek alternatives. Some were made licensed traders of the Company and employed in competition with American traders to the south and east.[79] Others were encouraged to become private freighters under contract to the Company.[80] Still others were given assistance in becoming private merchants in the Settlement.[81] Simpson went still further, lending his advice and abilities to enterprises such as the Buffalo Wool Company

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[76] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

[77] H.B.C.A., D.4/8, Simpson to the Governor and Committee, June 5, 1824.

[78] Ibid., B.235/a/4, Winnipeg Post Journal, September 22, 1822.

[79] Ibid., B.235/a/6, September 11, 1824.

[80] Ibid., August 17, 1824.

[81] Ibid., August 25, 1824.

and other projects designed to utilize the means and skills of retired officers for the benefit of the Settlement.[82] The illicit trade in furs was never eradicated in Red River but it was brought within such bounds that it did not constitute a serious threat to the interests of the fur trade or those who looked for the development of Red River as a British community.[83]

III. THE ANGLICAN MISSIONARIES

The Anglican missionaries in Red River were products of the Evangelical movement within and outside the Church of England.[84] Looking to the "heart" rather than the "head" for salvation the movement represented a British middle-class response to the revolutionary doctrines of continental Europe and the problems arising out of industrialization and the wars of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era. Essentially the movement was conservative. It sought a reformation of British society, not a revolution. To the Evangelical the problems of the British nation arose from individual and collective behavior rather than the

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[82] Although of limited success these efforts were continued in later years. For an example of Simpson's and the Company's involvement, see Ibid., F.30/1, Assiniboine Wool Company.

[83] Both the correspondence of Simpson and the Winnipeg Post Journal reflect less concern for the problem after 1826.

[84] An admirable survey of this movement is to be found in Elie Halévy, England in 1815 (London, 1961).

institutions and core of values which underlay the community. The terms Christian and British were inextricably linked in referring to these foundations of the British nation.[85] To achieve their ends the Evangelicals created myriad societies to solve national problems as they perceived them. One of these was the Church Missionary Society, an Evangelical Anglican organization whose particular purpose was to bring Christianity to the heathen.[86]

The C.M.S. interest in Red River commenced in 1821, the year following West's arrival as chaplain to the Company in Rupert's Land. The affiliation of West with the C.M.S. owed much to Benjamin Harrison, a member of the Company's governing committee and a lesser light in the "Clapham sect," a gathering of leading Evangelicals in the Anglican Church.[87] It was evident that the dominant elements in the Company saw an essential role for the Church in the new order of things being established in Red River. A British community without the church was inconceivable.[88] Yet the supposed basis of

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[85] J. E. Foster, "The Anglican Clergy in the Red River Settlement" (unpublished Masters' thesis, University of Alberta, 1966).

[86] The major work on the Church Missionary Society remains Eugene Stock's History of the Church Missionary Society (London, 1899), in four volumes.

[87] Rich, II, 344.

[88] H.B.C.A., A.6/20, Governor and Committee to Simpson, March 8, 1822.

common interest between the Company and the C.M.S. had to be defined in detail. The difficulties encountered in this process nearly destroyed the mission.

In fulfilling their function in Red River the C.M.S. missionaries had first to achieve an understanding with their rivals, the Roman Catholic missionaries at St. Boniface, and with the Company's officers in Rupert's Land. The presence of Roman Catholic missionaries from Lower Canada had been dictated by the few French Canadians and the overwhelming number of Métis living in the region of the Settlement. With the encouragement of Lord Selkirk the Rev. J. N. Provencher and the Rev. A. Dumoulin and their party made the arduous journey westward in 1818 to establish themselves on the banks of the Red. Initially reluctant to abandon their work at Pembina on the forty-ninth parallel of latitude, the Roman Catholic clergy soon yielded to the insistence of the Company and concentrated their activities at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers.[89] Once they had lost their naive and simplistic view of the task of evangelizing the Indians they proved capable of appreciating some of the doubts voiced by the fur traders with respect to extensive missionary enterprise among nomadic peoples.[90] Cautioned by Selkirk to avoid clashes with the British Protestant element in Red

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[89] Nute, Plessis to John Halkett, April 8, 1822.

[90] Ibid., Plessis to Dumoulin, June 30, 1819.

River, the missionaries centered their efforts on the "French" and "Roman Catholic" segment of the populace.[91] In a short time a cordial accommodation was achieved between the priests from Lower Canada and the Company. Each rendered the other service along the lines suggested by the British model of a civilized community. The missionaries quieted the Métis when they proved restless[92] and the Company provided financial and other assistance.[93] The relationship proved beneficial to both parties.

With the arrival of the first Anglican missionary in 1820, the question arose as to how the newcomer would accomodate himself to sharing his field of missionary endeavour with his archrivals. The powers in London cautioned West to avoid any clash with his Roman Catholic colleagues.[94] Initially West appeared amenable to the Red River dictum that "French" was "Roman Catholic" and "British" was Protestant.[95] Difficulties arose when West married Roman Catholic Demeurons to the Protestant daughters of Swiss settlers, Roman Catholic missionaires having been unable to acquire the necessary

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[91] Ibid., Lord Selkirk to Plessis, December 30, 1819.

[92] H.B.C.A., D.4/119, Chief Factor Donald Mackenzie to Simpson, May 4, 1827 (date should apparently read 1826).

[93] Nute, Rev. J. N. Provencher to Plessis, June 12, 1825.

[94] Ibid., Plessis to Dumoulin, April 10, 1821.

[95] Foster, 61.

authority from their superior, the Bishop of Quebec.[96] This bone of contention was removed when the bulk of those involved in mixed marriages emigrated from Red River following the disastrous flood in the spring of 1826.[97] A stable situation, validated by language, place of residence and way of life, evolved. The French-speaking, buffalo hunting Métis settled on river lots to the south and west of the forks. The English-speaking Protestants lay to the north, down the Red River.[98] As long as the respective churches confined themselves to Red River the fur trade had little fear of a clash between Anglican and Roman Catholic clergymen. Missionary penetration of the hinterland was to be a different matter.

Initially both the Company and the C.M.S. expected much from a close relationship between the officers in the fur trade and the Anglican missionary.[99] As a member of the "higher orders" of society, West was expected to fulfill a leadership role, religious and secular.[100] West himself

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[96] Nute, Provencher to Plessis, January 15, 1819, and Plessis to Dumoulin, April 10, 1821.

[97] With a very few exceptions the Swiss and Demeuron element was eliminated from the mosaic of Red River at this time.

[98] This "cordiality" between the Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries continued until both undertook major missionary projects in the hinterland during the 1840's.

[99] H.B.C.A., A.6/20, Benjamin Harrison to West, February 26, 1822.

[100] No doubt as Chaplain to the Company in Rupert's Land West was expected to exhibit some element of corporate loyalty as well.

expected whole-hearted cooperation from the officers of a British and Christian corporation.[101] Unfortunately the expectations of each placed the other in what might be described as a subordinate position. As a result difficulties soon arose. When the actions of the Company's officers, including Simpson, appeared to condone unacceptable practises[102] West took recourse to the unforgiveable action of "pulpit denunciation".[103] In his report to the Governor and Committee of the Company on his return to Great Britain in 1823, West called for a drastic change in the order of things in Red River.[104] Simpson's correspondence, with due regard for the religious interests of his employers, suggested that West's "absence would be no great loss."[105] His failure to appreciate the ways and circumstances of Rupert's Land could prove harmful to the trade and to the peace of Red River. The result was that West did not return to the Settlement.[106]

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[101] West's disappointment in this expectation probably accounts for the negative view of the officers contained in a private letter, C.M.S.A., I.C., West to Rev. H. Budd, November 26, 1822.

[102] Simpson's first child by his country-wife, Margaret Taylor, was baptized by West.

[103] H.B.C.A., D.4/5, Simpson to Harrison, March 10, 1825.

[104] C.M.S.A., I.C., West, Report to the Honourable Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, December 3, 1823.

[105] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

[106] H.B.C.A., A.5/7, W. Smith to West, January 29, 1824.

His successors, the Rev. David T. Jones and the Rev. William Cockran, were cautioned by the C.M.S. to avoid similar situations.[107] The Company for its part wrote in a similar vein to Simpson and the officers.[108] Simpson, ever quick to sense the direction of a new wind emanating from London, made himself a friend and confidant of the young Anglican missionaries.[109] The relationship that emerged did not encompass the cooperation initially envisaged. However it did reflect more accurately the situation in Red River. The limits of cooperation were acknowledged. Neither party asked for more nor gave less than was expected.

West's clash with the Company officers had two beneficial results as far as the interests of the mission were concerned. In the first place it established the Anglican mission on a basis somewhat independent from the Company's interests. Many officers, including Simpson, had tended to view the mission as an auxiliary of the Company, subservient to the interests of the trade and the men who ran it. This view was replaced by a recognition of the missionary's independent interest and his right to comment, in an appropriate

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[107] C.M.S.A., Outgoing Correspondence (hereafter, O.C.), Rev. Josiah Pratt to Jones, March 10, 1824.

[108] H.B.C.A., A.5/20, Governor and Committee to Simpson, March 12, 1824.

[109] C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journal, February 5, 1824, and H.B.C.A., D.4/3, Simpson to Harrison, August ?, 1824.

manner, on public and private behavior.[110] This development enabled both parties to work out an effective basis for cooperation. The second beneficial result of West's clash with the officers was that it led the C.M.S. to reexamine their goal of evangelizing the Indians in terms of circumstances in Red River.[111] Few Indians frequented the Settlement, partly because the Company did not encourage their appearance except to bring in the returns from their traplines.[112] This created a quandary for the directors of the Society as their objective was to evangelize the heathen and not the Europeans who had strayed from the Christian flock. In time they accepted the fact that the work of their missionaries in Red River among the Country-born contributed to their particular goal.[113] Thus West's successors, Jones and Cockran, could devote their full energies to the British and Protestant sector of the Settlement and to developing techniques of persuasion appropriate to their circumstances.

The efforts of the missionaries complemented those of the Company in attempting to establish Red River on the British model. Whereas the Company and the executors of the Selkirk estate emphasized institutional structures and

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[110] Foster, 82.

[111] C.M.S.A., O.C., Dandeson Coates to Jones, February 24, 1826.

[112] H.B.C.A., D.4/1, Simpson to Thomas, May 13, 1822.

[113] C.M.S.A., O.C., Coates to Jones, February 24, 1826.

behavior appropriate to the whole community, the missionaries in their message of salvation centered upon behavior within the family and among neighbours.[114] For Jones and Cockran the twin social ills of Red River society were drunkenness and the loose nature of family bonds stemming from marriages au façon du nord.[115] Through the Church service, Sunday and Day schools and pastoral visits they worked assiduously to render these evils subject to community sanctions. Yet the way was difficult. It was soon perceived that these problems were interrelated with others. The poverty of many of the settlers and their lack of acquaintance with even the rudimentary skills necessary for successful farming were serious obstacles.[116] Men who had spent a lifetime in the Company's service, where the necessities of life were provided and daily activities assigned by a superior, found it difficult to cope with their new found independence.[117] The Kildonan Scots, the original Selkirk settlers who had emigrated as family units, proved highly successful.[118] Yet the joy of the missionaries with the behavior of this segment of their parishoners was tempered by the Scots "much self

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[114] Foster, 16.

[115] West, 25.

[116] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 24, 1834.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Alexander Ross, Chapter XI.

consequence."[119] They maintained their community identity by emphasizing their Gaelic speech, their Presbyterian ways as distinct from Anglican forms and their refusal to marry with Indians or mixed-bloods.[120] The Country-born on the other hand responded in large numbers to the missionaries' efforts. In their bewilderment and despair they found the missionaries offered a solution.[121] Now the mixed-blood could more readily achieve what had been denied in the trading post. The Cree-speaking mixed-blood son or daughter could become literate in English.[122] He could learn the ways of the British-born which to his mind had been and continued to be the basis of social recognition. The missionaries found that, although particular aspects of the behavior of the Country-born failed to meet their expectations, the enthusiasm of the response of the Country-born was cause for joy. The situation was such that Cockran could observe, in 1826, that "the word flourishes here most amongst the Half-breeds."[123]

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[119] C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journal, December 24, 1824.

[120] Foster, 97.

[121] Ibid., 94.

[122] Ibid., 134.

[123] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretary, July 19, 1826.

IV. THE COUNTRY-BORN

The large-scale migration of the Country-born from the length and breadth of Rupert's Land to Red River did not begin until the summer of 1823 but was to continue for the remainder of the decade. The date of their arrival in the Settlement was perhaps crucial in determining the nature of their response to influences stemming from the Company and the Anglican mission. The problems facing Red River during the foundation years reached a climax in the months preceding their arrival. The clash between Chief Factor John Clarke and the Settlement's Governor, Andrew Bulger, owed much to the exaggerated self importance in which each held himself.[124] But the clash took its particular dimensions from the unresolved problems of the Settlement's relationship to the fur trade in general and the threat of the illicit fur trade to Company interests in particular. In the succeeding months Simpson made notable headway. With the cooperation of Bulger's successor Robert Pelly and, after 1825, Chief Factor Donald Mackenzie, who was both Governor of Assiniboia and the Company's officer-in-charge at Red River, Simpson gradually managed to resolve the problems facing the Settlement, including the problem of the illicit fur trade. Victory was not immediate; rather it was a question of the scale being

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[124] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, September 8, 1823.

tilted on an increasing angle towards the Company's interests. This was significant as the illicit trade appeared to offer much to the Country-born.

To the British-born officers and servants migrating to Red River with their mixed-blood families their retirement complicated problems experienced in the trading post and at the same time presented new ones. Life in the trading post had had its positive aspects. The necessities of life, physical and social, had been provided. Yet the perennial problem of finding a place for the young had remained unresolved. With retirement even the positive aspects of their lives were disrupted. Now such families faced what often appeared to be insurmountable difficulties in securing the means of survival employment in the Company's service had provided. Cockran graphically described the plight of these men and their families.

> [He] bends his course to Red River, with a worn out constitution, with small means, with a woman that knows none of the duties of civilized life, with a dispirited family who know nothing but what the heathen have taught them, who have no interest in each other's welfare, to begin life anew, . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Here he commences his operations, buys an axe and hoe, or borrows or begs according to his circumstances. He collects timber to build a house; begins to build and farm. But he stands, he labors, he does all alone; the woman he has brought, despises him in her heart; . . .[125]

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[125] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833.

For men and families in such circumstances the financial rewards offered by the illicit fur trade and the extent to which it promised to recapture the past were to prove attractive. In addition it presented to many the means of expressing their bitterness towards the Company for what to their minds was their unjustified retirement. Yet few were in a position to take advantage of this opportunity.[126] Many of the new arrivals lacked the means or the entrepreneurial skills that were necessary for success. Some might find occasional employment as interpreters and runners for illegal traders, but most of them lacked the kinship connections with Indians in the region that were important preconditions of employment.[127]

Others among the Country-born were opposed to the illegal trade for reasons similar to those of the Company and the Anglican missionaries. Among the British-born retiring to Red River with Country-born families were officers with some financial means. Strong attachments to their families and, in some cases, habits that would render them unacceptable at "home", tied them to Red River. Though embittered toward the Company for the reasons and manner of their retirement, fundamentally they shared the Company's and the

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[126] Ibid., Cockran indicates that the poverty and health of many were factors that would prevent active participation in the trade.

[127] This situation changed in later years when a relatively large number of Cree were attracted to the region because of their kinship connections with the Country-born.

Anglican missionaries' aspirations for the settlement.[128] In the early period of the foundation years, when it appeared that it was unlikely that Red River would mirror British example, let alone survive the antagonisms that threatened to erupt in violence, they looked to the protection of their own interests and ignored those of the community.[129] As men of property they had looked forward to the enjoyment of the fruits of their labors in the fur trade. But this appeared to be impossible in Red River. Simpson's efforts, abetted by the Anglican missionaries, to have these men assume positions of social leadership and accept the responsibilities implied by such a position, made some hesitant headway.[130] It would take a catharsis engendered by the malevolent forces of nature to achieve Simpson's goal.

To accept the role for themselves set forth by Simpson and the missionaries, the principal settlers had to be assured of the permanence of the new order in Red River and the necessity that they act in its interests. This required

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[128] See P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 23, Thomas Thomas to Governor Williams, June 12, 1821. The criticisms of the state of affairs in Red River contained in this letter suggest a value framework on the part of the author that was in accord with the Company's ambitions for the Settlement.

[129] See Ibid., vol. 26, Simpson to Colvile, May 31, 1824.

[130] In addition to participation in the affairs of the mission some of the Principal Settlers lent their efforts to other projects of "civic" interest. An example is John Pritchard's involvement with the Buffalo Wool Company. See H.B.C.A., D.4/3, Simpson to John Pritchard, February 18, 1824.

an unquestionable act by the Company demonstrating its commitment to the survival of Red River as a "British" community. Circumstances, which on the surface appeared to herald the end of Red River, made this possible in the winter and spring of 1825-26.[131] Late freezing autumn rains and deep snows during winter drove the buffalo far from their usual wintering grounds near the Settlement. Early in 1826 a lengthy blizzard trapped numerous Métis families on the open plains where they had been driven in search of buffalo by the threat of starvation. This development gave added credence to the rumours of plots among the Métis and Demeurons who in retaliation for the Company's refusal to supply goods on unlimited credit, threatened to pillage the Company's stores and possibly the more prosperous Kildonan Scots farmers.[132] Chief Factor Donald Mackenzie responded in an admirable fashion. While seeing to the security of the Company's property he organized the dispatch of parties to rescue the Métis and the dispensing of relief supplies.[133] In this program he was assisted by the Anglican missionaries,

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[131] Some active officers may have considered the possibility of using the events in the spring of 1826 as a means of destroying the Settlement. See C.M.S.A., I.C. Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833, in which Cockran cites conversations with officers now retired.

[132] H.B.C.A., B.235/a/77, Winnipeg Post Journal, April 8, 13, 21, 1826.

[133] Ibid., March 23, 1826.

Jones and Cockran, who overcame bitter opposition to the Métis among their own parishioners to gather 200 bushels of grain.[134] The winter blizzard with its attendant loss of life[135] gave way to the threat of more suffering in spring when a flood, unequalled in the memory of any resident in Red River, turned the valleys of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers into a vast lake.[136] The struggle to survive the common danger dissipated the threats of pillage and violence.[137] With the loss of only one life but much destruction of property, the Settlement survived the rampaging waters. The aftermath held forth little promise. It appeared unlikely that crops could be planted and grow to maturity before frosts would deny a harvest. Some of the settlers chose to leave Red River; among them were a large number from the most turbulent elements.[138] Over two hundred Swiss and Demeurons and a lesser number of French Canadians embarked for the friendlier climes of the United States or the Canadas.[139] The remainder of the settlers, for a variety of

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[134] C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journal, March 3, 1826.

[135] See Ibid., for the months of February and March, 1826 and H.B.C.A., B.235/a/7, Winnipeg Post Journal, for the same months of the same year.

[136] Ibid., for the month of May, 1826.

[137] References to plots disappear from H.B.C.A., B.235/a/7, Winnipeg Post Journal, after the month of April.

[138] Alexander Ross, 108-09.

[139] H.B.C.A., B.235/a/7, Winnipeg Post Journal, July, 1826.

reasons, chose to stay. The Company proferred what support it could. Provisions and seed grain were furnished to the limit of its ability.[140] Had the Company sought the destruction of the Settlement, as some settlers had thought, the terrible months of the first half of 1826 had furnished the opportunity. The Company's actions affirmed its commitment to Red River. At the same time many felt that, had the settlers given more attention to activities encouraged by the Company and the missionaries, the extent of the Settlement's suffering could have been reduced.[141]

The task ahead was difficult. Yet from these circumstances a new perspective emerged. In the British sector of the Settlement, an upsurge of interest in farming occurred as a means of ensuring against the consequences of future calamities. At the same time many felt the necessity of making a more personal commitment to the new order in Red River. A letter from retired officer James Bird to Simpson illustrates this change:

> If seed corn could be had in sufficient quantity I am convinced that the late Flood would produce on the whole a good effect, as all the Settlers feel a possibility of its recurring and the consequent necessity of their always having a years stock of provisions on hand.
>
> If the spring proves favorable industry will not (amongst the Europeans) I am convinced be wanting to

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[140] Ibid., September 27, 1826.

[141] It was at this juncture that Cockran undertook efforts to make the Anglican mission self-sufficient in its farming operations. See C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, May 24, 25, 26, 1827.

> secure plenty hereafter. I feel an unusual stimulus myself now and will certainly spare no pains to secure the possession of something more than for the Season before me.[142]

Other principal settlers in their behavior duplicated Bird's change of heart.[143] Simpson's efforts and those of the missionaries had borne fruit. The establishment of Red River as a British community with due allowances for local circumstances had been achieved. The direction of development in the period subsequent to the foundation years had been determined. Of this development the Country-born were to be an essential part.

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[142] H.B.C.A., D.4/120, James Bird to Simpson, February 18, 1827.

[143] Ibid., June 3, 1827.

CHAPTER III

THE GOOD YEARS, 1827-1834

In the years between the flood in the spring of 1826 and the transfer of Assiniboia from the executors of the Selkirk estate to the direct control of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1834, the Country-born successfully adapted the ways of the trading post to their new circumstances in Red River. The foundation years had sketched the broad outlines of the Settlement's future development. The roles of the Company and the Missions were determined with some precision. The nature of the Settlement's relationship to the fur trade was clearly elucidated. The mosaic of peoples constituting the Settlement was established. Yet the Country-born still faced the difficult task of establishing a functioning way of life in Red River. The eight years after the flood witnessed their response to their new found independence and responsibilities--their choice between the hunt and the farm. Cast upon their own resources many of the Country-born were perplexed by their situation. Few of them had much experience with either pursuit. Thus in terms of their technical capacity neither the hunt nor the farm held out particularly strong attractions. In desperation many turned for help to the agents of British civilization in Red River.

By and large these were the Company and the Anglican mission. With specific goals in mind and the mastery of the techniques required to achieve them, the Company and the Mission represented an element of stability.[1] Having survived the chaos of the foundation years and emerged with renewed vigor both set to the task of directing the lives of the inhabitants in what they conceived to be the best interests of the Settlement. The interplay of forces in the good years following the flood between the Country-born and the missionary and the Company were to determine the nature of the Country-born community in Red River.

Two factors of demographic significance influenced the course of events during the good years. The first factor was the yearly succession of relatively bountiful harvests. The problems of crop disease, insect infestations and frosts that had marked agricultural endeavours since the founding of the Settlement were in abeyance. The primitive farming techniques of the Red River settlers enabled few to gain all their sustenance from their river lots. For this reason the bountiful returns of the good years were most welcome.[2] This

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[1]The nature of the relationship between the Anglican missionaries and the Hudson's Bay Company has never been adequately examined either in terms of their headquarters in London or in terms of their men in the field.

[2]Alexander Ross, in chapters dealing with the period 1826 to 1835, indicates returns were more than adequate. The years 1831 and 1832 may be an exception. See Denis Bayley, A Londoner in Rupert's Land (Winnipeg, 1969), 61, Thomas Bunn to Nancy Bayley, August 3, 1831 and G. P. de T. Glazebrook (ed.), The Hargrave Correspondence (Toronto, 1938), 102, Donald Ross to James Hargrave, December 30, 1832.

was particularly true in the light of the fact that a continuous stream of migrants from the interior took up residence in the Settlement at this time.

While a trickle of settlers continued to emigrate from Red River to the frontier regions of the United States their numbers were out-weighed by this flow of immigrants.[3] Among the Country-born the nature of the latter changed somewhat from that which had marked the settlers during the foundation years. Whereas in the earlier period the retired British-born officer or servant of long years service had been conspicuous the new settlers represented more diverse origins. The retired servant who had only recently arrived in Rupert's Land appeared, attracted at the time of his enlistment by the promise of a land grant when he completed his initial period of service.[4] Another far more numerous element was the Country-born family who was not headed by a British-born husband and father. Some of the adult Country-born males with families had been employed as servants. Others had lived a

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[3]Unfortunately none of the sources provided figures on the numbers entering or leaving the Settlement. An idea of the rate of increase can be garnered by observing H.B.C.A., E.5/6, Red River Settlement Census Returns, 1828, 1832, 1838.

[4]In the 1830's the appearance of surnames in the marriage and baptismal records of the Anglican mission that were not evident in earlier records nor in the Lists of Servants before 1823 shows that such individuals had not had lengthy careers in the Company's service before becoming settlers. This would suggest that the land grant constituted a significant attraction for them.

life closely akin to the ways of the homeguard Indians.[5] The retired British-born officer or servant who with his Country-born family had spent several years in the Company's employ continued to appear, but this proportion among recently arrived settlers continued to fall.[6] Retired officers in particular continued to demonstrate a preference for Great Britain or Upper Canada.

The Country-born migrants who made their way to Red River after the flood had notable repercussions upon the emerging Country-born community. A number of retired servants had sufficient financial means to add to the size of their land grant and to commence farming in earnest.[7] Their purchases of food and other goods stimulated the endeavours of farmers already settled on river lots and the business interests of the petty merchants. Others were not so fortunate. Some were not eligible for land grants as they had not been employees of the Company.[8] Still others lacked the financial

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[5] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, no date, probably August, 1832.

[6] The only officer of prominence to retire to Red River in this period was Chief Factor James Sutherland.

[7] See H.B.C.A., A.36/1B, Officers' and Servants' Wills, 1816-1873, for examples of the wealth of some of the retired officers and servants.

[8] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833. Note the reference to "8 or 10 erratic [sic] families; who I think will have to drift down quietly to the spot where I intend to begin the Indian Settlment."

means to begin farming on a profitable basis. They remained dependent upon the charity of relatives and acquaintances already settled by the banks of the Red and upon the assistance dispensed by the Anglican missionaries.

The varying financial resources of the arriving settlers also indicated much cultural diversity. In most cases families headed by a British-born male possessed certain advantages. They had at least one member who was familiar with the English language, often in written form, and with the usages of the church and the local government. In addition farming as it was practised by the Kildonan Scots may not have appeared as strange as it did to the newcomer who was familiar only with the type of agriculture practised in and around the trading post.[9] In numerous cases families who lacked a British-born head faced almost insurmountable difficulties. Even some of those with a British-born parent found the challenge overpowering. Both the Company and the Mission attempted to alleviate the problems the newcomers encountered in adapting the ways of the trading post to their new environment.

I. THE COMPANY

The Company was intimately involved in the life of

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[9] Agriculture in some form, largely gardening, was practised at most of the major posts. It would appear that, at best, it was considered a low status occupation. See E. E. Rich (ed.), Moose Fort Journals, 1783-85 (London, 1954), 53.

the Settlement in three areas. Through the fur trade the Company gave Red River its economic raison d'être and determined its social structure. Secondly, through Company initiated projects, most notably the Assiniboine Wool Company, Simpson and the Governor and Committee in London sought to develop an export trade. Lastly, through the Council of Assiniboia the Company provided the means by which British-born individuals of some education and achievement could influence the course of developments. From the Company's viewpoint their efforts were not particularly successful. But they did have an impact upon the Country-born in this crucial period.

Red River depended upon the Company for survival. Both directly and indirectly it provided the funds that kept commerce alive. As Thomas Simpson noted in a letter to Chief Factor James Hargrave:

> Money circulates in greater quantity and more rapidly than ever: it is all - (except what comes from the C.M. Society and Catholic Church) - derived, in one shape or other from the Fur Trade,- . . .[10]

By purchasing supplies and hiring seasonal tripmen the Company furnished the bulk of the Settlement's monetary supply. Through contracts to merchants who functioned as private freighters, employing their own boat crews, the Company's influence carried farther than the presence of its insignia would indicate. In addition the pensions and savings of

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[10] G. P. de T. Glazebrook (ed.), The Hargrave . . . , 120, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, December 13, 1833.

retired employees played a noteworthy role. Throughout the good years the Company's demands for the produce of the settlers coupled with those of the new arrivals created relatively buoyant economic conditions in the Settlement. But many saw difficulties ahead. With the growth in population production increased. Yet the demands of the fur trade, under the watchful and parsimonious eye of Simpson, remained constant.[11] Those who looked to the future believed that it was essential for Red River to develop products suitable for export to Great Britain.[12] The fur trade alone could not sustain the economy of the Settlement as it emerged in the mid-1830's.

In the fur trade wealth and rank went hand in hand. The same state of affairs was true in Red River. Social practises actively pursued in the trading posts by the Company were implanted in the Settlement during the foundation years. Retired British-born officers together with active officers in the Company's service constituted the social elite. The only exceptions were the clergy of both missions who by virtue of their education and position enjoyed similar status. As the bulk of Red River's elite had been residents in the Settlement since the early years of the 1820's they enjoyed the position and influence of what might be described as a charter

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[11] Compare the Company's orders for provision in R. H. Fleming, (ed.), Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-31 (London, 1940), 182, 208, 239, 257, 277.

[12] Alexander Ross, 136.

group.[13] It was they who constituted the local Council of Assiniboia and in many cases took an active role in the church life of the Anglican mission.[14] Below them in status among the Country-born were the private merchants and the school teachers. The generality of the Country-born were divided upon a basis that emphasized financial well-being and the absence or presence of "Indianness" in their behavior.[15] It is significant that until 1835 mixed-bloods were virtually excluded from social positions of influence. The British-born male predominated.

The Company exerted an influence upon the Country-born through its relations with the British-born males. In the person of George Simpson it expected and insisted upon

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[13]Except for the death of retired Chief Factor Thomas Thomas and the addition of retired Chief Factor James Sutherland the Councillors of the Council of Assiniboia remained constant from 1823 to 1835.

[14]The reticence of the Anglican missionaries with respect to the names of individuals participating in the affairs of the mission makes it difficult to assess fully the role of these men. Frequently the missionaries referred to leaders by their first initial. Thus Mr. S. is probably James Sutherland, Mr. R. is probably Alexander Ross and Mr. T. is Thomas Thomas. The first wardens of the Upper Church, Robert Logan, Alexander Ross and Dr. John Bunn were not appointed until 1835. See T. C. B. Boon, The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies (Toronto, 1962), 31.

[15]"Indianness" could best be described in general as a lack of constancy from a British viewpoint. Such an attitude underlies the negative comments of the missionaries as well as other British-born writers such as Alexander Ross. The comments of George Simpson with respect to mixed bloods in H.B.C.A., A.34/1, Servants' Characters and Staff Records, 1822-1830, offer other examples.

behavior appropriate to a man's "station in life". During the foundation years this policy had proved successful in terms of developing the principal settlers as responsible leaders in society. This same policy was probably carried forward by them in their relations with less prominent persons. At the same time teachings emanating from the Anglican mission emphasized "correct" social behavior associated with various ranks in society.[16] To a significant degree the Company's policy in this area abetted the efforts of the Anglican missionaries who sought to create community sanctions governing social behavior. These were derived from British practises. While it is most difficult to evaluate the extent to which the Company's influence in this area bore fruit social behavior did change in the direction the Company desired. It seems reasonable to conclude that the Company's influence in this matter enjoyed some measure of success.

As the population increased during the good years it became apparent that the settlers would have to develop an export trade. The fur trade as it was conducted by the Company and the savings of retired officers and servants failed to produce sufficient funds to enable the settlers to purchase needed items in Great Britain. Clothing in particular was one item that drained away the monetary supply of the Settlement.[17]

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[16] Foster, 20-23.

[17] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 29, 1830.

Some means had to be found that would make Red River less dependent upon the Mother country and at the same time improve the balance of payments. Again the Company in the person of George Simpson took a leadership role.

Earlier efforts in this area during the foundation years had proven abysmal failures. The Hay field Farm established by Selkirk and the Buffalo Wool Company financed by the Company had not fulfilled their expectations.[18] Nevertheless Simpson did not hesitate to try again. The first project of note was a second experimental farm under the direction of Chief Factor James McMillan. Begun in 1830 the farm proved as unsuccessful as its predecessor. The best of intentions could not save a fur trader inexperienced at farming with equally inexperienced mixed-blood servants.[19] The Assiniboine Wool Company suffered a similar fate. Initiated in 1829 it had admirable objectives:

> 1. The dissemination of Religion, Morality, Education and general knowledge and information among the large and growing population of this immense Country, benefits hitherto very partially enjoyed from its remote situation, and the limited intercourse it has had with the Mother Country, and which the extension of Trade alone can obtain for it.
> . . . .
> 3. The giving employment to and diffusing a Spirit of enterprize and industry among the Colonists of Red River, ...[20]

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[18] Alexander Ross, 76, 77.

[19] Ibid., 134.

[20] H.B.C.A., F.30/1, Assiniboine Wool Company, Deed of Partnership etc., 1829-1836.

The bulk of the subscribers were from the Country-born community.[21] After a series of misadventures the enterprise came to naught. A similar fate met another of Simpson's projects, the Red River Tallow Company. Apparently wolves, unseasonal weather and an inexperienced herdsman were responsible for the decline of the cattle herd on which the shareholders had placed their hopes.[22] Again the Country-born had been conspicuous by their presence among the subscribers. The succession of Company projects that failed terminated with the attempt to encourage the cultivation of flax and hemp. Prizes were offered for the best crops. For a few years crops were sown but, by 1833 interest had waned.[23]

> We cannot even get the requisite number of Candidates for the prizes offered for the raising of hemp and flax, the only valuable articles of export with which we are yet acquainted, so that I fear our expectations of an export trade from hence are premature, if not hopeless.[24]

In view of the failure of the Company's various projects in this period it is worth noting that they were willing to try again at a later date.

Although projects "with a view to ameliorating . . .

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid., F.31/1, Red River Tallow Company, Minutes, 1832-33.

[23] Alexander Ross, 139.

[24] Glazebrook, (ed.), The Hargrave . . . , 120, Thomas Simpson to James Hargrave, December 13, 1833.

[the] condition"[25] of the inhabitants failed there were benefits. Additional money entered the Settlement in the form of local purchases and wages paid to various servants. Other benefits such as improved equipment, a better breed of horses and the keeping of sheep were readily apparent to observers.[26] Yet to those who sympathized with the Company's objectives such "failures did, perhaps, more harm in a country like Red River, ..." Alexander Ross continued:

> it gave such a contemptible idea of the skill of the white man. It became a byword in the colony, among the half-breed population, "that the ice-barn farmers were bad, but the experimental farmers were worse! and, after all their grand performances, the whites have but little to boast of."[27]

The failures suffered by the Company evoked some debate. Was it a question of mismanagement by those in charge or was it a question of the ways of the people with whom the Company dealt?[28] What criteria determined which British practises would flourish in Red River and which would not? Through its different projects the Company had an influence upon the Country-born: but the influence was not what the Company had hoped for.

Through the local Council of Assiniboia the Company had an impact upon the Country-born and the other communities

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[25] H.B.C.A., F.30/1, Assiniboine Wool Company, Deed of Partnership etc., 1829-1836.

[26] Alexander Ross, 135.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 133-40.

of the Settlement. The presiding officer was the Governor of Assiniboia. From 1825 to 1833 Chief Factor Donald MacKenzie occupied the office.[29] From 1833 to 1839 Chief Factor Alexander Christie was in charge.[30] In addition both men were responsible for the conduct of the Company's business in the region of the Settlement. The Governors of Assiniboia took their instructions from the Governor and Committee in London. In practise it would appear that most influence upon them originated with the Governor of Rupert's Land, George Simpson and to a lesser extent with the Council of the Northern Department, the annual meeting of Chief Factors responsible for the conduct of the trade emanating from York Factory.[31] When Simpson was residing in the Settlement he presided at the meetings of the Council of Assiniboia.

Between 1826 and 1835 membership in the Council of Assiniboia was limited to retired British-born officers drawn from the principal settlers. As Councillors they were responsible for judicial and legislative concerns of a local nature. From what is known of their activities during the good years they were not particularly busy men. They tried the few cases of petty crime and passed legislation affecting the daily

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[29] E. H. Oliver, The Canadian North-West, Its Early Development and Legislative Records (Ottawa, 1914), I, 46.

[30] Ibid., 47.

[31] The dominant influence of Simpson is made apparent by Innis, "Introduction," R. H. Fleming, (ed.), Minutes . . . , xxxix.

lives of the inhabitants.[32] Concerns such as animals running at large and using horses without the owner's consent captured their attention.[33] Yet their impact upon the populace was minimal. The Métis who were concerning themselves increasingly with the buffalo hunt would find little of consequence in their legislation.[34] The Country-born and the Kildonan Scots who devoted more energy to farming would find it of greater interest. But even for them the influence of the local government on their daily lives was minimal.

As the Councillors resided in different parts of the British sector of the Settlement, as they generally had extensive kinship connections and as they probably exerted some personal influence and leadership in the neighbourhoods and parishes where they lived they would serve as representatives of local interests and opinions. As nearly all of these men had large Country-born families the interests of this community would predominate in the affairs of the Settlement. But as they held office at the Company's pleasure they were to an

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[32]Oliver is sketchy concerning activities prior to 1835. Occasional passing references to attendance at Council are found in C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journals, 1823-38.

[33]Oliver, I, 265.

[34]G. H. Sprenger, "An Analysis of Selective Aspects of Métis Society, 1810-1870" (unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Manitoba, 1972), 88-95, establishes the Métis as a "purchaser" society. In Sprenger's analysis the Métis are economically related to the Settlement but politically autonomous.

extent insulated from local pressures.[35] In essence their value seemed to be their function as a vehicle of communication between the Company and the Country-born settlers. The limited evidence available makes it difficult to determine how well they performed this function. The fact that the Company broadened representation after 1835 to include representatives of other communities as well as the Country-born suggests that the Councillors performed this function satisfactorily.[36] Nevertheless the increasing ineffectiveness of the local council after 1835 suggests that their earlier success may owe much to the inconsequential nature of their activities. On a daily basis the Council of Assiniboia interfered only minimally in the lives of the Country-born.

The fact that the judicial and legislative activities of the Council of Assiniboia had only a minor impact upon the lives of the Country-born does not necessarily mean they were without influence. The Council was an essential part of the institutional structure that the Company felt was imperative in Red River. To the Company's mind a "civilized" community was essential if a beneficial relationship between the fur

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[35]The feeling that the Councillors represented a particular vested interest does not appear to have emerged before 1835. P.A.M., G. H. Gunn, (ed.), Journal of Peter Garrioch, unpublished manuscript, in various entries indicates some animosity directed at the Councillors after 1840.

[36]Alexander Ross, 173, gives a favorable if not enthusiastic assessment of the government of the Council of Assiniboia to 1835.

trade and the Settlement was to continue. Such a community rested upon a constellation of values, attitudes, and behavioral practises that were essential to its success. The populace had to respond in an appropriate fashion. Institutions that directed individual and group activities in directions consistent with the cultural ways of the community were a necessity. Even though the particular activities of the Council played a minor part in the lives of the inhabitants its existence shaped the frame of reference in which the settlers found themselves. Among the Country-born at least membership on the Council identified men who were supposedly worthy of some recognition. Their interests, concerns and behavior were to be emulated by others. During the foundation years Simpson had placed much emphasis on this aspect of their duties. Through their extensive family connections and their acqaintances in different neighbourhoods and parishes these British-born men influenced the behavior of the settlers. Their influence was paramount among the Country-born. Although other British-born males of less social prominence may have been envious of those at the top of the social ladder they reflected similar ways. Together the British-born males exerted an influence on the Country-born. The nature of this influence was structured and given direction by the principal settlers who sat on the Council of Assiniboia. In this role the Councillors were fulfilling a major expectation of the Company. Thus in this respect the Council of Assiniboia was

an important vehicle through which the Company made its influence felt in Red River. By virtue of the makeup of the Council in this period, the major recipients of this influence were the Country-born.

II. THE ANGLICAN MISSIONARIES

To the Company the missionaries of both religious persuasions were essential to the development of Red River as a civilized community. The expectations of the Company in their regard were similar to those they had for the principal settlers and the Council of Assiniboia. Besides seeing to the religious needs of the inhabitants the missionaries were expected to shape the cultural ways of their parishioners in a direction that reflected civilized practises. Among the inhabitants of the British and Protestant sector Great Britain would furnish the example.

During the foundation years the Anglican missionaries, the Rev. David T. Jones and the Rev. William Cockran had mastered the techniques of persuasion they would use to accomplish their goals. Through the church service, pastoral visitation and the schools they sought the evangelization and civilization of the inhabitants who came under their tutelage. Their success in the early period was threatened by the large scale migration from the interior following the flood of 1826. Numbers alone could swamp the small Anglican community in Red River. A particularly serious problem was the stream of

migrants whose way of life in the interior could be described as "homeguard Indian." Cockran described the situation to his correspondents in London:

> The Swampies [Muscaigo Cree] have from all parts of the North been drifting in from year to year, till the Settlement is full of them and really burdened with them. They have come and pitched their tents near to those whom they could claim as relations, those whom they had seen in the Indian Country, or those whom they heard were kind to strangers, and lived upon their munificence till every man who has got a farm and house has nearly double the number of his domestics to feed. . . . They come in such large numbers now that they eat up our superabundance in an instant. Last autumn a large body came and having fared so well in every respect, they sent off a Courier to carry the intelligence to their relatives, and I am informed there are 20 canoes on their way toward us.[37]

If the work of the foundation years were not to be undone, the newcomers had to be integrated into the existing pattern of life in the Anglican parishes.

In observing their new parishioners, Jones and Cockran expressed a perspective based upon British practises. Before they could begin their labors among the newcomers they had to determine the nature of the problems involved. As missionaries they perceived areas of thought and behavior that required a religious reformation. The salvation of the soul remained central to their endeavours. Nevertheless the experience of the foundation years taught them that civilization was essential if evangelization was to be successful. For Jones and Cockran the nomadic hunter, tripman and trader was lost to damnation. Only in sedentary communities could the

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[37] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, no date, probably, August, 1832.

Country-born and the Indian hope to enjoy the blessings of Christianity.

While a settled life as a farmer was essential to the Anglican missionary program it was not sufficient in itself to ensure success to the Country-born. It was necessary that he experience a spiritual quickening that would lead to a reformation in behavior. In the religious vernacular of the day Cockran explained what changes the missionaries felt were necessary:

> They [the Country-born settlers] have to be brought exceedingly low before God will condescend to bestow his renewing grace to change their characters. The voyager's very bones must be broken; wearisome months must be appointed as his portion, to give him time to remember the transgressions of 30 or 40 years. His conscience must be quickened, so as to bring the agonies of the second death into his soul, that he may confess his sin with wet eyes, a trembling voice, and bleeding heart to God; before those whom he has taught to sin for 30 years. Then God will remember that he is the merciful, and gracious One who forgets transgressions and forgives his enemies; and will condescend to look upon the miserable being, show him favour and give his savage wife a new heart and his adulterous progeny new dispositions. . . .[38]

To Cockran many of the ways of the Country-born made such a reformation necessary:

> others who live at the very bottom of the Settlement, who are still in possession of all the manners and customs of the Indians, and are daily associating with them, live very profane, licentious, intemperate lives. . . . Since I came down to the Rapids these same characters have regularly attended Divine Service both Sundays and Tuesdays, and most of the Adults who have been addicted to the worst of crimes (such as reveling, gambling, conjuring

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[38] Ibid., July 25, 1833.

> & whoring) have attended the Sunday School every Sunday Afternoon and are now learning to read; . . . .[39]

For the missionaries most aspects of the behavior of the Country-born required reformation.

Cockran and Jones, but particularly Cockran, perceived that a major difficulty facing the Country-born migrants was in coming to terms with their new independence and responsibilities. As Cockran stated:

> A great many have never been accustomed to provide for themselves, the Company always provided for them until they came to Red River. Now when they have to provide for themselves and their children they are perfectly at a loss: . . . .[40]

In another passage Cockran elaborated further on the difficulties encountered by the newcomers:

> I have them everything [sic]to learn; I have to enter into all their internal broils, act as a peacemaker between their nearest relatives, as well as their distant neighbours. I have to teach them prudence in the management of all their temporal affairs for they borrow and beg for [from?] one, till they put one into the same state of poverty with themselves.[41]

The way ahead for the newcomers was difficult. The cultural shock in moving from the trading post to Red River was bewildering. Could the missionaries alleviate the distress experienced by the recent arrivals?

The problems of the Country-born were accentuated by

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[39] Ibid., July 29, 1830.

[40] Ibid., Cockran to Rev. E. Bickersteth, August 3, 1829.

[41] Ibid., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 30, 1833.

their poverty. Few possessed means adequate to bring their river lots quickly into production. Other factors such as the nature of the soil and climatic conditions hindered their labors. In a letter to the Secretaries of the Church Missionary Society Cockran explained their predicament:

> The people of this Lower part of the Settlement are exceedingly poor, and meet with a great many temporal discouragements: emerging from the nature of the soil and climate and their inexperience in providing for future contingencies. They scarcely ever succeed in raising as much grain as will serve their families throughout the year. Few are so rich as to possess a plough and yoke of oxen; therefore all that they can plant and sow in the Spring has to be done with the hoe. . . . They [trees and shrubs] have taken an extensive hold of the earth with their roots so that a man cannot dig up many of them in a day, and particularly if the individual has to attend his nets for the subsistence of himself and family, which is frequently the case in seed time, the long Winter having exhausted their little store.[42]

The problems of the newcomer were not limited to the conditions described by Cockran. The absence of a strong market that could have encouraged him to expand his productive acreage and the necessity of purchasing such European articles as clothing took the settler away from his farm. Each year by the middle of June many of Cockran's male parishioners were absent, working as "Voyagers and Hunters":

> I say this not to the disparagement of either parties [sic] for many follow these callings from necessity more than choice: these being the only lawful means within their reach to obtain clothing for themselves and families. By making a voyage to York a man will earn £6 or £7 sterling. . . . The same defence may be made for many who leave their homes, their children and Churches to go to

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[42] Ibid., July 29, 1830. Cockran is referring to the area around Grand Rapids or Lower Church (St. Andrew's).

> hunt on the plains. They get leather for shoes and winter clothing P[emmican], Dried meat and fat, which they sell to raise money to purchase the European articles wanted for their individual or family use.[43]

Necessity and choice together dictated that the voyage and the hunt would play significant roles in the life of the Country-born. Such a response was less than satisfactory to the missionaries. How could they encourage the development of the Country-born community in the light of British example?

The missionaries responded to what they conceived to be the religious needs of their parishioners by expanding the facilities of the mission. In 1821 West had started the construction of the "Upper Church" near Point Douglas, two miles below the fork of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers. This church was consecrated as St. John's in 1853 after the Right Rev. David Anderson arrived in Red River as the first Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land.[44] Jones continued West's work in 1824 when he began work on the "middle Church", later St. Paul's, seven miles down the Red River from the "Upper Church." In 1827 Cockran laid the foundations for his work at Grand Rapids, another seven miles to the north. In time his work was marked by the construction of the "Lower Church", later St. Andrew's. With these churches went schools. Jones and Cockran spent much effort recruiting retired employees of the Company, British-born and Country-born, to teach in Day

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Boon, 33.

Schools and Sunday Schools.[45] In addition Jones opened a boarding school for the Country-born children of the active officers in the Company and the principal settlers.[46] Yet these traditional techniques of persuasion were not enough.

In the face of the large number of immigrants after the flood and in view of his experience since his arrival in the summer of 1825, Cockran determined on a new course of action, the development of a mission farm. Initially his energies were attracted to this enterprise when he faced difficulties in provisioning the staff of the mission and the children of the Indian school. When he realized that the returns from the farm failed to meet the cost of the labor, he resolved to expand the mission's agricultural operations.

> Having felt the bitter pangs of want and finding myself unwilling to put my own life, the lives of my family and the very existence of the Indian School into the hands of a few fisherman, who never allowed us to have any until they had enough for themselves, and who set their nets on Sunday and boast that they would sell them to us at double price: I therefore made a motion for a change of system declaring that I for one would cast off my coat and work. . . . In the autumn of 1826 and Spring of 1827 I increased the farm to ten acres [from 3 1/2 acres] - in the Spring of 1828 to twelve acres - and in the Spring of 1829 to above twenty four acres. I have also made a drain 800 yards in length, 4 feet wide and nearly 3 feet deep. . . .[47]

The value of produce coming from the farm was not the only benefit.

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[45] Foster, 134, 138.

[46] Ibid., 136.

[47] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to Bickersteth, August 3, 1829.

> Besides we are setting a good example to our neighbours who have so much need of it, . . . By setting a good example they imitate; example speaks louder than precept: this I prove every day, and it is our example that gives weight to our precepts.[48]

Cockran felt "that the example of superiors, is fast followed by inferiors."[49] What he achieved at the mission farm near the Upper Church was duplicated at Grand Rapids when he transferred his energies there in 1829.

Cockran carried his efforts beyond the confines of the mission farm. On pastoral visits to his parishioners he was continually encouraging the new settlers and demonstrating correct techniques of farming. The "recollections" of a descendant of one of these families noted Cockran's role:

> It was Mr. Cockran's custom, when farming operations commenced in the spring of the year, to ride along the bank of the river, and if he saw a plowman who was doing poor work, he would dismount, talk kindly and encouragingly to him, and make such changes in the rigging of the plow and in the hitching of the oxen as he considered necessary, then go a round or two with the man and perhaps make further changes, until everything worked satisfactorily. And so he went through the parish assisting in all things.[50]

Cockran's farming background proved of immeasurable value to himself, to the mission and to his Country-born parishioners.[51] But this was not the only course of action required of the missionaries if their work was to enjoy some

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[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Colin Inkster, "William Cockran" in W. B. Heeney, (ed.), Leaders of the Canadian Church (Toronto, 1920), II, 44.

[51] Boon, 35.

measure of success. Efforts to improve the technical competence of the new settlers was meaningless unless reformation took place in other aspects of their behavior. To the missionaries the family was the key to a successful program. Drunkenness and the loose nature of marriages au façon du nord were the twin scourges of Country-born family life. Beginning with West and continuing with Jones and Cockran the missionaries inveighed against these evils. The family was the important social unit. West spoke for his successors when he succinctly expressed his beliefs.

> Having frequently enforced the moral and social obligation of marriage upon those who were living with, and had families by Indian or half caste women, I had the happiness to perform the ceremony for several of the most respectable of the settlers under the conviction that the institution of marriage and the security of property were the fundamental laws of society.[52]

While marriage itself was important much emphasis was placed upon the nature of relationships within the family. Each member had reciprocal rights and responsibilities. An entry from Cockran's journal in 1833 demonstrates this:

> One of the parents who had a child to baptize (of negro descent by his paternal ancestor) had lived a very quarrelsome brawling life with his wife. . . . I declined officiating, alleging that as they had refused to be ruled by christian precepts; they were unworthy of christian privileges, and had no reason to expect them. While they lived at variance one with the other, they were out of the path of duty, consequently they could not be considered capable of training up a child in the fear of God. And as they had abused several of the ordinances of the christian church already, by giving

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[52]West, 25.

> way to their unruly feelings, I intend to suspend all christian privileges to them till I had full proof that they had forsook [sic] their errors, and were living together in peace and unity.[53]

Outside the family circle additional rules governed both individual behavior and relations with others. A very incomplete list was given by Cockran in one of his sermons:

> I . . . pressed the necessity of industry, economy, cleanliness, taste, good order, and all other moral virtues which made the Christian shine among a perverse generation.[54]

At the same time the concept of private property was given its due. Cockran found it necessary to emphasize "the necessity of exercising justice and equity in their dealings with each other." Cockran continued:

> This was a very necessary Discourse for our Indians and Half Breed Brethren, as they have always lived in common, have very loose notions of justice and often make no difference between their neighbour's property and their own. Having shewed them that our religion required us to render unto all their due and owe no one anything, I concluded as usual with a hymn and prayer.[55]

Few aspects of the life of the Country-born were exempt from the scrutiny of the missionaries. From the perspective of British practise they identified what they felt were the principal problems and took the action they deemed necessary.

The Company and the Anglican missionaries were two of the most powerful influences affecting the lives of the Country-born during the good years. In essence they sought

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[53] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, February 6, 1833.

[54] Ibid., Cockran to the Secretaries, August 8, 1836.

[55] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, December 30, 1828.

to establish the Country-born in the image of Britain. Through their various activities they structured, to a degree, the interests of British-born males who had Country-born families. Both the Company and the missionaries sought their cooperation and attempted to direct their various activities in appropriate avenues. Yet these men, principal settlers as well as the less prominent, were members of the Country-born community. They also were products of the previous generation's experience in the trading post. To a significant degree they responded to the entreaties of the Company and the Missionaries. But would their children respond? Would their Country-born relatives follow their example? In answering such questions no simple picture emerges. The response of the Country-born was varied and uneven. But its broad outlines were determined in the trading post and by the nature of the influences they experienced in the Settlement.

CHAPTER IV

THE RESPONSE OF THE COUNTRY-BORN

The particular nature of the Country-born community as it developed in the years following the flood of 1826 was the product of the individual and collective experiences of its members. In essence this experience was the adaptation of the way of life of the trading-post to the new circumstances of Red River. Its geographical and social features and the influences brought to bear there by the Company and the Anglican mission were novel indeed. They suggested that new modes of behavior were necessary if the Country-born were to adapt successfully to this strange world. The response of many of the Country-born to their new situation suggested a cultural transformation, a rejection of many of the ways of the trading post. Yet other manifestations of behavior seemed to indicate a different response. Rather than rejecting altogether the ways of the trading post the Country-born adapted them to permit their survival in Red River. As the ways of the trading post had reflected cultural antecedents in Rupert's Land and Great Britain so too did the ways of the Country-born in Red River reflect their antecedents in the trading post.

Trading post practises and new influences, particularly those emanating from the Mission and the Company,

produced a collective experience that served to identify the Country-born and distinguish them from other communities. Factors that tended to distinguish the Country-born from others were not so much differences in kind as differences in degree. The Country-born participated in activities similar to those of other communities. One senses, though it is difficult to enumerate them with clarity, the differing degrees of involvement with various activities that marked the lives of the inhabitants. Further, in distinguishing the Country-born as a community the important question may well be not what they did but with whom they did it. In other words the "degrees" of difference may not be sufficient in themselves to demarcate a separate community. What becomes significant is the collection of individuals that participated in the activity. This, in large measure, may serve to distinguish the Country-born from others. Lastly it must be noted that the various factors that served to distinguish the Country-born also served to determine a particular "nature" for this community as a collectivity. The nature of their community was such that they played a distinctive role in the life of the Settlement as a whole. The role of the Métis as provisioners to the fur trade and as a buffer against the Sioux "menace" to the south is well understood by historians. The role of the Country-born has been less clearly stated. But perhaps the relative stability of the Settlement with its mixture of semi-nomads and agriculturalists owed much to the

nature of the Country-born community.

The relatively large scale migration of the Country-born to Red River began in 1823. It continued for the next decade. After the good years, the number of migrants declined although there was a continuing movement from the interior until Confederation in 1870. Initially the Country-born settled near Fort Garry, the Company's establishment at the forks. The settlement moved northward down the Red. North of Point Douglas it was interrupted by the river lots of the Kildonan Scots on the west bank, who kept their lands on the east bank as wood-lots. The Country-born reappeared again a few miles farther north near Frog Plain. With occasional traverses to the east shore settlement continued northward to Grand Rapids and Little Britain. By the end of the good years settlement had reached the lands of Peguis' band of mixed Saulteaux and Cree. By the 1840's the Settlement as a whole and the Country-born in particular were beginning to feel the pressure of numbers. River lot farming did not permit extensive subdivision. The lots usually measured from one and a half to six chains fronting on the river and were approximately two miles in depth. Most of the lots of retired servants had a frontage of three chains or less. By the third generation it was generally impossible to subdivide the land in a manner that would permit effective farming and at the same time provide river frontage. In the early 1850's several Country-born families were again pulling up stakes

to move westward and settle along the Assiniboine in the region of Portage La Prairie.[1]

I. FAMILY LIFE

The first problem facing the newcomer from the trading post was to find a means of livelihood. Circumstances pointed towards river lot farming but the way was difficult. While the life-time savings of some permitted them to begin farming on a relatively large scale, many found that they lacked adequate financial means to farm at all. The cost of land was an important factor. By the end of the foundation years the Company had determined a policy for land grants for retired officers and servants based upon rank.[2] Some servants received as little as 25 acres which, in terms of the Red River survey, meant a river frontage of one and a half chains (33 yards). As the depths of the lots were uniform, grants of larger acreages reflected increased river frontage. By the 1830's the largest grants were 200 acres, i.e., the lot of twelve chains frontage on the river given to retired Chief Factors.[3] Other grants were made, notably twenty-five acres to the eldest son of a settler. For most retired servants the grants of land were too small for effective farming. Thus many faced the problem of acquiring additional land and by the mid-1830's the price had risen to ten

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[1] W. L. Morton, Manitoba, A History (Toronto, 1967), 88.

[2] P.A.C., M.G.19, E1(1), Vol. 25, Simpson to Colvile, May 15, 1833.

[3] Ibid.

shillings an acre.[4] For many the cost of purchasing additional land and, at the same time, acquiring implements, seed and animals was prohibitive. Cockran indicated their dilemma in a letter to the Secretaries of the C.M.S. in July 1833:

> He receives gratis a piece of land, 33 yards in breadth, and two miles in length. This is too narrow to fence and make a farm of. Therefore the dust of the balance, which has been collecting for 30 years, must be swept out at once to procure another piece, to add to his gratuity. Here he commences his operations, buys an axe and hoe, or borrows or begs according to his circumstances.[5]

But for the charitable assistance of the Anglican mission and older and more prosperous settlers many would have failed.

The poverty of large numbers of the Country-born was not the only impediment to their efforts to establish themselves as farmers. Many lacked the necessary skills. In 1833 Cockran noted that of the 92 families in the neighbourhood of Grand Rapids only 39 were headed by European males.[6] Thus more than half of the Country-born families were headed by males whose knowledge of agriculture was limited to what they had seen practised in the gardens and occasional small fields in and around the trading posts. Neither were British-born servants, hired for particular trade skills, necessarily better versed in farming. Even though some came from farming

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[4] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, no date, probably August, 1832.

[5] Ibid., July 25, 1833.

[6] Ibid.

backgrounds, years of service with the Company left its mark. Injury and illness had robbed many of the physical capacity for manual labor.[7] Again the Anglican mission in the person of Cockran played a significant role in assisting many of the Country-born. The results obtained by the "ice-barn" farmers were not impressive to observers familiar with advanced practises in Great Britain[8] but, in comparison with their initial efforts, they represented a vast improvement. Gradually a sedentary community of relatively large numbers emerged on the banks of the Red River.

In comparison with the successful farms of the Kildonan Scots, the circumstances of some of the Country-born were miserable indeed. This reflected the fact that among the Kildonan Scots the whole family, husband, wife and children, were familiar with farming.[9] Even the most enterprising and physically capable retired British-born servant, who had spent but a few years in the Company's service and thus had not forgotten the lessons of his youth, could not match the agricultural success of his Kildonan neighbour. His Indian or mixed-blood wife and children could not initially meet the expectations of the European. In his parish Cockran

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[7] Ibid., July 24, 1834, noted that the poverty of Cockran's parishioners could be explained by the fact that there were only "10 sound men" amongst them.

[8] Alexander Ross, Chapters X, XI, XII. "Ice-barn" farmers refers to the practise of threshing grain in winter on barn floors that the settlers had flooded with water and allowed to freeze.

[9] Ibid., 111.

noted this deficiency:

> But he [the retired servant] stands, he labours, he does all alone; the woman whom he had brought, despises him in her heart; calls him an old dog, neglects to please, and never studies to make herself useful; the children from having descended from women of various tribes, and neglected by their father in infancy, are without filial or brotherly affection.[10]

Often too the habits of the bread-winner were no more compatible with farming.

Many retired servants and their families found their new independence from the daily dictates of the Company in the trading post a liability rather than an asset. In Red River the retired servant and his family had "duties to learn in old age, which some of us learned in infancy; virtues to seek which some have had interwoven in our nature."[11] Once again the missionaries found themselves involved in the lives of their parishioners, combining the roles of manager and financial adviser. In pastoral visits and from the pulpit they exhorted their congregations to adopt personal habits and practices which to their minds were conducive to success as settled farmers. The Country-born listened and gave the missionaries' message "its proper weight."[12] Yet old ways died hard, particularly when they were intimately involved in the kinship connections that were a vital

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[10] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 30, 1833.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

consideration for so many of the Country-born.

From an early date relatively established Country-born settlers expressed a desire to assist newly arrived compatriots. When referring to problems he experienced with the newcomers Cockran noted this tendency:

> But I have only to feed them in common with my neighbours. If I find any in want, the first time I meet anyone who has been successful, I tell the tale of pity, and then will say, we must not let this or that man starve. . . . He or she will say I will give so and so; and I give to [sic]; thus by a union of effort we affect a great deal.[13]

The vehicle for much of this charity was kinship. The willingness of the Country-born to recognize and accept their kinship obligations in the face of a drain on their economic resources suggests that many of the ways of the trading post were sustained in Red River. One reason for this was the fact that, in the economic sphere, circumstances hindered the realization of the British ideal. Those who aspired to the way of life of the British yeoman or gentleman farmer found the absence of a strong market for their produce a serious handicap.[14] The principal market was the fur trade. But by 1830 its demands were relatively constant. As the numbers of farmers increased any surplus, no matter how small, compounded the problem. In addition the farmer faced the

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[13] Ibid.

[14] For two different views of this problem see Alexander Ross, 113-117 and W. L. Morton, "Agriculture . . ."

competition of the buffalo hunter, largely Métis.[15] A bountiful return for both hunter and farmer glutted the market in Red River although, should either the hunter or the farmer suffer a failure, he was glad to have the other sector of the Settlement to call upon. Should both sectors suffer failures the situation with regard to provisions would be ominous indeed.

A further complication in the market was the political use the Company made of its position as principal purchaser.[16] As part of its technique of control the Company tied influential families to its interests. Someone with extensive kinship and friendship connections, particularly among the young men of mixed blood, could apparently count on a market where his neighbour found none.[17] Who had produced the commodity was a more important question than its quality.

There can be little doubt that circumstances in Red River militated against a concentration of effort on the part of the Country-born to produce a large agricultural surplus. Rather circumstances seemed to encourage a diffusion of economic effort to meet the settlers' needs. An example of the economic problems facing the Country-born was the acquisition of clothing. Little was produced in the Settlement

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[15] Alexander Ross, 334-35.

[16] This conclusion is implied in Ibid., 117-18.

[17] Ibid., 122-23, 139.

in the first three decades and material had to be purchased at the Company's store or through private merchants.[18] For this the settler required cash or sufficient credit. In the absence of a strong market for the produce of his land he was driven to look elsewhere for survival. As a result many of the Country-born were absent from their farms for varying periods of time. The fisheries on Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba offered some opportunity to acquire a marketable product as well as to vary a grain and vegetable diet.[19] The marshes about the mouth of the Red River on Lake Winnipeg offered a similar opportunity in spring and autumn with the passage of innumerable wild fowl.[20] The plains and the buffalo hunt provided provisions for consumption and sale and hides for robes and leather.[21] But the returns from the fisheries and the hunt were precarious. As a result "many of the young men make a voyage to York Factory in the boats to gain as much as will clothe themselves, and also to assist their relatives who are not in the way of gaining clothing."[22]

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[18] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 29, 1830.

[19] The significance of fish as a saleable item apparently decreased following the foundation years. However as late as 1829 the Anglican mission still purchased a quantity. See C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to Bickersteth, August 3, 1829.

[20] In the documents wild fowl are never mentioned as saleable items.

[21] Alexander Ross, 258.

[22] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cocran to the Secretaries, July 20, 1831.

"Voyaging" as tripmen on the York boats of the Company or private freighters contracted to the Company was a principal means of procuring necessities of life not available on river lot farms. Others turned to profitable activities reminiscent of the trading post. The craftsmen of the British sector of the Settlement were drawn largely from the ranks of the Country-born. Some appear to have concentrated on a variety of crafts to avoid the monotony of farm work. The summer tripman could find employment in winter as a woodcutter and sawyer.[23] As in the trading post the carpenter was cartwright and cooper as well.[24] Yet the poverty of much of the population and the absence of much money allowed few, if any, to depend wholly on a single trade or occupation without farming for their sustenance.[25] As a result of the diffusion of effort both farming and the trades suffered. The produce that the Country-born brought to the market place, whether it was from the hands of the farmer or the tradesman, was never noted for its quality.[26] To this extent at least, Red River shared the experience of other "frontier" areas.

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[23] P.A.C., M.G.19, E7, Vols. II, III, IV, John Inkster Papers.

[24] G.-A.-I., J.S.C., James to John Sutherland, August 8, 1831.

[25] One of the most successful Red River merchants, Andrew McDermot conducted one of the most extensive farms. See P.A.C., M.G.9, E3, Vols. I, II, Red River Census.

[26] Alexander Ross, 121-22, 394.

The jack-of-all trades reigned and the specialist was virtually unknown.

Retired senior servants and junior officers provided most of the Settlement's petty merchants.[27] Those who remained active for a significant period of time tended to combine merchandizing and freighting. The Company exercised some control over their behavior through contracts granted for freighting the Company's goods between York Factory and the Settlement and licenses granted for private trading in furs in competition with interlopers from the United States.[28] In addition the Company's store in the Settlement served to keep the prices of the petty merchants within bounds. Besides assisting the movement of goods between Red River and Great Britain, the petty merchants facilitated the exchange of goods and services within the Settlement. An enterprising merchant such as Andrew McDermot could furnish nearly any good or service for a price.[29] The account books of another such merchant, John Inkster, reveal an interesting relationship between himself and what might be termed his employee-customers. While a good portion of Inkster's business depended upon the occasional purchases by neighbouring

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[27]The leading merchant, Andrew McDermot, served as a clerk in the Company's employ during the last decade of the competition. He retired to the Settlement in 1823.

[28]H.B.C.A., D.4/8, Simpson to Governor and Committee, June 5, 1824.

[29]Alexander Ross, 399-402.

farmers, a significant part of his business involved his tripmen. In a manner reminiscent of the relationship between the trapper and the trader in the trading post, goods were supplied to an individual throughout the year in return for his services as a tripman during the summer.[30] Additional credit sales could be made if the individual contracted as a wood cutter or sawyer during the winter months.[31] The profitability of this relationship for the merchant is indicated in the Red River practise, on credit sales, of adding one-third to the cash price.[32] While most of the small merchants in the early years were born in Great Britain they were joined by mixed-bloods, largely Country-born, in the 1840's.[33]

The remaining social element of economic importance among the Country-born were the principal settlers. British-born almost to a man they constituted a small group whose wealth extended their influence beyond the confines of their immediate family. In their purchase of goods and services from the settlers they contributed in a very small way to the economic well-being of the Settlement. Much of their fortunes, however, seemed to be directed towards the purchase

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[30] Ibid., 394 and P.A.C., M.G.19, E7, Vols. II, III, IV, John Inkster Papers.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Alexander Ross, 394.

[33] Among them were James Sinclair and his brother Thomas, Peter Garrioch and his brothers John and Gavin, and Henry Cook. It is equally noteworthy that all were related.

of luxuries in Great Britain. They appeared to be content to enjoy the fruits of their labors in the fur trade rather than to develop the productive capacity of their lands.[34] Their means allowed them to live in a grand style. Together with the wealthier merchants they gave Red River its fame for lavish entertainment and some degree of sophistication.[35] Their children affected the same style although they themselves possessed little of their own. The phrase "living on the wreck of their father's fortunes" became a by-word in Red River.[36] The style of life of the principal settlers was the epitome of the good life for the Country-born. Yet how could an ambitious young man hope to realize such aspirations without serving as an officer in the Company's service? The success of a few petty merchants seemed to indicate one path. But in a Settlement whose population reached 5,000 by 1850 few could hope to enjoy much success.

The economic response of the Country-born in Red River was a function of the circumstances they encountered and their past experiences in the trading post. The diversity of their economic activities as individuals and as a community reflect the economic realities of the Settlement. The related problems of adequate markets for goods and

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[34] Alexander Ross, 126.

[35] W. L. Morton, Manitoba . . . , 67.

[36] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, November 7, 1831.

services and an adequate circulation of money encouraged the individual to look to several sources to gain a livelihood. Yet the nature of the response of the Country-born differed from that of other communities in Red River. This would suggest that the past experiences of the different communities were as important as local conditions in determining the nature of their response. This is most apparent when the Country-born are compared with the Kildonan Scots.

The census returns for the Settlement in these years confirm the observations of contemporaries and the recent findings of historians respecting agricultural enterprise.[37] The devotion of the Kildonan Scot to the soil was rewarded with returns superior to those of the Country-born in quantity and quality.[38] Unlike the Country-born the Kildonan Scot was rarely seen voyaging, hunting extensively on the plains or devoting himself to commerce. His attachment was to the land. No doubt some differences between the Kildonan Scots and Country-born communities can be attributed to the fact that British-born individuals among the Country-born differed from the Kildonan Scots in terms of their region and class of origin. Cultural differences between Highland Scots crofters, Orkney fishermen-farmers and the English urban middle-class were significant. Yet the career of Samuel Henderson, an Orkneyman and retired Company servant who

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[37] W. L. Morton, "Agriculture . . .".

[38] Alexander Ross, 111.

married into the Kildonan Scots community and lived successfully as a farmer, suggests that the barriers were not insurmountable.[39] This, in turn, suggests that differences between the economic behavior of the Country-born and the Kildonan Scots did not arise solely from cultural differences originating in Great Britain. When the agricultural success of the Kildonan Scots is perceived in terms of their ability to function as "family-teams" the difference between them and the Country-born serve to underline the legacy of the trading post in determining the nature of the Country-born response.

The question arises whether the various economic activities of the Country-born represented simply acts of economic desperation in which circumstances in the Settlement served to encourage selected aspects of their past experience or whether, in addition, such activities represented purposeful acts taken to sustain a way of life that had proved functional and rewarding. In other words was the individual in his economic activities motivated not only by the desire to continue a way of life that had evolved in the trading posts of the Company? Adaptations to new circumstances in Red River were necessary, but did not the "core" of the trading post way of life continue? Some indication of the answer may arise from an examination of other aspects of the social

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[39] See A. M. Henderson, Biographical Sketch of Samuel Henderson, Information supplied from the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, in possession of A. M. Henderson, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

behavior of the Country-born.

The correspondence of residents in Red River, particularly the Anglican missionaries, document notable changes in the personal habits and the family life of large numbers of Country-born within a few years of their arrival in Red River. Needless to say much of what occurred in the trading post and was acceptable there was viewed in a negative light by the missionaries. This was particularly true of Cockran:

> I have had a great deal of conversation with different individuals, on the morals of the people of Canada, and I find that fur trading and voyaging have made them the most base, unprincipled, immoral people that inhabit this Continent. I have therefore set my face as much against these two evils, as time and our circumstances would allow.
> . . . .
> I harangued all who ever came into my way, about cultivating the soil, rather than depending upon the chase; and often attempted to prove the impossibility of living comfortably, or in the fear of God, by any other means.[20]

It was from this bias that Cockran and other British-born individuals observed the social behavior of the Country-born as they wandered into Red River.

Cockran thus characterized his parishioners at Grand Rapids on their arrival in Red River:

> The best of these men and families find life a warfare; they have habits, customs, and vices to cast off, which the worst of us are strangers to; . . . . Yea, all the indolence, treachery, falsehood, cruelty, extravagance, cunning, ingratitude, sensuality, selfishness, pride and superstition which ever met in a human being, must be exchanged for the wishes of the Gospel.[41]

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[40] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833.

[41] Ibid.

In another letter Cockran made similar observations while commenting upon the "improved" behavior of the Country-born.

> These are individuals who a few years ago, worshipped no God, except profit and pleasure; acknowledged no Savior; knew no Sabbath except from this particular, they ran into greater excess of wickedness on it on account of the opportunities it afforded them of gratifying their inclinations. Those who were in the habit of spending their Sabbath in drinking to excess, fighting and racing, and other things improper to mention are now attentively and reverently serving God. . . .[42]

Among the "other things improper to mention" was "unrestrained sensuality" expressed in terms of "whoring" and "seducing each other's women".[43] Yet in spite of the bias of the missionary's observation he was no unintelligent observer. It would appear that social behavior did change and in the direction encouraged by the missionary.

Drunkenness remained a problem among the Country-born but it was apparently brought within the limits familiar to a British community of the day.[44] A similar change was noted with respect to the "unrestrained sensuality" of the Country-born that was "shocking to the feelings of the tender Christian."[45] Cockran observed:

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[42] Ibid., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 20, 1831.

[43] Ibid., and Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833.

[44] Drunkenness receives little attention in the correspondence of the missionaries after 1827. In contrast it is mentioned with some frequency in earlier correspondence.

[45] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 20, 1831.

> There also appears to be a growing respect among our population for the ordinance of Matrimony. The youths are not now in the habit of going and living together until their banns were [sic] published, but they are legally married. . . . The Protestant population may amount to 1200, and among the whole I have not known of more than two illegitimate children born the last year. This must to every mind be a convincing proof of their moral improvement; and particularly when it is taken into consideration that sensuality has ever been their besetting sin.[46]

While such changes may not have reflected "moral improvement" they did reflect increasing stability in the family life of many Country-born families.

Further evidence suggesting changes in personal behavior that appear to have had a positive effect in terms of the stability of the individual family is described in Cockran's Journal for November 9, 1832:

> [I] walked down the bank of the River to the residence of a certain family, who had appointed today for their initiation into the Christian church, by becoming the recipients of baptism. Six of the family are constant attendants in our Sunday School since their arrival in the settlement a little more than twelve months ago; two are day Scholars. The father of the family, according to the history he gives of himself, seems to have descended from a Welsh man and an Indian woman. The woman judging from her appearance, I took for an Indian woman. However I saw many things in her which I considered highly interesting. Being a little earlier than expected, I perceived the good lady was thrown into a flurry, and greatly abashed on looking out and seeing that I had fallen in with two of her boys in disabille. The little fellows on my approach came forward to show themselves; they did not consider the unpleasant feelings that were calling forth in their mother's bosom; neither did they recollect that while playing on the bank they had torn their trousers and metamorphosed [sic] their faces, that I scarcely knew them. The oldest daughter was sent to draw them slily

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[46] Ibid.

> into the house, while I was conversing with another branch of the family. The house has two rooms; they were taken into one room, and I was conducted into the other. Every part of the room was clean, the walls had been newly whitewashed, the floor had been well scoured, every box and stool had been wiped down, so that the whole had the appearance of comfort. While they sent for the Father, who was working at a neighbour's house, I delivered an ecomium [sic] in favor of the mother for her cleanliness and good management of her family. When the family were all assembled I . . . baptized the mother and seven children. Four were her own by her present husband, and three her husband's by another woman who had been dead some time ago.[47]

Though others among the Country-born clung to earlier ways, families like this gladdened the hearts of the missionaries and others in the Settlement, British-born and Country-born, who saw Red River's evolution and development in terms of British example.

The Day and Sunday Schools established by the Anglican mission and staffed by retired British-born officers and servants with mixed-blood families as well as by the Country-born were designed in essence to achieve a cultural transformation among the mixed-blood inhabitants of the British sector of the Settlement.[48] The initial emphasis had been placed upon religious instruction and literacy. While the results, particularly in individual cases, were notable, the missionaries were disappointed that the transformation was not always as rapid nor as extensive as they would have liked.

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[47] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, November 9, 1832.

[48] Foster, 124.

Cockran expressed this view in a letter to the Secretaries of the C.M.S. advocating the establishment of a school for girls and young women:

> The Females being Natives and Half Breeds, are consequently entirely ignorant of the economy and industry necessary to make a family comfortable in civilized life. And they are naturally so indolent, thoughtless and licentious, that it requires a great deal, both of instruction and grace, to make them honest and virtuous Christians and is equally difficult to keep the pious and virtuous in the path of duty, while they are surrounded and constantly mixing with a host of indolent, licentious women and girls, who go from house to house enshrouded in a blanket, and using all manner of detestable conversation.[49]

Personal habits as well as some social practises from the trading post persisted among the Country-born. While examples of "correct" behavior were continually set before them by the missionaries and other interested settlers, some Country-born themselves, the individual family appeared to determine the nature and degree of its response.

The child-rearing practises of the Country-born offer a further example of the varying response of individual families to the influence of British example and at the same time demonstrate that ways that were acceptable in the trading post were perpetuated in Red River. Insight into the child-raising practises of many of the Country-born families is given in Cockran's Journal:

> Need we then be astonished at the apathy, pride, indolence and disobedience of the rising generation, when

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[49] C.M.S.A., Cockran to Rev. T. Woodroffe; August 3, 1831.

> the only remedy, which Solomon knew for the evil is withheld. The greater part of the children here, seem to be altogether their own masters - do every day what is most agreeable; eat when they please, waste what they please, sleep when, where and how they please. . . . from their infancy they go astray, and because their parents neglect to use the rod, through attachment of old habits, therefore they are never brought back. It is viewed as cruel and tyrannical to chastise children. And, I am sorry to say, that many of the Parents of my Congregation follow this method with their families. They have done well in many things, ... But there are only a few, a very few, who will command their children. . . .[50]

It would appear that the child-raising practises related by Cockran were not limited to a particular segment or "class" of the Country-born. While it is probable that British-born retired officers would be most likely to share Cockran's views, it is equally notable that many of them continued practises that were apparently found in the trading post. It is possible that this created some problems for those who had high aspirations, in terms of achievement, for their sons. Those who could afford it could send them home to Great Britain or to the Canadas or in some cases to colleges in the United States. Others placed their sons in the academy founded by Cockran's co-worker, Jones, at the Upper Church.[51]

The oscillation between joy and displeasure that marked Cockran's observations of the Country-born reflects

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[50] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, August 2, 1832.

[51] See H.B.C.A., D.5/5, Bird to Simpson, August 10, 1840, and D.5/6, J. P. Pruden to Simpson, July 9, 1841.

not only Cockran's particular biases and interests but also the selective nature of the response of the Country-born, as a community, to the influences brought to bear upon them in Red River. Notable changes were made in terms of personal habits and family life. Behavior that had been tolerated in the trading post became subject to community sanctions. The changes that took place were in that area of behavior that had lent instability to the lives of the Country-born in the trading post. The overindulgence in alcohol and "whoring" that had proved disruptive in the trading post, particularly in terms of family life, were apparently rejected and habits and practises more conducive to stable relationships within the family adopted. By the same token other practises which appeared to remain functional and enjoyable were sustained although those who favored British example found fault with them. Child-raising practises in particular denote a purposeful perpetuation of practises originating in the trading post. Such a development suggests that the economic activities of the Country-born might, in part, reflect similar purposeful action on the part of the individuals involved.

II. LIFE AS A COMMUNITY

The focal point for the social life of the Country-born was the neighbourhood and the parish. While many of the Country-born, particularly the men, were absent from their farms for varying periods of time, they did return.

While river lot farming did not hold strong attractions for many of them, the few acres planted to grain and vegetables promised sustenance should the hunt or the fisheries fail. As Cockran noted:

> Some of the people think that it is a disgrace to them, to become ground troublers (for such they call the husband-man). . . . To paddle a canoe, to kill a buffalo, to drive a sledge are the chief excellencies which constitute the man in the opinion of many.[52]

Yet the cabin, no matter how humble, was an improvement over what not a few had known before their migration to Red River. While circumstances such as an incapacitated breadwinner may have deprived some families of the standard of living they had enjoyed in the trading post, many others found their situation improved. But economic advantage was not the sole reason the Country-born remained attached to their farms. Their residence in the Settlement owed as much to the ties that flowed from the companionship of kith and kin. Social ties formed in and around the trading post influenced the pattern of settlement that emerged among the Country-born in Red River. This pattern constituted the social milieu in which the Country-born flourished.

The day-to-day life of the Country-born involved much social interchange between the residents within various neighbourhoods. To say the least the Country-born were gregarious. The unpublished journal of Peter Garrioch, a

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[52] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, May 24, 25, 26, 1827.

Country-born settler, records frequent cooperative ventures among neighbours. On occasion these activities appear as informal business relations;[53] but there are many instances of cooperative activity for mutual benefit. One can be found in Garrioch's journal for February 17, 1846:

> [I] went off to the Far Pines with Gavin [brother], Bill [brother] and Charles Cummings [brother-in-law] . . . Sandy Sebiston, as I had apprehended, was not at the place he had promised.[54]

Among the women there was a frequent interchange of visits and gossip. The stern eye of the missionary noted with disapproval this proclivity: "I found so much to say on the idle gossipping habits of the females and the evil consequences that arose from such habits, . . . "[55] Baptisms, marriages and funerals were occasions that brought the Country-born together in relatively large gatherings. Marriages in particular were sufficient cause for many to leave their homes to join their friends and relatives for two or three days. Such activity was again subjected to the critical eye of the ever observant Cockran:

> After the service was finished [I] detained the communicants to address them on certain abuses which had been creeping in among them. The first was that of giving dances at weddings . . . when a couple were married, all their friends and acquaintances from the most distant part of the settlement must be assembled. Frequently

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[53] P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 291.

[54] Ibid., 294.

[55] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, October 21, 1828.

> 100 persons would meet on such an occasion; many of whom would have to be at least three days absent from their houses.[56]

Whether the missionaries approved or not the Country-born clung to social practises that emphasized the strength of kith and kin associations. The gregariousness of the Country-born was common to all ranks within their community.

In the early years of Red River's development the pattern of settlement among the Country-born reflected kin relationships that had been established in the interior. With the passage of time similar ties connected individual families in the different neighbourhoods inhabited by the Country-born. Such connections tended to give the Country-born a sense of continuity that did not extend beyond their own kind. The intertwining of blood and marriage connections tied individuals to others in different parishes. Peter Garrioch, journeying from the Forks to his home at Grand Rapids, found that his social obligations as distinct from his business concerns necessitated frequent stops along the way.[57] In Garrioch's case his obligations extended to the Indian village where his uncle, Joseph Cook, served as catechist and school teacher.[58] Kith and kin connections also served to maintain contact with those still active in the fur trade.

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[56] Ibid., April 5, 1833.

[57] P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 233.

[58] Ibid., 296-97.

The ties of kinship that brought many retired servants and officers to Red River constituted a continuing bond with the fur trade. Through a wife's relatives contact could be maintained with those still actively employed. Nevertheless changes in the Company's employment practises after 1821 tended to weaken these bonds. The first noteworthy change was the Company's increased use of seasonal labor. Rather than hire European servants on an annual basis to man their York boats, the Company hired mixed-bloods or contracted with private freighters who hired mixed-bloods for the season of open water.[59] In Red River this practise, with the passage of years, tended to sever links with officers and servants who were employed on an annual basis. At the same time the Company began to select its officers almost exclusively from among Highland Scots in Great Britain. Testifying before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Hudson's Bay Company in 1857, Edward Ellice noted:

> We sent out principally from the North of Scotland young men who were the sons of Clergymen and the sons of Farmers who had been educated in the Schools and Colleges of Scotland - they were sent out first as apprentices then they were made Clerks, and then they became gradually advanced to the higher positions in the service.[60]

The continuing influx of British-born officers further

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[59] The Company continued to hire tradesmen skilled in European crafts in the Orkney Islands.

[60] H.B.C.A., E.18/17, Parliamentary Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company, June 23, 1857.

weakened connections that bound individuals in the fur trade to the Country-born settlers. This development was noted by retired Chief Factor James Sutherland when commenting upon the difficulties his sons faced in finding employment:

> I could get him [Sutherland's second son] in the Co^{s} service, but halfbreeds as they are called has [sic] no chance there nor are they respected whatever their abilities may be, by a parcel of upstart Scotchmen, who now hold the power and Controle in the concern, ...[61]

Such a situation boded ill for the Company's interests as the troubles of the 1840's so eloquently illustrate.

As in the trading posts marriages among the Country-born tended to reflect gradients in the social structure. Leading families such as the Birds, Thomases, Logans and Sutherlands were interrelated through marriage.[62] Similarly such families as the Rosses, Gunns, Garriochs and Cooks reflected similar connections. Kinship ties, however, were not the sole basis on which a person's social standing was determined. Behavior, education and wealth were important determinants of an individual's position in the community. With respect to behavior the ways of the man of property seemed to count for much. James Sutherland reflected this outlook in noting the marriages of some of his children:

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[61] G.-A.I., J.S.C., James to John Sutherland, August 10, 1840.

[62] To date a thorough study of the marriage patterns of the Country-born has not been attempted. It would be interesting to determine if marriages such as that of Henry Cook to Harriet Garrioch, which appears to reflect the crosscousin marriage pattern of the Cree, occurred with any frequency.

> I have now got all my Daughters married, the last two on one day, to an Orkney man and a Half Breed, a native of this Country, both of the name of James Inkster - the first is from Orphar and a boatbuilder by trade - the second is the son of an industrious good man, has a good farm well stocked, has errected [sic] a [?] mill which brings him in money and in a very few years the whole will fall into the hands of my son-in-law.[63]

To a degree the social structure, mirroring that of the trading post, was a hierarchical spectrum proceeding from "Indianness" to what the settlers conceived to be the attributes of a British gentleman. School teacher W. R. Smith noted this view when he was explaining the difficulties involved in collecting fees from the parents of students:

> Another objection which is stated by those who (perhaps) might be able to pay for their children, is their dislike to have their children brought up in the same school with the Indian children. It is true there are exceptions to this, but very few.[64]

The extent to which the social spectrum was recognized by all the members of the community is reflected in the answer of an Indian at the Indian village to the Anglican missionary, Rev. John Smithurst, when the clergyman reprimanded the Indian for increasing his charges for cutting and hauling a cord of wood. The Indian replied:

> They wanted to be gentlemen as well as the English. They did not want to be always working and should have good wages that they might have fewer days to work and more days to take their pleasure.[65]

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[63] G.-A.I., J.S.C., James to John Sutherland, August 8, 1831.

[64] C.M.S.A., I.C., W. R. Smith to the Secretaries, August 1, 1834.

[65] Ibid., Rev. John Smithurst, Journal, December 15,1847.

What is equally significant about such behavior was that much of it was rooted in the "custom of the Country". Newcomers from Great Britain often treated individuals in a manner which they thought was appropriate but which was at odds with precedents established in the trading post. A notable example involved two native catechists, Henry Budd and James Settee, who labored under the direction of the Rev. James Hunter at Cumberland House. Raised and educated in Red River and therefore familiar with the social usages there, the two missionary laborers voiced their complaints through the catechist at St. Peter's, Joseph Cook. Cook was the mixed-blood son of retired Chief Factor William Hemmings Cook. He included the complaints of Budd and Settee with his own in a letter to the Lay Secretary of the C.M.S.:

> there will never be that union and love between the C. Missionaries and the Native Catechists as it ought to be, nor can the propagation of the Word of God be carried on with that degree of success and quietness, if this great distinction which has been made between the European Catechists which is so glaring, if it is not abolished - . . .
> Now, my dear Sir, I ask the question again, what right and reason has the C.M.S. to impose on me this part of duty to perform. . . . I suppose they will say because I am only half an Englishman, this is very true, but my good Sir, I can eat as good a plum pudding as any Englishman.
> . . .
> I can assure you Sir, we are rather beginning to get disgusted with our situations and the treatment and the distinction which has been made between us and the European Catechists, and the too much Lordship being exercised over us.[66]

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[66] Ibid., Joseph Cook to the Lay Secretary July 29, 1846.

Cockran, by this time an experienced hand, added his own words of advice to the C.M.S. the following year:

> He [Hunter] ought to exact nothing from them [the Catechists] except teaching the School and superintending the children. . . . He has been treating them as common labourers. This is never done by the Hudson's Bay Company to any of their Interpreters or Post Masters. And you may rest assured they have studied what is most politic.[67]

The social gradation from "Indianness" to the ways of a British gentleman existed in Red River but it rested on criteria that had been adapted to circumstances in Rupert's Land decades earlier.

The top of the pyramidal social structure of the Country-born was occupied by the principal settlers. Largely retired British-born officers of senior rank, they possessed the wealth, in some cases the education and in most cases the habits that qualified them for leadership in Red River. They were the social equals of the senior officers in the Company's service. With their wealth they were able to afford the accoutrements of life which they felt constituted the "correct" way. This behavior was accentuated when three of these gentlemen, recently widowed, married British-born governesses sent to the Anglican mission in successive periods.[68] Sutherland noted the impact of these marriages on the social life of his peers:

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[67] Ibid., Cockran to R. Davies, August 5, 1847.

[68] Boon, 29.

> We have here some rich old fellows that has [sic] acquired large fortunes in the service, have got married to European females and cut a dash and have introduced a system of extravagance in the place that is followed by all that can afford it, and to keep up a little respectability have followed it in a small way, my housekeeping expenses is [sic] double of what they were when I first came to Red River.[69]

It was the social behavior of this leading element in Red River that defined the basis of the good life for the Country-born.

The principal settlers were at a loss to find the means to ensure the succession of their children to their "station" in life. Sutherland expressed this quandary in a letter to his brother in Scotland:

> I am very much at a loss how to settle my Sons. I have now four Sons at the house with me, the two oldest are now men fit for any duty but in this part of the World their [sic] is no opportunity for young People to push themselves forward in any way, better than Labourers, either as farmers or Boatmen in the Co^{s} service and either way they can barely make a living - my two youngest sons has got a better Education than I had when I came to this Country yet it will be of no use to them. . . .[70]

Apparently a European education was no answer to the problem:

> I feel obligated for your kind offer towards your name son [sic] but I perceive that the Children of this Country do the best that is [sic] brought up in this Country - all those that have been educated in Europe acquire a kind of Pride that unfits them for the customs and habits of this Country and the greater part of them turn out to be blackguards or unfit to do for themselves, ...[71]

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[69] G.-A.I., J.S.C., James to John Sutherland, August 10, 1842.

[70] Ibid., August 7, 1838.

[71] Ibid., August 8, 1831.

Under these circumstances it was little wonder that the children of the principal settlers remained financially dependent upon their British-born parent. As Sutherland noted: "all depend upon my advice and the greater part of my Purse."[72] There can be little doubt that such circumstances excited the envy of less fortunate but possibly more enterprising members of the community.[73] Over the years the numbers of the principal settlers increased slowly as some retired officers journeyed to Red River and as a few private merchants successfully climbed the social ladder.

The ranks of the private merchants covered a relatively wide spectrum. A number of individuals at one time or another dabbled in the practise of indenting for more goods than they required and disposing of them among their neighbours. It is equally apparent that few sustained this practise for more than a few years. In many cases it would appear that they lacked the personal habits and abilities that would ensure success.[74] Generally speaking the private merchants represented retired servants of senior rank or mixed-blood sons of retired officers. They did not possess the same prestige as the principal settlers. At the parish

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[72] Ibid., August 6, 1832.

[73] The attitude of Peter Garrioch expressed towards James Bird is a noteworthy example. See P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 249-250.

[74] In a letter to his uncle, John Sutherland noted that a local merchant, Joseph Bird, was "rather fond of

level they may have been men of some social consequence. However, as the records of the C.M.S. are strangely reticent in identifying individuals by name, the nature and extent of their leadership is virtually impossible to determine.

In the period to 1850 there appears to have been little upward mobility from the ranks of the private merchants to the position of a principal settler. One exception was Andrew McDermot whose business success and influence earned him an appointment to the Council of Assiniboia in 1839.[75] The relationship between the private traders and the principal settlers seems to have involved an element of envy on the part of the private merchants.[76] It appears that many of them desired to emulate the way of life of the retired officers. They aspired to the wealth of these men and the patronage of the Company that ensured positions of status and responsibility in the Settlement.

The nature of the relationship between the private merchants and the generality of the Country-born is also difficult to determine. However on occasion their avarice

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the bottle, ..." See G.-A.I., J.S.C., John [nephew] to John Sutherland [uncle], August 8, 1840.

[75]Alexander Ross, 399-402.

[76]In addition to Peter Garrioch's comments on James Bird in P.A.M., Garrioch Journal, 249-50, see P.A.M.,R.R.S., Andrew McDermot to Chief Factor Alexander Christie, August 4, November 13, November 30, 1845.

provoked hostile comments.[77] Once at least their treatment of the tripmen provoked complaints from these seasonal workmen.[78] No doubt the system of credit that existed in Red River was open to abuse by both the seller and buyer.[79] The resulting hostility may have served to limit the influence that these men could exercise over their neighbours.

Sharing the status of the private merchants were the lay officials of the Anglican mission, school teachers and catechists. In the early years of the Settlement's history these men were British-born. By the 1840's, however, mixed-blood sons of retired officers were much in evidence. For a brief period Dr. John Bunn taught school.[80] Joseph Cook taught school at Grand Rapids and later at the Indian village at St. Peter's. The Garrioch brothers, Peter and John, followed in the footsteps of their father, William, and for brief periods taught in the mission schools.[81] Some idea of the status associated with this position can be seen in the person of W. R. Smith. After having retired as a teacher

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[77] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, August 1, 1827.

[78] H.B.C.A., D.5/16, [?] to A. Barclay, September 19, 1845.

[79] P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 163-65.

[80] C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journal, July 26, 1825 and August 14, 1829.

[81] Ibid., Report of the State of Religion, Morality and Education . . . , August, 1835 and Cockran to the Lay Secretary, August 8, 1844.

he did not hesitate to identify himself as "gentleman" when others were content to be known as farmers.[82] A comment by Peter Garrioch with respect to the treatment he received while living and working at the Lake Harriet Presbyterian mission in Minnesota Territory in 1837, suggests that a teacher in Red River among the Country-born was a person of some consequence:

> To be treated like a menial servant after having sustained a rank in society at least a little superior (if a poor yet honest school-master can be so considered) is bad enough;but to be treated so by a stranger in a strange land. . . .[83]

Similar experiences no doubt helped to lead Peter to abandon the classroom for the life of a free trader as a means of advancing himself. Education and behavior qualified many of the Country-born for "respectable" positions in society; yet the absence of wealth comparable to that enjoyed by many of the "nabobs" in the fur trade and some of the leading private merchants made many of the teachers restive. Garrioch was not alone in leaving teaching because of what was considered to be poor pay and a lack of opportunity for advancement.[84]

The bulk of the Country-born who worked their land

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[82] H.B.C.A., A.36/1B, Officers and Servants Wills, 1816-73, Will of Robert Logan, codicil witnessed May 5, 1862.

[83] P.A.M., Garrioch Journal, 109.

[84] C.M.S.A., I.C., W. R. Smith to the Secretaries, August 1, 1834.

with some assiduity reflected the ways of their "social betters" although they could not match them in terms of education and wealth. By the 1830's it was apparent that many of the social sanctions set forth by the mission were accepted by the Country-born. Behavior that had been tolerated in the trading post was frowned upon in Red River and became subject to the criticism of the whole community. To a degree the leading elements in the community were expected to demonstrate some leadership in this respect. At the same time the general body of the Country-born resented any suggestion that in terms of "moral" behavior they were any less acceptable than the "higher orders". In 1832 an incident occurred which provoked much hostility among Cockran's parishioners at Grand Rapids. The sixteen year old orphaned granddaughter of a retired Chief Factor who was attending the school for children of fur trade officers at the Upper Church, under the tutelage of Jones and his wife, became pregnant by a twelve year old Indian lad attending the Indian school at the same location.[85] In the uproar that followed the Indian school was moved to Grand Rapids. Cockran noted the reaction of his parishioners:

> The ostensible reason which was given for transferring the boys to me was of such an offensive nature that it could not fail in giving offence to the parents who sent their children and fully grown daughters to the School at the Rapids. It was said, These boys are so immoral

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[85] Ibid., Jones, Journal, August 19, 1832.

> that Mr. Jones cannot support the character and respectability of the new established Schools unless they are removed to the Rapids. Then say the people at the Rapids, If these Indian boys are so bad as to corrupt the bastards of the Chief Factors surely Mr. Cockran will never allow them to enter the School where our children and daughters are educated. And again, We have married our wives and are endeavouring to train up our children according to Christian principles, but still the bastards of the Chief Factors are more esteemed by our Ministers.[86]

It is noteworthy that while Cockran's parishioners took pains to distinguish between their own behavior and that of "Indians", they did not accept the implications suggested in moving the Indian school to Grand Rapids. It would appear, on this occasion at least, that there was little love lost between the Country-born and the officers active in the Company's service.

The comradeship of kith and kin as experienced in the various neighbourhoods constituted the social world of the Country-born. From the beginning of settlement in Red River kinship and friendship associations had played a role in determining the composition of various neighbourhoods in each parish. With the passage of time, as the overwhelming number of Country-born married amongst themselves, the network of kinship extended throughout the length and breadth of the Country-born sector in Red River. No longer subject to transfer or retirement as they had been in the Company's service it seems likely that such social bonds had been strengthened. Within this social milieu many of the

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[86] Ibid., Cockran to the Lay Secretary, July 28, 1834.

practises of the trading post were perpetuated, others were abandoned and some altered. The gregarious behavior of both sexes is an example of ways that were continued in the Settlement. In contrast to the Kildonan Scots who appear to have been more assiduous in devoting their energies to their individual farmsteads,[87] the Country-born were ready and willing to take advantage of opportunities for social interaction.

While the rank structure among the Country-born reflected British antecedents and current British influences it in essence represented a continuation of trading post practises. The criteria that determined social rank had their roots in the trading post. The factors that determined status such as wealth, education, family connections and individual behavior appeared to mirror British example but as the incident with Joseph Cook demonstrated British attitudes and ways were not directly transferable to Red River. There the experience of the fur trade served to determine distinctive criteria.

The social structure of the Country-born involved some tension. In the trading post the interests of officers and servants could collide. A similar situation occurred in Red River. The distinctions between principal settlers and private merchants, teachers and catechists on one hand and the distinctions between these two social groupings and the

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[87]Alexander Ross, III.

generality of the population were such that envy and suspicion could not help but enter into the community. These social divisions were perpetuated in the associations of kith and kin that were formed. Such divisions tended to diffuse the sense of community expressed by the Country-born. Nevertheless they could find common agreement in their lack of regard for the "upstart Scotchmen" who occupied officer's rank in the Company's service.

In adapting the ways of the trading post to Red River, the institutions of church and state played an innovative role and served as well as a vehicle for perpetuating some of the practises that the Country-born brought with them. While the local government under the tutelage of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Council of Assiniboia and the courts all had a role to play, the predominant influence came from the Anglican mission. It was in the various activities of the mission that the Country-born found a vehicle for expressing their social solidarity and undertaking enterprises of value to the parish as a whole.

Until the autumn of 1825 one missionary labored alone at the Anglican mission in Red River. From 1820 to 1823 it was John West. In the summer of 1823 he was replaced by David Jones. William Cockran and his family joined him in 1825. The two missionaries together established four parishes before Jones returned to Britain in 1838, following the death of his wife. During the next few years Cockran was joined by

the Rev. John Smithurst, the Rev. John MacAllum, the Rev. Abraham Cowley and the Rev. Robert Hunt.[88] Smithurst devoted his energies to the Indian Settlement at St. Peters while Cowley established a mission outside the Settlement at Fairford. One man alone, however, stamped his mark on Anglican missionary work in Red River during this period. This was William Cockran.

Cockran readily perceived the role that kinship played in determining the pattern of settlement among the Country-born. He had no qualms about exploiting this social bond as a means of furthering his work at Grand Rapids.[89] Among other things kinship was a vital factor in establishing sanctions on individual behavior that were supported by the community. In his journal Cockran noted the importance of the community in this respect:

> I have lately been in the habit of receiving all new Communicants in the presence of as many of the members of the Church as can be conveniently assembled; so that if there be any defect in their moral characters, it may be pointed out.[90]

It is noteworthy that one of the strongest sanctions that could be brought to bear on an individual whose behavior was amiss was to deny him or her the sacraments of the Church.

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[88] See Boon, for sketches of their careers.

[89] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to Rev. T. Woodroffe, August 3, 1831.

[90] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, December 24, 1833.

Cockran recorded a revealing incident in his journal for February 6, 1833. Assembling several families for the purpose of baptizing their children, Cockran "had a disagreeable matter to settle" before administering the sacrament.[91] One of the parents "had lived a very quarrelsome, brawling life with his wife."[92] Cockran continued:

> The baptism of the child was deferred till this present evening, when the whole matter was fully examined into. His neighbours were present, who knew both sides of the business. All allowed that he bore an excellent character before he married this woman; and even at present he was attentive to his duty and endeavoured to provide for his family; but his wife was not so attentive as she ought to be, she was an idler, often left her house, neglected to milk his cows, would not mend or wash his clothes, and frequently left him to cook his own victuals. The woman was present and could not deny the charges. I reproved her sharply for her neglect, and advised her to do her duty, as being the only way to gain the good opinion of her neighbours, the regard and affection of her husband, and the favor of God.[93]

It is equally noteworthy that the ceremonies of the church tended to strengthen the bonds that linked families together. The increased stability of family life among the Country-born owed much to the fact that they were no longer subject to transfer and retirement. Thus the ties of kinship did not face the depredations that time and distance wrought in the interior. Cockran's labors aided and abetted the strengthening of these ties. His ministrations which often focussed on

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[91] Ibid., February 6, 1833.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

the strength and cohesiveness of families and the sacraments of baptism and marriage served to enhance kinship bonds originating in the interior.

The parish church served the interests of the Country-born in another fashion. In the Sunday church service and the Wednesday evening prayer meeting the church became the focal point of the social life of the parish.[94] For a brief period the Country-born interacted on a social stage larger than the limits permitted in the neighbourhood or among kinfolk. Cockran suspected that the motives of his parishioners were open to question but the social importance of these events cannot be denied:

> Some young person has come [to church] to show his horse and cariole; another who has got a clear voice, to sing; a third to see an acquaintance; and a fourth to hear the news of the day - these having little or no work in the house of God need a warm seat to lengthen their patience.[95]

It is significant that the church service was the one social activity that brought the Country-born together to interact socially on a basis distinct from family ties and neighbourhood associations.

The Anglican mission also served the interests of the Country-born by functioning as a vehicle through which projects of interest to the parish could be initiated and completed. In selecting a teacher for the school, seeing to

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[94] Foster, 110-19.

[95] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, October 25, 1836.

the management of church affairs or looking to the construction of a new church, the adult males of the parish would meet under the guidance of their clergyman to decide upon a course of action.[96] At these meetings some laymen, in addition to the clergyman, took leading roles. In this way the activities of the mission tended to perpetuate the rank structure as it had existed in the trading post and facilitate its adaptation to Red River. A letter from Cockran, detailing the construction of the Church at Grand Rapids suggests the manner in which this was done:

> All this work has been done, materials purchased, and money treasured, by the voluntary exertions and contributions of the heads of 76 families, who regularly attend Divine Service at the Rapids. . . . We have managed the whole business in a very easy manner. We have had six Directors, who have each devoted one day a week to the work. We divided the heads of families. . . among the Directors, . . . and thus the work has gone on . . . .[97]

Community action of this nature, which revolved around the interests of the parish, provided an excellent vehicle for individuals to demonstrate socially approved attributes before a wider audience of their peers. Cockran noted a particular incident in his journal for July 27, 1845 when the adult males of the parish were discussing the construction of a new church:

> One black curly head descended from the line of Ham by his father's side - stood up in his leather coat and said "I shall give £10," The eyes of all were turned to him and a smile on every countenance. I said, "I

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[96] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, July 9, 1839 is an excellent example.

[97] Ibid., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 30, 1831.

> believe our brethren think you are too poor to raise such a sum". He raising his arm said, "here is my body, it is at your service. It is true I can neither square a stone nor lay one; but there will be the floor and the roof, turn me to them and there you will see, if God give me life and health, the value of the sum shall be raised."[98]

Others besides the "black curly head" found parish affairs an excellent means of validating their status and receiving approval for actions that benefited the parish as a whole. In this manner the mission served to perpetuate practises and ways found in the trading post while at the same time altering particular aspects of behavior to adapt them to new circumstances.

Although the institutions of local government did not involve the Country-born as intimately as did the Anglican mission, they had a similar influence. In a fashion they provided a vehicle through which practises found in the trading post could be adapted to Red River. At the same time, as with the mission, the support and acceptance by the Country-born of the institutions of local government constituted a relatively stable foundation on which these British practises could rest. Similarly the extent of the participation of the Country-born in the organs of local government served as one factor that distinguished them from other communities.

The Country-born had as little difficulty in accepting the legislative efforts of the Council of Assiniboia.

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[98] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, July 27, 1845.

While few records appear to have survived those that have would suggest that the Country-born made use of the courts out of proportion to their numbers.[99] Several factors appear to be responsible for this state of affairs. Among the Country-born there were present a number of British-born who were somewhat familiar with the operations of the courts. Fines as a means of disciplining those who were guilty of such infractions as assault or selling beer to Indians,[100] had been used in the trading post to discipline refractory servants. Many Country-born were present on the juries of the General Quarterly Court.[101] It may be assumed that they were recognized as leading members of their community. In large measure the Country-born were being judged by their peers. As a result there appears to have been little dissatisfaction with the actions of the courts until the 1840's. At that time other factors came to bear upon the situation.

The use and acceptance of the institutions of local government by the Country-born serves to distinguish them from others in Red River. The Métis virtually ignored the

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[99] See P.A.M., R.R.S., Assiniboia, General Quarterly Court, February 20, 1845 to August 21, 1851. Census returns in H.B.C.A., E.5/11 indicate they numbered between 35 and 40 percent of the population. In the records of the General Quarterly Court they appear with more frequency than these percentages would predict.

[100] P.A.M., R.R.S., Assiniboia, General Quarterly Court, February 20, 1845 to August 21, 1851. See various cases.

[101] Ibid.

local government apparently finding few of its provisions relevant to their way of life.[102] Their displeasure with local institutions emerged in the 1840's when these appeared to operate as agents of the Company's interests against those of the Métis.[103] In contrast the Country-born were more intimately involved in the various affairs of state. Even during the 1840's when a large number appeared to be disaffected others remained steadfastly loyal.[104] Two major points of interest emerge in reference to the Country-born's relationship with the local government. First, the acceptance of the government and participation in its affairs suggests that such institutions were not hostile to the interests of the Country-born and possibly facilitated the adjustment of trading post practises to Red River. Second, the support of the Country-born constituted the only wide basis of support available in the Settlement. The fact that the institutions of local government survived the turbulence of the 1840's was due in no small measure to the Country-born.

Language, religion and place of residence determined

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[102]Until the 1850's the Métis were represented on the Council of Assiniboia by Bishop Provencher and Cuthbert Grant. Similarly they do not appear in the records of the General Quarterly Court in numbers that their proportion of the population, over 50 per cent, would indicate.

[103]The most noteworthy example was the trial of Guillaume Sayer. See Alexander Ross, 372-77.

[104]It is significant that the Country-born free traders found the bulk of their support among the Métis and not their own kind.

the basic division in the society of Red River. The fork of the two rivers demarcated the "British" and "French" sectors of the Settlement. Broadly speaking to the south and west of this point the population was French-speaking and Roman Catholic; to the north the inhabitants were English-speaking and Protestant. Other factors served to distinguish the two areas of Red River. Among the French-speaking inhabitants, particularly the Métis, a far greater percentage of the population continued their semi-nomadic ways. When not absent from their river-lot farms for the purpose of hunting buffalo they could often be found, depending upon the season of the year, fishing or hunting wild fowl around the marshy lands bordering Lake Manitoba.[105] Among the inhabitants of the British sector far fewer families followed the semi-nomadic ways of their co-residents to the south.[106]

Thus Red River was fundamentally divided into halves on the basis of language, religion, place of residence and way of life. Within the British sector of the population a similar division took place. While nearly all the inhabitants could make themselves understood in the English language and attended the churches of the Anglican mission, the

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[105]Alexander Ross, 85.

[106]Unfortunately none of the documents provide figures on the numbers of Country-born who followed the buffalo hunt. Occasionally individuals such as William Gaddy are identified as hunters. For the most part the documents limit themselves to vague references. The basis for the statement is an

Kildonan Scots took positive steps to identify themselves with the Gaelic tongue and the Presbyterian religion.[107] When Jones had reason to criticize their "unchristian and illiberal spirit",[108] they petitioned the Company for a minister of their own faith claiming that several older members of their community understood only Gaelic.[109] The tenacity with which the Kildonan Scots clung to the symbols of their separateness in Red River, their Gaelic tongue and Presbyterian views, distinguished them from their mixed-blood neighbours. Occupying a block of land extending from Point Douglas north to Frog Plain the Kildonan Scots were notable for the complete absence of nomadic activities in their way of life. A further factor that served to distinguish the Kildonan Scots from their neighbours was the absence, until the 1840's, of marriages with mixed-bloods.[110] Thus kinship connections linking individuals in the British sector of the Settlement stopped abruptly at the lots of the Kildonan farmers and were not resumed for the space of a few miles.

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impression garnered from some familiarity with the documents concerned with the Country-born during the period under study.

[107] Foster, 97.

[108] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 29, 1830.

[109] H.B.C.A., D.4/18, Simpson to W. Smith, November 26, 1830.

[110] Ibid., D.5/7, Adam Thom to Simpson, August 8, 1842, notes the death of Ross's daughter, Country-born, who was married to a Kildonan Scot.

The distinctions between the Country-born and the Indian village at St. Peters were not nearly as abrupt as those with the Kildonan Scots. A number of Muscaigo or Swampy Cree who had been attracted to Red River were linked by ties of kinship to some Country-born families.[111] At the same time, while many distinctly Indian practises were retained, many Indians embraced the Anglican church, undertook farming operations and, among the younger generation, became conversant with the English language. In some areas the changes were startling. In 1841 Smithurst recorded an account of a wedding that suggested the changes that had taken place:

> I was pleased to see them all dressed in the costume of dear old England and in the true English fashion walking quite orderly in pairs. . . . The bride was given away by John Hope, one of the two boys that Mr. West obtained from the Indians on his first landing at York in 1820. Had Mr. West been at the Indian Church this morning and seen a fine looking young man of 27 dressed in an English made blue frock coat, dark cloth trousers, handsome waistcoat and a silk handerchief neatly tied about his neck he would hardly have recognized the naked greasy little urchin put into his canoe at York. . . . Mr. Cook . . . tells me he went to breakfast with them and that every thing was conducted in a very orderly manner. . . . Everything connected with the marriage had an English aspect and the parties themselves appeared proud that such was the case.[112]

Yet much to the annoyance of the missionaries the "conjurer"

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[111] The nucleus of the Indian village was the Peguis band of Saulteaux. However by the 1840's they were outnumbered by the Muscaigo Cree who had followed relatives to Red River.

[112] C.M.S.A., I.C., Smithurst, Journal, January 26, 1841.

remained an important part of their world.[113] In such ways the village at St. Peters was distinguished from the Country-born.

While a constellation of factors served to differentiate one community from another in Red River others emphasized features of their lives that suggested a common interest. Early in the 1820's some fear of an attack by the Sioux gave the inhabitants common ground for concern.[114] However this fear waned as the development of the Métis buffalo hunt ensured the existence of an effective barrier between the Sioux and the Settlement. Prior to the 1840's little else focussed the attention of the inhabitants upon the interests of the Settlement as a whole. The disastrous flood of 1826 was not repeated until 1852.[115] Even crop disasters failed to elicit a general response as their impact was limited largely to the British sector.[116] The French sector looked to the buffalo hunt for sustenance. The failure of this activity was a calamity but it did not effect the agriculturalists except to furnish them with a better market for their stock.[117] As a result the separate communities of

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[113] Ibid., Cockran, Journal, May 12, 1834.

[114] West, 58.

[115] W. L. Morton, Manitoba, . . . , 88.

[116] Alexander Ross, 273.

[117] At numerous points Alexander Ross notes the antipathy between the hunter and the agriculturalist. For an example see Alexander Ross, 272-75.

Red River had little reason to look to issues that emphasized the concerns of the Settlement as a whole. Nevertheless other factors existed that served to link members of the various communities.

A large number of the Country-born could speak Cree while many were conversant with the closely related language of the Saulteaux. Similarly the Métis were conversant with both of these languages.[118] This, together with the similarity of their origins, created, to a degree, a bond between the two peoples. This bond was strengthened on occasions that furthered social interaction between the two. One such was the buffalo hunt. Many Country-born joined the Métis on their annual excursion to the plains.[119] While they lived in separate areas of the Settlement during the rest of the year and in large measure married among their own kind, for a few brief months each year large numbers of both communities lived in relatively close harmony. The result was that in certain specific instances and for brief periods of time the two communities could take joint action. Seemingly unrelated incidents in the 1830's demonstrate the nature and strength of the bond between them.

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[118] In the early years of the Settlement's history, before the Missions had made their impact, a significant number of mixed-bloods were apparently more conversant in Cree than English or French.

[119] Unfortunately no detailed records of those who accompanied the hunters are available.

In 1834 Thomas Simpson, a cousin of Governor George Simpson and a clerk in the Company's establishment at the Upper Fort, physically chastized an insolent Métis by the name of Larocque. The resulting furor marked the first overt threat of violence by the Métis since the flood.[120] While this dispute was ostensibly settled the next year witnessed another incident that provoked their ire. A Canadian by the name of Régiste Larant was subjected to imperious conduct on the part of the Company's officers who suspected him of trading illicitly in furs.[121] The Métis were joined by many Country-born when a leading member of the latter community had his suit for the hand for a daughter of a Company officer rejected. Resenting the slur on all mixed-bloods many young men among the Country-born caballed with associates among the Métis.[122] Cockran noted the hostility that was generated:

> A spirit of discontent had been raging amongst the former [Roman Catholic population] for several months; it was now ready to burst forth into open resistance. They wanted only the sanction of the Protestant Half-breeds to carry their threats into accestion [sic]. They were active in stirring up their worst feelings, and soon got them partly to unite in the same cause. . . . One cabal succeeded another, through the whole winter; . . . .[123]

It was only with difficulty and the active assistance of the

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[120] Alexander Ross, 167.

[121] Ibid., 237.

[122] Ibid., 238.

[123] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, October 28, 1835.

clergy of both missions that the Company was able to extricate itself from a most delicate situation.

The union of the interests of the Métis and the Country-born is highly significant. Of equal importance is the fact that this union was temporary and for a specific purpose. The Métis and the Country-born had acted together and could do so again in the future, but no permanent bond of association had arisen. The ties that bound the two together could not overcome the other factors that determined that each community would maintain their separate ways and develop their own course of conduct. Differences in place of residence and kinship ties together with language, religion and, to an extent, ways of life played an important role. The mixed-bloods in Red River were and remained two distinct communities.

A somewhat similar relationship existed between the Country-born and the Kildonan Scots. At the Upper and Middle parishes they shared the same church and missionary.[124] Ostensibly both peoples were farmers although the Scots demonstrated an obvious superiority in terms of technique and returns. The relations between the two communities were apparently fairly harmonious if the histories of the two

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[124]The Kildonan Scots attended both St. John's and St. Paul's churches.

parishes to 1850 are any indication.[125] Both peoples were apparently able to cooperate for the successful conduct of local affairs. Yet the fact that no intermarriage occurred between the two groups until the 1840's demonstrates that at least one of the communities had ethnocentric views that excluded the other. The tenacity with which the Kildonan Scots clung to old country ways suggests that they held views that made the two communities mutually exclusive when it came to questions of marriage. In the face of such attitudes it is difficult to believe that the Country-born would not reply in similar fashion. It is noteworthy that a significant distinction between the two was the fact that the Scots had European wives. Cockran himself noted that there was no love lost between white women and those of Indian blood.[126]

The fact that the various communities in Red River continued their separate identities and development yet, at the same time, maintained fairly harmonious relations speaks well for individuals who served as cultural bridges between the various communities. Several factors serve to explain the relatively stable and harmonious relations that existed

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[125]The religious controversy between the Anglicans and the Presbyterians as evidenced throughout Alexander Ross and D. Gunn and C. R. Tuttle, History of Manitoba (Ottawa, 1880), appears to have been limited to the leaders of the Kildonan Scots and the Anglican missionaries. Also see W. L. Morton's "Introduction" in E. E. Rich (ed.), Eden Colvile's Letters, 1849-52 (London, 1956).

[126]C.M.S.A., I.C. Cockran Journal, April 13, 1838 and Cockran to the Lay Secretary, June 17, 1840.

in Red River. The fact that each community inhabited a geographically demarcated region is important. On a daily basis contact between individuals of different communities was limited. Thus incidents of an irritating nature were avoided. At the same time the instruments of civilization played their role. The clergy of both missions and the officials of the local government appear to have been effective in reducing the public expression of hostility between communities. Similarly notice must be taken of those who served as cultural bridges between the various communities. It is worth remark that these were more or less tied to the Country-born community. The Settlement's only doctor for many years was Dr. John Bunn, a leader among the Country-born. Besides his medical practise Bunn was active as a magistrate and councillor in the local government.[127] The leading private merchants and freighters who conducted business with both mixed-blood communities were Country-born or British-born with mixed-blood families.[128] The Presbyterian cause of the Kildonan Scots was championed by Alexander Ross and Donald Gunn, two retired officers with Country-born families.[129] Several young Country-born men, some from leading families, frequented the plains each summer with the Métis.

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[127]Oliver, I, 61. Also see Ross Mitchell, Medicine in Manitoba, no place of publication, probably Winnipeg, 1954, 41-43.

[128]Various names appear in the documents with some frequency. In proportion to their numbers the Métis appear to have remarkably few individuals engaged in merchandizing.

[129]This position is evident in each of their books.

Such men played an influential role in the affairs of the Settlement as a whole. They served to interpret differences between communities. They were an essential liaison that prevented misunderstandings from developing out of incidents of little consequence. The fact that most of them were associated with the Country-born serves to reflect the diversity of interests and ways that marked their community. This in itself explains in large measure why the Country-born failed to develop as highly integrated a community as others in Red River. At the same time such individuals denote the role that the Country-born, as a community, played in the affairs of the Settlement. While functioning as a positive framework which nurtured British institutions such as churches, schools and government, they also served as the amalgam that held the Settlement together. Their relations with the different communities constituted the cultural bridges that made the Red River historical experience possible. The mosaic of peoples there could not function in relative harmony without the activities of individuals whose actions served to breach ethnocentric barriers.

In adapting the ways of the trading post to life in the Settlement in the years following the flood, the Country-born reflected not only circumstances there and the nature of influences brought to bear upon them but the diverse nature of their origins. The fur trade post had provided some experiences in common. The local institutions of church and

state did likewise. As a result a sedentary community of some selfconsciousness evolved though diversity still remained a part of the life of the Country-born. In comparison with neighbouring communities the Country-born never developed the same unity of purpose and similar outlook. This feature of their lives probably worked against their interests in the narrow sense. Unlike the Métis and, to a lesser extent, the Kildonan Scots they could not take effective action in their own interests. This deficiency, however, was an essential factor contributing to peace and stability. By virtue of their numbers alone the Country-born had to be considered by others in Red River. Their generally positive support for institutions established by the Company and the Anglican missionaries could not be ignored. At the same time the diversity of interests among them allowed individuals to establish links with members of other communities. Such persons served to explain one to the other. Thus they served the broad interests of all the inhabitants. The Country-born with their limited ethnocentric views, with their base of support for local institutions and with their diverse links to other communities were the social catalyst that made the Red River experience possible. In the period following the good years down to mid-century they would continue their cultural ways. In the same years various events would underline their contribution to the Settlement as a whole.

CHAPTER V

THE TROUBLED YEARS, 1835-1850

By 1835 the Country-born had successfully adapted their past experience to their new circumstances in Red River. The pattern of life which they had established would remain until the coming of the Canadians after Confederation. For most of the Country-born the basis of a reasonably good life was agriculture as it was practised on the narrow river lots. With a few acres planted to vegetables and grains, chiefly wheat and barley, and with a yoke of oxen, a few cows, hogs and sometimes sheep most enjoyed a relatively comfortable existence. For variety the hunt and the fisheries offered different fare and the possibility of garnering some money by selling the produce to fellow settlers or to the Company. In their social life the Country-born oriented themselves around kin, neighbours and the residents of their own parish. The daily routine varied with the season of the year, but at all times it was marked by frequent social interaction within extended families and amongst neighbours. Cooperative ventures, were frequent. Brawls and disagreements were usually held within acceptable bounds by conventions recognized and enforced by the community and strongly supported by the agents of church and state. To the outside world

the Country-born presented a face that emphasized routine and stability. Yet appearances could be deceiving. The years from 1835 to 1850 were troubled years indeed.

It was as if the forces of nature purposely combined with the machinations of men to trouble the lives of the inhabitants. The bountiful years which generally marked the seasons following the flood of 1826 gave way to years when drought, frost and insects denied the promise of good harvests. The troubled years for Red River agriculture began dramatically in 1836:

> On the 7th of June we had a heavy fall of snow, and on the following day the ice was the thickness of a penny piece on the water; but still nothing serious happened to damp [sic] our hopes, till the 19th of August, when the severity of the frost blasted our fairest prospects, by destroying the crops.
> . . . . . .
> The season continued cold, drizzly, and frosty, till the latter end of October, which added another item to the catalogue of evils by destroying the fall fisheries:. . . .[1]

The next year was no better:

> En 1837, l'extrême sécheresse du début de l'été nuisit à la germination des grains, puis l'humidité d'août et de septembre, accompagnée de gelées rigoreuses, devasta les champs de blé et de pommes de terre.[2]

After a respite of two years drought returned:

> Our summer here has been rather extraordinary. From the 1st of June to the 1st of this month we had hardly a shower of rain, the consequence has been that our Barley is almost burnt up, & of course will be short, ...[3]

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[1] Alexander Ross, 187.

[2] Giraud, 778.

[3] Bayley, 72, Thomas Bunn to Ann Bayley, August 6, 1840.

Insects and drought continued to take their toll during the 1840's. It was a rare occasion indeed when the settlers had successive years in which crop returns were generous.

During the middle thirties nature further emphasized the tenuous basis on which civilized life in Red River rested. The vital link with London, northward through York Factory and Hudson Bay, was vulnerable to the exigencies of a continental climate. In 1834 winter set in before transportation inland was complete.

> The very early and boisterous setting in of winter this Season has been the cause of five of the Private Freighter Boats being set fast by the Ice, ... The property, the ladings of these Boats, up to this date, remains where the crews left them unprotected.[4]

Two years later the malevolent forces of nature reemphaszied the precarious nature of Red River's principal link with the outside world:

> our annual supply ship was driven from her moorings at York by a storm, and the captain, without making any effort to regain his position, and without that hardihood and resolution which belong to his class, returned to England, carrying along with him the Red River supplies for the year.[5]

Other factors affected the successful operation of the inland transportation routes. In the same year that the annual supply ship failed to dock at York Factory mutinous boat crews threatened to bring inland transportation to a halt.[6]

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[4] H.B.C.A., D.5/4, John Lee Lewis to Simpson, December 16, 1834.

[5] Alexander Ross, 188.

[6] Ibid.

On another occasion an influenza outbreak in the Settlement and among the boat crews gave rise to the fear that supplies of needed items would not be forthcoming that year.[7]

Life in the Settlement was further complicated by the failure of the buffalo hunt.[8] Occasionally the herds could not be found in sufficient numbers. At other times conflict with the Sioux jeopardized the safety of the hunters and limited the returns.[9] Similarly unseasonable storms could destroy the nets of the fishermen and deny the inhabitants this important source of food.[10] While most of the Country-born were not completely dependent upon these sources interruptions in the flow of produce to Red River were not without their effect on the settlers living to the north of the forks.

While the forces of nature troubled the lives of the inhabitants after 1835 the workings of men had a similar impact upon their daily routine. The affairs of the Settlement in the period from 1835 to 1850 were dominated by the challenge of the illicit fur traders and their supporters to the charter rights of the Company. It is significant that

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[7] H.B.C.A., D.5/18, Christie to Simpson, July 27, 1846.

[8] Information on the success of the summer and fall hunts can be found in H.B.C.A., D.5/, covering the correspondence between the Governor of Assiniboia and Simpson during the period under study.

[9] See the incident noted in Alexander Ross, 258.

[10] Ibid., 188.

the Country-born participated to some degree in this challenge. It is equally significant that their support for those who challenged the Company never equalled the level of support that the illicit traders received from the Métis. Nor did the free trade movement blossom forth as a movement of popular protest as it did with the Métis. From these facts two questions emerge concerning the behavior of the Country-born in this period. First, what served to provoke hostility towards the Company? Second, what explains the difference in the nature of their response from that of the Metis? Answers to these questions should furnish useful insights into the nature of the Country-born community, the manner in which it differed from the other communities and the role that the Country-born played in the mosaic of communities that constituted the ethnic pattern of the Settlement.

The Company's economic, political and social dominance made it the natural target for the expression of any dissatisfaction with the status quo. It was the major supplier of European goods and, at the same time, the principal market for produce. In political affairs the Governor of Rupert's Land, Sir George Simpson, took precedence over the local Governor of Assiniboia. The members of the Council of Assiniboia were in no small measure sinecurists of the Company. Even the clergy of the two missions could not afford to offend the Company. In the social affairs of the

Settlement, in the British sector at least, status depended upon past or present association with the fur trade. Few if any individuals could aspire to positions of social consequence without the sanction of the Company. In such circumstances the Company was a natural adversary for any who were discontented with their lot. The Company in turn was motivated in its various actions by its desire to sustain and enhance the profitability of the fur trade. It was in this area that the struggle between the Company and the malcontents began to unfold.

Before examining the reawakening interest in the illicit fur trade it is necessary to consider the dominance of the Company in Red River in some depth. The all encompassing influence of the Company is most apparent in economic affairs. Even the individual who dealt exclusively with the private merchants found that economic reality was molded by the Company's actions and policies. After the initial difficulties experienced during the foundation years when the Company often failed to fulfill the economic demands of the citizenry, an operable system emerged. The Company took upon itself the duty of supplying basic necessities at what were admitted to be reasonable prices. Goods were sold for the price at York plus the cost of transportation to the Settlement.[11] The Company also encouraged the settlers to

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[11] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, August 1, 1827, noted: "Everything which we purchase from the Company is 33 1/2 per Centum above the English price, which is as cheap as they can sell."

indent for their own needs from London.[12] Soon a number of settlers were following this practise. In time not a few emerged as private merchants, indenting for supplies beyond their needs and disposing of them by sale amongst their neighbours.[13] By remaining in the retail trade in the Settlement the Company prevented the rapacious inclinations of some of the private merchants from victimizing the other inhabitants. The Company's prices served as guidelines for buyer and seller. However when the Company's store was out of goods some merchants were not adverse to charging up to 250 percent above London prices.[14] Over all it would appear that the Company performed its role as a major supplier of European goods to the general satisfaction. While there may have been grumblings about the increased costs of goods over London prices most settlers appear to have recognized the Company's charges as "fair" in terms of the costs involved in making European goods available in Red River. The Company's selection of goods for sale may have lacked imagination, but this field was readily filled by private merchants.[15]

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[12] Alexander Ross, 156.

[13] Ibid.

[14] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, August 1, 1827.

[15] At no time did the Company appear to view the private merchants, in the business relations with the settlers, as competitiors.

If the Company's role as a major supplier of goods did not invoke significant hostility its role as the principal market for the Settlement's produce was another matter. Still among the Country-born one senses an attitude of regret for the circumstances that limited the Company's ability to absorb local produce rather than hostility towards the Company itself. To an extent the Company was in the unenviable position of having to use its powers of purchase as a political tool. At an early date the Company found that its annual demand for pemmican, dried meat and agricultural produce was fairly constant. At the same time the population of the Settlement continued to increase in spite of migration to the United States.[16] The increased population naturally led to increased production. To a degree some of this increased production, particularly amongst the Country-born, was held in reserve for lean years. Nevertheless there was constant pressure on the Company to purchase the surplus. As the Settlement did not begin to produce woolen clothing until late in the 1830's many of the settlers had to sell produce or labor to be able to purchase this necessary article.[17] The Company in turn found it necessary to use its power of purchase as a means of influencing important

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[16]During the 1830's and 1840's there seems to have been a small but steady trickle of emigrants to the United States from all communities in the Settlement. Some such as Peter Garrioch later returned.

[17]This fact explains the Company's numerous attempts

families. For this reason its purchase of pemmican appears to have been limited to recognized hunters and their families.[18] It used an identical approach with respect to agricultural produce.[19] In a lengthy passage Alexander Ross noted the adverse effect of this policy.[20] If Ross' complaint was typical of the dissatisfaction that existed, the better farmers in Red River were not content with the Company's purchasing policies.

The need for an export item suitable for the British market was readily recognized by the settlers and the Company. From the end of the Selkirk period the Company had made extensive efforts to develop such a product. The failure of previous "experimental" farms did not stop the Company from making a renewed effort in 1838 under Captain G. M. Cary.[21] Similarly, projects such as the Assiniboine Wool Company continued to attract the attention of Governor Simpson and the Governor and Committee in London.[22]

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to introduce first buffalo wool and then sheep into Red River.

[18] It would appear that some pemmican and dried meat was purchased by private merchants and disposed of in other regions of the Settlement.

[19] Alexander Ross, 122-23.

[20] Ibid., 127.

[21] Oliver, I, 63, gives a brief sketch of Cary's public career in Red River.

[22] H.B.C.A., F.30/1, Assiniboine Wool Company.

Yet for a variety of reasons these projects continued to fail during the 1830's and early in the 1840's. Ross suggested that mismanagement at the local level may have been largely responsible for successive failures.[23] What is equally apparent, however, is the fact that the populace, for the most part, possessed the technical capacity to harvest only one exportable item. This was fur.

The Company had never been able to eradicate the illicit trade in furs in the region of the Settlement. It had chosen to fight it by licensing private traders to acquire furs in the region of Red River to prevent their flow southward to the United States.[24] Many of these furs passed through the hands of settlers either as a result of their relations with Indians or of their own trapping. Furs by no means provided a living for most of those involved.[25] At best the traffic provided a few luxuries otherwise unobtainable. As long as the Company remained the only purchaser and as it allowed a higher tariff over that used in trading with the Indians, the settlers engaged in this business

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[23]Alexander Ross, 172 and 213-14.

[24]P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., 1845-47, Andrew McDermot to Christie, November 13, 1845, intimates that the writer had been licensed to trade in furs for a good number of years with the view of preventing their movement to the United States.

[25]Numerous references in P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, would suggest this conclusion.

appear to have been content.[26] But when an alternative to the Company was presented early in the 1840's the attitude of the settlers changed dramatically.

Difficulties between the Company and some or all of the inhabitants would arise only if the Company used its power to advance its own interests at the expense of the settlers. The Company controlled transportation to and from London. If this control were used to limit the purchase of supplies or the sale of goods problems would arise. The Company had no interest in exercising this power except in circumstances where the control of the fur trade was involved. Early in the 1840's, when certain merchants among the Country-born looked to the approaching American frontier as an alternate market, the Company sought by various measures to stop their flow of supplies from London. The merchants then turned to American sources. Countermoves by the Company elicited the free trade controversy that dominated the Settlement's affairs until the Sayer trial in 1849. It is important to remember, however, that the Company exercised its economic muscle only in respect to those who dabbled in the illicit fur trade. Settlers not involved found little cause for concern.

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[26] C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran, Journal, February 13, 1832, in noting a visit from the Saulteaux chief, Peguis, wrote: "I know well what he wished to ascertain whether on his becoming an Agriculturalist he should receive the same price for his furs which Halfbreeds and other Indians who have amalgamated with the whites in the Settlement."

Present or past relationship with the fur trade determined, in large measure, social status in the Settlement. Most principal settlers owed their exalted position to the fact that they had held senior positions in the fur trade.[27] Similarly many of the merchants had served as clerks or had reached the senior ranks of the servants.[28] Thus the social hierarchy of the fur trade survived in Red River, determining relations between "social classes" and directing the ambitions of those who aspired to positions of leadership and recognition.

The social hierarchy of the fur trade played a less vital role in the French sector. Among the French Canadians and the Métis status was determined by success as a private merchant or prowess as a hunter.[29] The French sector reflected its traditional association with the fur trade but, in the past, rather than being directly involved in the fur trade, the majority of the older adult males had functioned as auxiliaries to it. The Indian or Métis hunter had always

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[27]Only the clergy of both missions and G. M. Cary among the Councillors had not served for at least a brief period in the fur trade.

[28]This held true until the latter years of the 1830's and the 1840's when young men such as James Sinclair and Peter Garrioch appeared.

[29]The number and role of private merchants in the early years who were Métis is difficult to deduce. In view of arrangements that existed in later years it seems quite possible that such individuals were dependent upon more prosperous merchants among the Country-born.

been prominent in the world of the trading post but he was usually apart from the mainstream of the rank hierarchy.[30] As a result the intricacies of the fur trade hierarchy were not of importance to this community except as they affected relations with the Company and other communities. While the Métis were apart from the dominant social gradient of the Settlement they resented attitudes and behavior that seemed to disparage their concept of themselves as the "New Nation."[31] The Métis generally did not seek access to the trading post social structure in Red River. But they did resent actions that seemed to class them as inferiors. In the expression of this attitude they contrasted sharply with the Country-born.

As the social hierarchy of the trading post was a part of their immediate past the Country-born had little difficulty in adjusting themselves to its usages in Red River. The social pyramid from unskilled laborer to Chief Factor defined their social world. During the foundation years and the good years that followed this social structure offered few if any disadvantages and, at the same time, it had the advantage of fitting the newcomer into a society with which

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[30]The evidence in various fur trade journals serves to emphasize the fact that the hunter remained distinct from the complement of the trading post. See the relationship denoted in H.B.C.A., B.22/a/11, Brandon House Journal, 1804.

[31]For an examination of this concept see A. S. Morton, "The New Nation, The Métis," The Royal Society of Canada, Transactions, Series III, Section II, 1939, 137-145.

he was already familiar. After 1835 difficulties arose. The first generation of settlers had adjusted to Red River and made their way largely as river lot farmers. But what about their children? Economic circumstances in the Settlement did not encourage them to take up farming as a way of life. This was particularly true of those with some education who sought to emulate their fathers and achieve some position in the community. Access to positions in the fur trade was limited indeed. Only a favored few among the principal settlers could hope to approach Governor Simpson requesting that their sons be taken into the concern as apprentice clerks.[32] Others found themselves on the outside looking in. The hiring policies of the Company by which the Governor and Committee looked to the Highlands of Scotland rather than the banks of the Red River for their officer candidates denied the ambitious in Red River the opportunity to "get ahead."

The values and attitudes of young men who aspired to the good life of the Indian trader are revealed in the extensive unpublished journal of Peter Garrioch.[33] While Garrioch's journal dates from the middle years of the 1840's it is probable that the attitudes expressed therein were

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[32]For an example see H.B.C.A., D5/5, James Bird to Simpson, August 10, 1840.

[33]P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal is replete with examples of which the following are only a few samples.

current in the previous decade. His journal closes with the statement that "the writer of these remarks was carelessly and variously extending and distending his limbs on a bed, suited to the rank and condition of an Indian trader."[34] For Garrioch and his young friends and associates the life of the Indian trader was the epitome of the good life in Red River. Denied lawful fulfillment of this ambition they expressed a good deal of hostility towards the "in" group. With biting sarcasm Garrioch noted the arrival of a principal settler for Sunday church service: "Old Mr. Pruden came into the Middle Church with his usual gait and manner of lordly consequence.- Would be what? Something!!!"[35] What is noteworthy about Garrioch's utterances is that they appear to be directed against the manner in which individuals were selected for positions of prominence rather than against the pyramidal social structure that arose in the trading post. The quarrel of young men like Garrioch was with the fact that they were not allowed to participate in the benefits that the structure allocated to those who demonstrated merit as Indian traders.

The discontent of some of the Country-born with the inflexible and impenetrable structure carried over into the political life of the Settlement. The Company by right of charter, by virtue of its interest in the fur trade and by

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[34] Ibid., 364.

[35] Ibid., 302.

the manner in which it controlled the political life of Red River was the natural target for these dissatisfactions. In 1835 the local Council of Assiniboia was expanded to include more of the principal settlers[36] and steps were taken to establish the local government upon a more stable basis. In the face of evidence of unrest among the Métis and to a lesser extent among the other communities a police force and a system of courts were inaugurated.[37] To pay for these the Council of Assiniboia, under the guidance of Governor Simpson, imposed a system of tariffs upon the importation and exportation of goods that were not for personal use. In the face of much grumbling the Governor and Committee in London later reduced such tariffs from seven and one-half percent to five and later four percent.[38] The suspicion arose, however, in the minds of the merchants that such measures were directed against themselves by the Company whose primary interest was the protection of the fur trade.[39] The situation was not eased when in 1838 the Company hired a recorder, Adam Thom, to advise local officials on correct legal procedures.[40] Thom's professional knowledge was unquestionable but his

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[36] Alexander Ross, 174.

[37] Ibid., 174-75.

[38] Ibid., 222.

[39] Ibid., 180.

[40] Ibid., 223.

overbearing demeanor and self-importance evoked the hostility of those who already resented the dominance of the "outsider" in the affairs of Red River.[41]

After 1835 hostility towards the Company and its representatives increased. Garrioch in the mid-forties expressed this animosity in a reference to the Recorder:

> Mr. Thom, judge for the sole benefit of the Hudson's Bay Company gave us a long and very learned rigma-role about the boundary lines, . . . and the pure and disinterested goodness of that Company . . . Stuff! Stuff!! Stuff!!![42]

Roderick Sutherland, a son of retired officer James Sutherland, expressed similar sentiments. Opposed to the smuggling activities of the illicit traders he was nevertheless equally opposed to what he felt were the injustices of the Company's rule in Red River:

> the Company have too long held the reins of power. They have so oppressed the people that I think it is high time they should be checked and I should suppose when under British government we will at least have a better code of laws, as the laws set out by the Company's recorder were all on the Company's favor and none for the poor man. The Committee at home have long held their title of being An Honorable Company which no doubt they are but I am sorry to say their Chief Factors and Chief Traders in the Country, were their characters and behavior known in a civilized world, would disgrace their employers.[43]

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[41] In addition to references in P.A.M. Garrioch, Journal, and other sources see H.B.C.A., D.5/23, John Ballenden to Simpson, December 30, 1848.

[42] P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 237.

[43] G.-A.I., J.S.C., Roderick to John Sutherland [uncle], August 6, 1846.

Remarks like those of Garrioch and Sutherland suggest the emergence of an awareness that discriminated between long time residents of the Settlement and newcomers, particularly those newcomers who occupied positions of status and influence. At the same time the dissatisfaction of the Country-born carried over to the local officials who had been appointed to positions of power from the ranks of the principal settlers.

Again Garrioch's journal is an excellent source for evidence of hostility towards local officials who were seen as sinecurists. Referring to retired Chief Factor James Bird, who acted as Collector of Customs, Garrioch wrote:

> [I] saw a notice at the Upper Church for merchants to come forward and pay the commission to Mr. Jas. Bird. If the old fool waits till people go to him he'd better drink more strong tea, to keep him awake.[44]

The image of the aggressive young challenger to a pack leader emerges in another of Garrioch's entries written after receiving a letter from Bird requesting the payment of duty on imported goods:

> The Old Coon [i.e. Bird] will find that I am not quite so great an ass as he takes me to be. . . . Old man, you have been young and now you are old, but I assure you that you will again become young and old enough again after that, before your most humble servant will be so stupid and impertinent as to trouble you with a call. Your humble servant knows his own place better than that. He does not like to insinuate himself into the affairs of big folk at all.[45]

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[44] P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 241.

[45] Ibid., 249.

Similarly the clergy, particularly the Anglican missionaries, were seen as supporters of the Company. Their actions, however, do not seem to have evoked the same hostility that marked reactions against others in local government. Perhaps many of the Country-born were aware of the difficulties that arose between Company officers and the missionaries when the latter attempted to civilize the Indians.[46] Perhaps Cockran's character and strength, already almost legendary, were such that his support for the Company's opposition to free traders was seen as an honest expression of his own views. It is noteworthy that Garrioch's journal makes it clear that he listened to the advice of the missionary with attention and respect.[47] Yet there can be little doubt that the influence of the principal settlers on the Council of Assiniboia was waning in this period.

The position of the Councillors and officials of the local government was indeed difficult. Many of them had children who were adversely affected by existing economic and social circumstances.[48] At the same time they were dependent

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[46]During 1830's large number of Indians had been attracted to the Settlement. The Company had attempted not altogether successfully to halt this migration. C.M.S.A., I.C., Cockran to the Secretaries, July 25, 1833, records an unpleasant incident in this regard.

[47]P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 251.

[48]With only one or two exceptions the male children of retired officers failed to win positions in society compared with those enjoyed by their British-born parent.

upon the Company for their own positions. There can be little question that the Company in the person of Governor Simpson attempted to manage the Council of Assiniboia. In July of 1847 Simpson wrote to the Governor of Assiniboia, Chief Factor Alexander Christie:

> In order that we may not be out-voted in future it may be well to get one or two of the Company's officers resident in the Settlement, besides the Governor, appointed Councillors.[49]

Simpson's ire had been provoked by the Council voting £50 to the local library.[50] In the circumstances it was natural that many of the Councillors would prove hesitant in their actions. Torn between sympathies and interests that lay both with the Company and the populace they were supposed to represent, the Councillors were increasingly embarrassed. In a letter to Christie, Andrew MacDermot noted not only the dilemma in which the Councillors found themselves but the increasingly low regard in which they were held by the populace:

> The Councillors themselves do not deny but that some of the laws are unjust altho' they agree to them. - One man says I would never put up with such stuff, but I could get no one to back me, another says: - I do not like to quarrel with my bread and butter, a third says I am afraid to be marked down as a black sheep and he knows well the black sheep were always esteemed by the Company in the Settlement, and a fourth recommends the people to get up a petition and represent the case to the

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[49] H.B.C.A., D.4/36, Simpson to Christie, July 7, 1847.

[50] Ibid.

> Government, how then can the public have any confidence in people of this kind?[51]

This also suggests the growing isolation of the Company's officers from their allies among the inhabitants, an isolation that became increasingly apparent after 1835.

Economic, social and political circumstances in the latter half of our period of study placed the Company's officers in an unenviable position. All the discontent that manifested itself in Red River focussed upon their actions. But circumstances alone were not responsible for this state of affairs. While the officers themselves were much to blame, their actions must be evaluated in the context of the maturation of the two leading communities in Red River, the Métis and the Country-born. The development of each may be considered separately from the other, but it must be remembered that each influenced the other. As each community took action in what was believed to be its interest the other community responded in an appropriate fashion. What becomes readily apparent in this period is that both communities were not necessarily working for the same goals. The Métis enjoyed the support of the Country-born to the extent that their actions furthered the interests of the Country-born. However it is equally apparent that the Country-born had no interest in subverting the basic structure of the Settlement. As the story unfolds in the years 1835 to 1850 it is obvious

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[51] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., McDermot to Christie, March 18, 1846.

that the initiative passed from one community to the other and back again. The process illuminates the role of the Country-born community in Red River.

During the 1830's the public peace of the Settlement was disturbed by clamorous demonstrations on the part of the Métis demanding better treatment from the Company.[52] Their complaints were rooted in the Company's inability to absorb all the production of the annual buffalo hunt. This had an unsettling effect upon the Métis community for it placed in jeopardy the means by which the Métis determined status. The skilled hunter occupied the highest social pinnacle envisaged by the Métis. The Company's purchasing policies closed off avenues of opportunity for young and ambitious hunters. Only by selling his hunt to the Company could he hope to acquire the clothing and other accoutrements that defined status among his colleagues.[53]

In the face of such difficulties the Métis found the concept of the "New Nation" increasingly attractive. This had originated during the period of competition when the North West Company had sought the support of the Métis in their struggle with the Hudson's Bay Company by emphasizing the proprietary rights to the soil that the Métis had inherited through their Indian mothers.[54] The concept fell into

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[52]Alexander Ross, 237-40.

[53]Ibid., 196-97.

[54]A. S. Morton, "The New Nation . . . ," 139.

abeyance during the 1820's but revived in the middle of the 1830's. It was a logical response in the face of continuing difficulties with the Company. It emphasized the fact that the Company owed the Métis something that went beyond the simple relationship between buyer and seller. In a sense the Company and its fur trade operated upon the sufferance of the Métis community. It was easy for the Métis to reason that they had a right to share in the benefits of the fur trade. This might mean little as long as the Company controlled the routes of access to the outside world. But this would change in the 1840's.

The Company did not recognize the claims of the Métis. However in the manner in which seasoned officers dealt with them, there was implicit recognition of their existence as a community. The Company could not dictate to the Métis. Their numbers and traditions denied this course of action. By skilful diplomacy, holding fast where possible and giving ground where it was necessary, the Company did succeed in defusing many of the protests of the Métis.[55] Difficulties were encountered with newcomers, "upstart" Scotsmen like Thomas Simpson, who had little regard for mixed-bloods and did not hesitate to show it.[56] The incident between Larocque and

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[55]For an example see Alexander Ross, 240.

[56]Ibid., 225-32, the account of Thomas Simpson's death. Also note 167.

Simpson was a slight directed against the whole Métis community or at least they chose to interpret it in this fashion. Again it fell to the old hands to pacify the clamorous Métis and make amends for the insult that was involved.[57]

Until the incident involving Simpson and Larocque occurred[58] the Country-born as far as can be learned stood apart from the recriminations that passed between the Company and the Métis. The reasons for this were probably both economic and sociological. The energies of the Country-born were absorbed in expanding their farms during a period when crop returns were good and the Company appeared to be willing to absorb much of their produce. At the same time distinctions between the two mixed-blood peoples that had been emphasized during the Selkirk period served to keep them apart. However an incident, mentioned previously, following close after that involving Larocque and Simpson served to draw the two communities together.[59]

In 1834 a young Country-born settler, William Hallett, the son of retired officer Henry Hallett, had his suit for the hand of a daughter of a Chief Factor rejected by the Governor of Assiniboia, the young lady's guardian. Young Hallett may have spent much time among the Métis where he

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[57] Ibid., 168.

[58] See this thesis, 206.

[59] See Ibid.

possibly enjoyed some fame as a hunter.[60] His case became a cause célèbre among his friends and associates. The unsettling effect of the incident is noted in several sources.[61] Governor Simpson found it necessary to address James Bird with respect to the behavior of one of his sons:

> I am both surprized and concerned to learn that your son Levi has for some time past been actively employed in endeavouring to incite some of his friends and associates to a breach of the peace, in support of the Hallett's claim to the daughter of Chief Factor Allan McDonell. This must be unknown [to] you as from your love of good order I feel assured you would exert your influence.[62]

The Rev. David T. Jones noted that the two mixed-blood communities found a common vehicle through which they could express their discontent:

> From some parts you will perceive that many disagreeable things have transpired in [the] course of last year on account of disaffection towards the Company in the minds of the Half Breeds. . . . The principal evil existed among the Catholic part of the Half Breeds; but we cannot deny that many on our side of the question were also drawn in to join in plots and plans which [were] but very imperfectly understood; and there is a spirit of national sympathy which connects them together by a very strong bond of union.[63]

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[60] Hallett lived to the west of the forks, up the Assiniboine, in close contact with the Métis. See H.B.C.A., E.6/2, Red River Settlement Land Register Book B, Lot 1236.

[61] See C.M.S.A., I.C., Journals and Correspondence of Cockran and Jones, 1834-1835.

[62] H.B.C.A., D.4/21, Simpson to Bird, December 11, 1834.

[63] C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones to the Clerical Secretary, August 10, 1835.

It is significant that Jones saw two separate mixed-blood communities coming together in an "alliance" to right similar wrongs. The Métis resented the aspersions cast upon themselves by Thomas Simpson's attack on Larocque. One might chastize a lowly servant with impunity but not a Métis hunter of some status. Similarly the Country-born resented the social definition of themselves signified by the treatment of William Hallett. Were not sons of retired officers of as good quality as "upstart Scotchmen"? If they were not so regarded circumstances in Red River were not what they should be. The furor of 1834-35 did not long endure. With the assistance of individuals held in some regard in both communities the mixed-bloods were placated.[64] The next few years seemed to indicate that, relatively speaking, peace and tranquility had returned to Red River. But the circumstances that had given rise to the clamorous demonstrations in 1834-35 had not been altered. A sense of social injustice awaited an issue through which it could challenge the status quo determined by the Company in Red River. Both the Métis and the Country-born, separately but in a similar fashion, remained discontented.

For the remainder of the decade few if any issues of a public nature disturbed the Settlement. But the furor that was to burst forth in the 1840's suggests that the basic

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[64]The extent of the clergy's role is not indicated in the documents.

issues were not forgotten. During the rebellion of 1837 a "Papineau standard" was erected in the camp of the buffalo hunters and songs were sung in honor of the rebels.[65] It seems likely that in their hunting councils and at social events the Métis were maturing and clarifying their views of themselves as the "New Nation." Fundamental to their thinking was the idea that as natives they enjoyed proprietary rights to the soil that the Company had not recognized.[66] It was only a matter of time before they would be convinced that they had a right to participate more fully in the benefits that accompanied the exploitation of the resources of Rupert's Land.

On the surface it would appear likely that the Country-born would be attracted to the concept that through their Indian mothers they too enjoyed special rights and privileges in Rupert's Land. While some evidence indicates that their views matured in this direction.[67] other evidence suggests that they were influenced strongly by British-born members of their community who emphasized the rights and privileges of "free-born" citizens.[68] It seems reasonable

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[65]Alexander Ross, 239.

[66]Giraud, 900-01.

[67]See P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., James Sinclair et al. to Christie, August 29, 1845.

[68]See the attitude expressed in Donald Gunn and C. R. Tuttle, 253-61.

to assume that developments in Great Britain would, through newspapers and letters, have some impact. When it is remembered that, in contrast to the Métis, many of the Country-born were literate to the point where they could read English with some facility it would be natural that the arguments surrounding free trade in Great Britain would be familiar in the Settlement.[69] That these arguments would be used against the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company was again only natural. As the expression of views that bore the imprint of British influence only comes to the surface in the 1840's it is impossible to assess the degree to which they were current in earlier years. Yet we do know that concern for individual "rights and privileges" had occupied the conversations of the principal settlers since the early foundation years.[70]

The genesis of the free trade movement of the 1840's in Red River lay in a technique of trade that the Company had developed in the latter years of the 1820's to combat illicit traders whose source of supply was the United States. The Company licensed a few private traders such as Andrew McDermot to compete with interlopers from the south. Supplying goods from the Company's stores and purchasing furs from

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[69] An example of this development can be seen in G.-A.I., J.S.C., 1827 to 1846.

[70] H.B.C.A., D.4/8, Simpson to Governor and Committee, June 5, 1824.

these traders at prices higher than those which they paid to the local Indians or, for that matter, to the other settlers, the Company appeared to have developed an effective way of dealing with its competitors.[71] The technique, however, depended upon the fact that the licensed traders and the other settlers remained dependent upon the Company for trading goods and for a market. In this way the private traders were made amenable to the Company's directions and control. This direction and control could be challenged if the settlers discovered alternatives to the Company in terms of supplying trade goods or marketing furs.

A by-product of the bountiful crops that accompanied the good years following the flood of 1826 was the brewing of beer from barley. Initially the local Indians treated this "barley broth" with disdain.[72] But in time they were introduced to the joys of drinking beer. In short order the settlers found they could hire Indians for a few gallons.[73] It was only a short step from using beer to pay for occasional labor to using it to purchase furs. This success in brewing led many to attempt, successfully, the distillation of whiskey.[74] Supplementing this basic commodity with a few

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[71] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., McDermot to Christie, November 13, 1845.

[72] C.M.S.A., I.C., Jones, Journal, August 30, 1835.

[73] Ibid.

[74] G.-A.I., J.S.C., Roderick to John Sutherland [uncle], August 6, 1846.

items purchased from the Company store or a private merchant, the nascent fur trader was in business. The upswing in this line of endeavour in the later years of the 1830's and in the early years of the 1840's led the Company to take increasingly stringent measures against the fur traffickers.

This soon disrupted relations between the Company and the leading private merchants. Most of the latter in this period were members of the Country-born community. The cordial and mutually beneficial relationship that existed between the Company and the leading private traders was a product of the experience of the foundation years. Once the difficulties between the Company and the Settlement had been alleviated the Company, both from a financial and an administrative point of view, found it profitable to offer favors to a select few.[75] The recipients in turn were not averse to being of service to the Company. Andrew McDermot put his horses, oxen, carts and canoes at the disposal of the Company for a moderate charge.[76] This system of reciprocal favors worked to the benefit of both parties although perhaps not in the interest of the settlers at large.

Early in the 1840's a series of incidents strained

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[75]Note the encouragement that was supposedly given to McDermot and Sinclair in P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., McDermot to Christie, November 13, 1845.

[76]H.B.C.A., D.5/11, McDermot to Simpson, June 3, 1844.

the relationship between the Company and the leading merchants. During the administration of Chief Factor Duncan Finlayson, the Governor of Assiniboia from 1839 to 1844, and the second administration of Chief Factor Alexander Christie, from 1844 to 1848,[77] a series of decisions were taken that alienated the favored few and caused them to look outside the Company's system for their rewards. During Finlayson's tenure in office the private merchants were deprived of their monopoly of the Settlement's freighting business with York when the Company reintroduced its own boats as a result of a public outcry against the merchants.[78] At the same time Finlayson turned a deaf ear to requests for higher rates of payment for goods transported by the merchants from York to the Settlement.[79] Christie rejected the similar appeal of James Sinclair.[80] Sinclair pleaded that the Company's "pieces" of freight averaged 116 pounds whereas the custom of the country held that a piece weighed 90 pounds.[81] Christie's refusal to compromise on this issue emphasized

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[77] See Oliver, I, 47-48, for brief sketches of their careers.

[78] H.B.C.A., D.5/15, [?] to A. Barclay, September 19, 1845.

[79] Ibid., McDermot to Governor and Committee, August 5, 1845.

[80] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., Christie to Sinclair, July 22, 1845.

[81] Ibid., Sinclair to Christie, July 18, 1845.

another incident in which the Company undercut McDermot and Sinclair in purchasing tallow from the hunters and shipping it to England.[82] No doubt such incidents reflect the increasing concern of Finlayson and Christie with the restiveness of the Métis, with the increasing traffic in furs and with the failure of the Company's licensing system to control this "nefarious" traffic. The fact that the private merchants were no longer serving the Company's interests to the same degree that they had a decade earlier may have caused first Finlayson and later Christie to view the relationship between the Company and the private traders in a new light. The result was to direct McDermot and Sinclair into the illicit fur trade, an undertaking they may well have been engaged in at an earlier date.

The illicit fur trade took a dramatic turn with the establishment of Norman Kittson's post at Pembina in 1844.[83] Located a few hundred yards south of the international boundary line, Kittson's post was erected on the spot where a long line of posts had been established by entrepreneurs who sought to challenge the Company's position in the region to the north. On previous occasions the Company had successfully fought competition.[84] But circumstances had

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[82] H.B.C.A., D.5/16 McDermot to Governor and Committee, August 5, 1845.

[83] J. P. Pritchett, The Red River Valley, 1811-1849 (New Haven, 1942), 254-55.

[84] See numerous references in H.B.C.A., D.4/5 to

changed. The American frontier had advanced to the point where it offered, on a competitive basis, an alternative source of supply and market. It is possible that the fur market had changed sufficiently to make by-products of the buffalo hunts, buffalo hides and fox and wolf skins, valuable produce indeed.[85] Métis traders outfitted by Kittson would service Métis hunters on the plains. At the same time such hunters would be better equipped to trade with Indian bands that they would encounter. Soon individuals in Red River began to participate, either with outfits of their own or through Métis intermediaries.[86] It was not long before contact was organized with Indian bands to the north and east of the Settlement.

Throughout Red River's history furs had flowed through the hands of Métis and Country-born settlers who had relatives among the surrounding Indian bands. As long as this trade represented an exchange of gifts on an occasional basis the Company apparently turned a blind eye. For that matter it was impossible to determine whether an individual settler had trapped the furs himself or committed the

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D.4/18, Simpson's Correspondence Outwards, 1825-30, detailing the manner in which the Company met opposition from the south.

[85]From the documents it would appear that the Company placed little value on these products until the advent of American competitors.

[86]P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal and McDermot's correspondence with Christie in P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., 1845, give examples of both means used to conduct the illicit trade.

illegal act of trading them from the Indians.[87] However when the volume of furs indicated that they had obviously been traded and when these furs were taken to the more favorable market at Pembina the Company had to act.

As long as the illicit trade involved isolated instances between individuals on a haphazard basis the Company faced a nuisance rather than a threat. But when capable entrepreneurs such as McDermot and Sinclair entered the fray the situation changed. They had the means to hire skilled employees to conduct their trade or to provide a "stake" for smaller fish than themselves to engage in trading. The Company found itself in a difficult position. The local constabulary, both Métis and Country-born were sufficiently disaffected that they could not be relied upon to give effect to the Company's legal controls.[88] At the same time some of the local magistrates indicated an unwillingness to sit in judgement on cases involving violations of the Company's rights.[89] For these reasons Recorder Thom recommended an indirect approach.[90]

During the middle 1840's the Company sought to bring

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[87]For an example see P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., McDermot to Christie, January 9, 1846.

[88]H.B.C.A., D.5/13, Adam Thom to Simpson, April 28, 1845.

[89]Ibid.

[90]Ibid., D.5/12, Christie to Simpson, December 27, 1844.

the illicit traders to heel by interfering with their source of supply of trade goods. Aiming at the major traders the Company demanded that such individuals post a bond stating they would not violate the Company's charter. If they refused the Company would embargo the goods they imported through York Factory.[91] At the same time the Company threatened to withdraw its notes, which circulated in the Settlement as currency.[92] Of the major traders Sinclair and McDermot were apparently the only ones who refused to post a bond.[93] The Company carried out its threat by embargoing their goods.[94] Irritated but not mortally injured financially, Sinclair and McDermot were able to carry on with stocks of goods on hand, with purchases from other merchants and possibly with supplies purchased at Pembina.[95] Their success in challenging the Company encouraged others to enter the field:

> While the evil was confined to men of property - Men who from the interests they have at stake, are assailable by a variety of indirect but powerful means, such as those which are to be found in our right of controlling the importation of goods and changing the character of the Currency. - While this was the case, perhaps it might have been difficult to find a plea, that would have

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[91] Ibid., D.5/13, Thom to Simpson, January 2, 1845.

[92] Ibid., March 10, 1845.

[93] Ibid., D.5/17, McDermot to Christie, April 2, 1846.

[94] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., between McDermot and Christie, November 13, and November 17, 1845.

[95] H.B.C.A., D.5/15, Christie to Simpson, December 1844.

> justified the policy of resorting to extremities. But when under the influence of example and of the seductive doctrine about equality & Free Trade, that are industriously taught them, - it appears that the ranks of the fur trafficers [sic] have been swelled by the accession of many such as, by the poverty of their circumstances, are placed almost beyond the reach of any indirect attack; . . . .[96]

In essence the illicit fur trade had been democratized. Young men, both Country-born and Métis, who sought to make a place for themselves in the uncertain economic circumstances of Red River turned to the fur trade in increasing numbers. In March, of 1846 Christie found it necessary to address James Bird:

> Never having been favored with any communication whatever from you on the subject, I am led to suppose, that you are not aware of the full extent to which I understand several members of your family, are implicated directly or indirectly, in illicit fur trafficking; and I therefore think it right to call your attention to the matter. . . . Besides others over whom it might perhaps be unreasonable to expect that you could exercise any effectual control, - Philip, Frederick, and Henry Bird have been represented as having this winter, been employed in the contraband trade; and I am sure it almost unnecessary for me to animadvert upon the tendency of such an example when set by those who are so closely connected with one occupying the position that you do in the Settlement. -[97]

Bird replied:

> I have lately heard with sorrow that the members of my family you name are somehow or other employed in an improper and illegal pursuit of furs for others, but I did and still do hope that you will readily feel that they are so without my knowledge, and in direct

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[96] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., Christie to Simpson, December 31, 1845.

[97] Ibid., Christie to Bird, March 31, 1846.

> opposition to my feelings and wishes, and in spite of any control I may be supposed to have over them.[98]

With added numbers participating in the illicit fur trade in various capacities the free trade movement in Red River took on political overtones.

Sinclair and McDermot sought to counter the moves taken by Governor Christie in 1844 by appealing to the Governor and Committee in London. In 1845 they dispatched McDermot's son-in-law, John McLoughlin, to London.[99] Hearing of this Christie took special pains to inform the Governor and Committee of the adverse effects the two free traders had on the Company's interests in Red River:

> I am in duty bound solemnly to assure your Honors, that any compromise with such men; unless involving ample Satisfaction for the past, would essentially corrupt the public principle of the Settlement, by pointing out the path of prosperity; & as to ample satisfaction for the past, their whole property would be an inadequate atonement for the demoralisation which they have wrought among the Indians and others, by example & precept.-[100]

Apparently the Governor and Committee listened to Christie as Sinclair and McDermot failed to receive satisfaction.

At this juncture the Métis and French Canadians in the Settlement began to assert an influence commensurate with their numbers. On August 29, 1845 twenty-three mixed-bloods addressed Governor Christie:

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[98] Ibid., Bird to Christie, March 31, 1846.

[99] H.B.C.A., D.5/15, Christie to Simpson, September 18, 1845.

[100] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., Christie to Governor and Committee, September 20, 1845.

> Having at this present moment a strong belief, that we as natives of this Country, and as half-Breeds, have the right, to hunt furs in the Hudson's Bay Company's Territories wherever we think proper, and, again, sell those furs to the highest bidder, - likewise having a doubt, that, natives of this Country can be prevented from trading and trafficking with one another, - we would wish to have your opinion on the subject, ...[101]

Therein followed fourteen questions dealing with the rights of native-born Rupert's Landers. Christie replied noting that all were British subjects with no special privileges or rights being extended to any particular group.[102] It is significant that, of the twenty-three men who signed the letter, eleven were Country-born. Six months later at a meeting called by the Roman Catholic missionary Rev. G. A. Belcourt and held at McDermot's place only four of those present were Country-born while possibly as many as a hundred were French Canadian and Métis.[103]

Governor Christie viewed this meeting as unlawful on the basis of reports carried to him.[104] Further he felt that while Sinclair and McDermot were the main instigators Belcourt had played an influential role.[105] Other evidence suggests

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[101] Ibid., Sinclair et al. to Christie August 29, 1845.

[102] Ibid., Christie to Sinclair et al., September 5, 1845.

[103] P.A.M., Garrioch, Journal, 299.

[104] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., Christie to McDermot, March 3, 1846.

[105] Ibid.

that Belcourt intervened to direct opposition away from the use of force and confrontation and towards an appeal by the assembly to the Imperial Government for redress of their grievances.[106] Only after this action was taken would the people be justified in creating their own government to express their wishes.[107] Belcourt's advice was followed and a petition was addressed to the British Government through A. K. Isbister, a mixed-blood who had a noteworthy pedagogical career in Great Britain.[108] The importance and significance of the petition paled in the face of the appearance of regular British troops in the Settlement in the sumer of 1846.

The Hudson's Bay Company had convinced the British government that the unsettled state of relations between Great Britain and the United States over the Oregon question required the presence of British troops in Red River.[109] The fact that these troops would constitute a secure base of support from which the Company could move against the illicit traders was not lost upon the Company's officers upon the spot. It would appear that the presence of the 6th Royal Regiment of Foot in the Settlement effectively stopped

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[106] Ibid., McDermot to Christie, March 18, 1846. See W. L. Morton,"Bellecourt, George-Antoine," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, X (1972), 46-48.

[107] Ibid.

[108] W. L. Morton, Manitoba . . . , 76. Also see H. C. Knox, "Alexander Kennedy Isbister," Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Series III, 12, 1957, 17-28.

[109] See W. D. Smith, "The Despatch of Troops to Red River, 1846, in relation to the Oregon Question,"(unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1951).

the illicit trade in furs.[110] At the same time the demands made upon local agriculturalists encouraged local industry. The crop of 1846 owing to the weather and epidemic sickness among the inhabitants was not sufficient to feed the inhabitants and the troops.[111] Supplies of grain and beef had to be brought in from outside. The following year the agriculturalists, including the Country-born, were stimulated to increase their production to take advantage of their new found market.[112] The fondness of the troops for beer gave great impetus to the production of barley. While the officers may have disdained the local brew the troops persevered, overcoming any initial reluctance.[113] Others in the Settlement found the troops' needs allowed them to advance prices on their services, much to the annoyance of the local residents.[114] It would seem that the Métis did not participate as fully in the benefits bestowed by the presence of the troops. The majority of the troops were quartered at Lower Fort Garry and as the Country-born were, as agriculturalists, better able than their kindred to supply the wants of the

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[110] P.A.M., R.R.S., R.R.C., Christie to Simpson July 30, 1847.

[111] H.B.C.A., D.5/18, Christie to Simpson, August 8, 1846.

[112] Ibid., D.5/18, Governor and Committee to Simpson, April 7, 1847.

[113] Ibid., Thom to Simpson, January 5, 1847.

[114] C.M.S.A., I.C., Smithurst, Journal, February 13, 1848.

newcomers, they profited to a far greater extent. It may well be that the presence of troops was the factor that tipped the Country-born away from their close association with the Métis and their policy of increasingly direct confrontation with the Company.

The 6th Royal Regiment of Foot departed from the Settlement in the summer of 1848 to be replaced by a small body of Chelsea pensioners commanded by Major W. B. Caldwell.[115] At the same time Caldwell replaced Christie as the Governor of Assiniboia.[116] It seems likely that the Company, with this move, sought to reduce at least the appearance of its power and influence. No longer was a fur trade officer in charge of the government of the Settlement. The new face of government was, however, quickly tarnished by the impression the settlers gained of the pensioners and their new governing authority. The pensioners proved ill-adapted to conditions in Red River. In the minds of the settlers they were neither an effective military force nor good citizens.[117] The controversy between Major Caldwell and his second in command, Captain C. V. Foss did nothing to improve matters.[118] Caldwell proved incapable of working

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[115] W. L. Morton, Manitoba . . . , 77.

[116] Oliver, I, 48.

[117] Alexander Ross, 365-66.

[118] H.B.C.A., D.5/23, Ballenden to Simpson, December 30, 1848.

effectively with anyone except the Protestant clergy on the Council of Assiniboia.[119] In a matter of a few months he demonstrated a capacity to alienate virtually all support from amongst the principal settlers. It was in these political circumstances that the famous Sayer trial occurred in 1849.

The Sayer trial, which has been fully described elsewhere,[120] is relevant to this study to the extent that it reveals the participation of the Country-born in the affairs of the Settlement at this juncture. Though the illicit fur trade resumed after the departure of the regular troops there was a striking absence of any significant number of the Country-born among the illicit traders.[121] While James Sinclair continued to play a prominent role, serving as Guillaume Sayer's counsel at his trial,[122] the initiative in opposing the Company had passed from the Country-born to the Métis. It was men such as Louis Riel père who emerged as the new leaders in the movement favoring free trade.[123]

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[119] See W. L. Morton, "Introduction," E. E. Rich, (ed.), Eden Colvile's Letters, 1849-52 (London, 1956), lxxvii.

[120] Ibid., lxxxiii-lxxxvi.

[121] This is deduced from the fact that important names are virtually absent from the documentary materials.

[122] Alexander Ross, 375.

[123] Riel had begun to exercise leadership as early as 1846; see W. L. Morton, "Introduction," E. E. Rich, (ed.), Eden Colvile's . . . , lxx.

What had become of the Country-born? In the documents they are conspicuous by their absence. This alone does not explain the position they had taken. Two facts are obvious. The Country-born did not actively support the Métis. Neither did they oppose them. This suggests that the views of the Country-born had matured in a direction distinct from those of the Métis. The former still maintained an interest in the cause of free trade as the presence of Sinclair and Peter Garrioch suggests. But their interest in the cause of free trade was tempered by concern for what would follow should the Hudson's Bay Company be overthrown. It seems likely that most of the Country-born feared the loss of their political and other institutions. Whereas the Métis with their semi-nomadic way of life and connections to the south appear to have felt little concern for this possibility, the Country-born had much to lose. Social advancement and economic opportunity meant little if the way of life associated with their farms was threatened. The Anglican clergy tied their interests increasingly to those of the status quo.[124] A change in the Company's political position in the Settlement was not necessarily in the interest of the Country-born.

It seems distinctly possible that the position of the Country-born set parameters within which the Métis challenged

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[124]Cockran was a particularly strong advocate of the Company's position. See H.B.C.A., D.5/23, Ballenden to Simpson, December 30, 1848.

the authority of the Company. As long as their challenge focussed upon the economic position of the Company and its political powers to the extent that they related to economic concerns the Métis could count upon at least the tacit support of the Country-born. But when their behavior denoted a challenge to the political and other institutions of the Settlement the Country-born, who had no liking for a French and Catholic ascendancy in Red River, would withdraw their support. This seems to be the only plausible basis on which to explain the behavior of the Country-born in this period. There can be little doubt that the Country-born realized they were a minority in Red River. At the same time many if not most of them had a vested interest in continuing the institutional pattern of the Settlement that gave the British sector an ascendancy in local affairs. It was the Country-born that constituted the bastion of support for the institutions of church and state in Red River. They could and did quarrel with a system that seemed to deny them social and economic opportunity. But their quarrel was with access to the system and not with the system itself. For better or worse the Country-born were attached to a system that emphasized the values, attitudes and behavior of the fur trader as they had been adapted to Red River. In their usage of the institutions of church and state the Country-born reflected their British connections. By their support of these institutions they constituted the social basis on which these institutions could function.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

For the Country-born the years from 1820 to 1850 mark the establishment and development of a community that was a key element in the mosaic of peoples that constituted the population of the Red River Settlement. The Country-born traced their origin to the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. The way of life in the trading post represented the adaptation of British values, attitudes and practises that flourished in the closing decades of the eighteenth century. This distinctive way of life did not evolve in isolation. Besides maintaining continuing contact with the British Isles the society of the trading post encountered new experiences with its penetration of the interior in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The Bay Tradition was thus the product of more than a century's experience in Rupert's Land before it was carried to Red River.

The way of life of the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company has not as yet been fully examined. The relevant documents suggest cultural ways that were extremely important in determining the nature of the cultural baggage that accompanied the Country-born to Red River. A primary feature of life in the Company's trading post was the social structure

that circumscribed and regulated the lives of the inhabitants. The formal means of structuring this society was the pyramidal hierarchy of rank, proceeding from a base of youthful unskilled servants to the officer-in-charge, the Indian trader. While mirroring British example this structure underwent some adaptation to make it functional in Rupert's Land. The general tendency was to emphasize merit as demonstrated in a variety of necessary skills. The tradesman who developed several related skills could look for his rewards in promotion and increased wages. At the same time tradition and authority remained and, adapted to Rupert's Land circumstances, proved admirably functional in the conduct of the trade. Both officers and servants appear to have expressed support for this element of British ways that tied them to the distant homeland.

An informal means of structuring the relationships of the inhabitants of the trading posts was the sense of camaraderie that bound the adult males. The society of one's work mates constituted a social structure that emphasized its own criteria for status and dictated its own hierarchy of positions. In its operation this informal social structure influenced the formal structure, moderating the strictly hierarchical nature of its organization. At times the two structures were in conflict. Nevertheless the informal structure was a very real part of the world of the trading post.

In addition to the informal social structure that emphasized the camaderie of workmates, kinfolk were an increasingly important part of the trading post community. To varying extents kin relationships involving the families of servants and officers influenced the operation of both the formal means of structuring the community and the status derived from the companionship of workmates. Kinship was an additional social link that tied individuals in the trading posts to each other and to surrounding bands of Indians. It was through kinship that individuals who exhibited the ways of one particular cultural tradition came to terms with those manifested by others. Differences remained between individuals in terms of their cultural ways but the element of "strangeness" was removed. Kinship was a principal means through which cultural differences in the trading post were made tolerable and to an extent maintained.

In addition to the social structure of the trading post another outstanding characteristic of its ways was the existence of two relatively distinct focal values expressed by the inhabitants. On the one hand the ethos of the man of property can be used to describe the values, attitudes and behavior of individuals who saw themselves in terms of the acquisition of property. On the other hand the evidence suggests that many were motivated by pleasures arising out of the companionship of kith and kin rather than those associated with the acquisition of property. The two focal values

were not mutually exclusive. They represent areas of emphasis that suggest a dominant interest. The man of property did not ignore the companionship of kith and kin. Neither was the man who revelled in the camaraderie of workmates and kin relations oblivious to the social and economic benefits bestowed through the ownership of property. But each individual appears to have made one focal value or the other central to his life in the trading post.

It is significant that until the Red River Settlement was established the man of property could not fulfill his ambitions in Rupert's Land. This in itself tended to strengthen cultural ties with the British homeland. Even mixed-bloods, born and raised in Rupert's Land, could be found who expressed fidelity to the ideal expressed in the term "British." In contrast to the man of property the man who looked to the sense of camaraderie experienced among kith and kin could find the realization of his ambitions in Rupert's Land. Employment in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company gave entry into a social world with its own rewards. For this man retirement did not offer the opportunity of realizing a life long ambition as it did for the man of property. Rather retirement meant the end of a way of life that he had come to know and even cherish.

A cardinal feature of life in the trading post was the nature of family relationships. An indication of the variety of circumstances that existed can be found in the

varying duration of marriages au façon du nord. In some cases such marriages endured for the length of but one trading season. In others the bond endured for the lifetime of the individuals involved. There appears to be some relationship between position in the hierarchy of rank and the duration of trading post marriages. The documents leave the impression that the more enduring marriages were to be found amongst the officers and the servants of senior rank. Their financial and social circumstances tended to make the family bond more secure. Thus in such families the British-born parent tended to have a greater influence on the children than was the case in families where there were frequent changes of husband and father.

A dominant aspect of family life in the trading post was the question of finding a place for the young. Apparently females experienced fewer problems than their brothers. As the tendency existed for British-born servants and officers to choose their mates from among the mixed-blood daughters and sisters of their co-workers the problem of finding a role for the latter was readily solved. The same was not true for mixed-blood males. The ranks of the Company were opened to them only when special circumstances dictated such a policy. The Company's expansion into the interior and the drain on the labor supply of the Orkney Islands arising out of the wars between Britain and France led to the addition of mixed-bloods to the Company's "Lists of Servants."

Nevertheless those in authority still preferred to recruit in Great Britain. Trading post parents could not feel assured that their sons would find a place in their own society.

The migration of the Country-born to Red River, arising out of the end of competition in the fur trade in 1821, marked a decisive change in their lives. In Red River under the tutelage of the Company they were to come under the influence of such British institutions as civil government, churches and schools. The response of the Country-born depended largely upon the interaction between the Settlement and the fur trade. Perhaps Simpson's most challenging problem and his most noteworthy success was the relationship he established between the Settlement and the fur trade during the foundation years. He had to win at least the acquiescence of his fellow officers in the fur trade. In conjunction with the missionaries of two persuasions he had to establish relative spheres of influence and areas of legitimate interest. From the principal settlers he had to elicit a concern for community interests and a willingness to participate in the affairs of the Settlement. The agrarian community had to come to terms with the Métis, the half of the population that remained semi-nomadic. All these problems were intertwined with the problem of the illicit fur trade.

Simpson's labors in Red River would have been for naught had he not dealt effectively with the illicit traders.

Their activities were not only a challenge to the pecuniary interests of the Company but they also threatened the peace and stability of the Settlement. In time and through a variety of measures Simpson's efforts proved successful. The illicit fur trade was brought within limits that were tolerated by the Company. The negative attitude towards authority itself, a survival from the period of the Selkirk experience, was blunted. The populace proved increasingly willing to accept the leadership of those placed in positions above them. The fratricidal quarrels which marked relations between various elements in the population gave way to an acceptance of the status quo. The rough outline of what Red River was to be was determined during the foundation years.

The response of the Country-born in this period and in later years reflected an adaptation of trading post ways to Red River. The evidence indicates that the Country-born accepted the ministrations of the Anglican missionaries and profited from their teachings. Similarly the institutions of local government were used and respected. But the response of the Country-born was uneven both in respect to individual's and families and in terms of the cultural items that were preserved and acquired. Ostensibly the Country-born constituted an agrarian community, but the old ways of the trading post exerted their influence. Hunting, fishing and tripping remained attractive, not solely for economic reasons, but because they perpetuated the social world of the trading post.

Even in their agricultural pursuits the Country-born demonstrated a proclivity for gregarious social behavior. In contrast the dour Kildonan Scots were far more assiduous in developing the agricultural potential of their river-lot farms. In Red River the Country-born by no means abandoned the ways they had known in the posts of the hinterland.

In responding positively to the activities of the Anglican missionaries the Country-born reflected weaknesses in their former way of life. In terms of family life and related behavior the missionaries appear to have made a genuine contribution. In Red River family life was marked by increased stability. Other related aspects of behavior such as drinking, fighting and "whoring" were brought within the bounds of community sanctions. Yet even in the realm of family life old ways persisted. The kinship connections which appear to have been an increasingly important aspect of trading post life were continued and extended. The missionaries recognized this sociological fact and turned it to their own account. They were less than pleased with child-rearing techniques of the Country-born who appear to have preferred the less stringent practises of the trading post. Similar examples can be found denoting the eclectic response of the Country-born to the institutions of church and state.

The Country-born had close and apparently harmonious relations with the other communities in Red River. For the Indian village at St. Peters they appear to have furnished

an example and leadership in the process of becoming "evanelized and civilized." With the Kildonan Scots relations were fairly comfortable. Similarly many of the Country-born were associated with the Métis on the annual summer buffalo hunt. Yet there were distinctions separating the Country-born from these other communities. Language, religion and place of residence served to delineate broadly the differences. In addition there were distinctions in their ways of life. The Country-born were more closely tied to their farms than were the Métis or the Swampies and Saulteaux of the Indian village. But in comparison with the Kildonan Scots they were not the agriculturalists that many felt they should be. The center of their social life outside of the immediate family was the kinship structure that was interwoven with the neighbourhood and the parish.

With the Country-born community great diversity appeared in styles of life. The differences between the humblest settler and a retired officer were striking. Other differences as well could be found. Some Country-born moved comfortably among the Métis. Others were more at home with the Indians at St. Peters. Still others served a leadership role among the Kildonan Scots. Equal diversity could be found in terms of occupation and wealth. The variety of outlook found among the Country-born prevented them from coalescing with the unity of purpose that appeared to mark the Kildonan Scots and the Métis. At the same time their

diversity served an essential function in the complex mosaic.

Those of the Country-born community who had close relations with members of other communities and to an extent shared their interests functioned as cultural bridges between the various communities. In essence the Country-born were the amalgam that prevented the diverse communities from splitting apart possibly in a violent upheaval. In their associations they removed the element of strangeness in the differences that demarcated the various communities. With the Kildonan Scots they shared values that were British, Protestant and agricultural. With the Métis they shared their mixed-blood ancestry and a lingering fondness for the chase and tripping. With the Indian they often shared language and, occasionally, the willingness to resort to the conjurers drum and chant. In all these ways the Country-born performed an invaluable service.

One essential feature of the Country-born remains. In Red River the Country-born were the primary foundation which supported the institutions of British civilization established there. Their numbers were such, in proportion to others, that they were a social factor that could not be ignored. Numbering approximately 2,000 individuals in 1850 their interests carried weight. Their attachment to the Anglican missionaries and their various religious and educational activities was self evident. Their attachment to the institutions of local government was less obvious but it was

present nevertheless. They participated in the local courts and accepted their decisions. To the extent that they were given effective leadership they extended support to the local legislative body. Even during the troubled years of the 1840's when many came to feel sympathy with the illicit traders a reserve of support existed that prevented local institutions from dissolving in chaos. The institutions of church and state from Great Britain have deservedly received much attention in terms of the manner in which they made it possible for different communities in Red River to function relatively peacefully in close proximity. But it must be remembered that in large measure support for these institutions rested upon their acceptance by the Country-born.

In understanding the experience of the Red River Settlement in the period 1820 to 1870 historians have tended to focus upon dramatic events associated with the largest community in the Settlement. Nevertheless the whole story cannot be understood without reference to the second largest community in Red River, the Country-born. In the period from 1820 to 1850 they took the way of life of the trading post and adapted it to the particular circumstances of Red River. In doing so their community came to play an unique and important role in shaping the development of the Settlement as a whole. This role was perhaps as decisive as that of the Métis in determining the course of events that shaped their world before Confederation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

C.M.S.A.	Church Missionary Society Archives. Microfilmed documents in the Cameron Library, University of Alberta.
G.-A.I.	Archives of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute. Calgary, Alberta.
H.B.C.A.	Hudson's Bay Company Archives. Microfilmed documents in the Public Archives of Canada.
P.A.C.	Public Archives of Canada.
P.A.M.	Public Archives of Manitoba.

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