

THE 18TH CENTURY WESTERN CREE AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS:  
IDENTITY AND TERRITORY

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
in the  
Department of Anthropology and Archaeology  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon

by

Dale Ronald Russell

April, 1990

The author claims copyright. Use shall not be made of the  
material contained herein without proper acknowledgement.

30200625085

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Postgraduate degree from the University of Saskatchewan, I agree that the Libraries of this University may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor or professors who supervised my thesis work or, in their absence, by the Head of the Department or the Dean of the College in which my thesis work was done. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of Saskatchewan in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my thesis.

Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of material in this thesis in whole or part should be addressed to:

Head of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0W0

THE 18TH CENTURY WESTERN CREE AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS:  
IDENTITY AND TERRITORY

ABSTRACT

The eighteenth century historical documents fail to support the accepted view, advanced by David Mandelbaum and others, that the Cree and Assiniboin invaded the west after 1690 as a result of the introduction of the fur trade. This view, seemingly supported by nineteenth century authorities, has its only source in several brief ambiguous statements published in 1801 by Alexander Mackenzie.

The western limits of the Cree and Assiniboin in the early 1700s remain unclear. Their marauding activities against members of the Blackfoot Confederacy occurred only in the late 1700s, almost fifty years after they were documented as peacefully living in central Alberta.

In the mid-1700s, six major Cree groups inhabited the western parklands, plains and boreal forest: the Susuhana, Sturgeon, Pegogamaw, Keskachewan/Beaver, Athabasca and Missinipi. These groups were all obliterated by the smallpox epidemic of 1781, and it was the resultant population shifts which were noted by nineteenth century observers.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the people of Sandy Bay, Saskatchewan, who have supported me over the years, especially the late Angus Bear Sr., Joe Morin and Magloire Nateweyes. Margaret Ballantyne also has patiently provided much helpful advice.

I would like to thank the members of my examining committee: Dr. Ernest G. Walker, chairman, Dr. William Waiser and Dr. Urve Linnamae. I owe a special debt to my thesis adviser, Dr. Mary Marino, who went out of her way to accommodate my working hours.

Shirlee Ann Smith and the staff of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives have been most helpful and have granted permission to refer to the Hudson's Bay Company material.

It has been a pleasure to benefit from Dr. David Meyer's knowledge of Saskatchewan. Art Friend shared his reconstruction of Matthew Cocking's travels in the Eagle Hills. My fellow employees at the Saskatchewan Research Council have also supported me: among them, Ed Perkins drafted my maps and Peggy McKeand helped with many practical matters. Lastly, I am indebted to my father, the late Doug Russell, for fostering my early interest in northern Crees.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Aim .....	1
1.2 Areas of inquiry .....	3
1.3 The scope of the study .....	4
1.4 Units of study .....	5
1.4.1 Subdivisions of the Cree .....	5
1.4.2 Nomenclature .....	11
1.4.3 Canoe routes to the Bay .....	12
1.5 The nature and limitations of the historical data .....	13
1.5.1 Sources of data .....	13
1.5.2 The nature of the data .....	18
1.6 The course of the Cree migration .....	23
1.6.1 Cree participation in the fur trade .....	23
1.6.2 Eighteenth century Cree warfare .....	27
2. DAVID MANDELBAUM: THE WESTERN MIGRATION OF THE CREE..	31
2.1 Introduction .....	31
2.2 Mandelbaum's history of the western Cree .....	32
2.3 First contacts: 1640-1690 .....	34
2.4 The establishment of the fur trade: 1690-1740..	37
2.5 Conquest of the western forests: 1740-1820 .....	42
2.6 The occupation of the plains: 1820-1880 .....	51
2.7 Summary .....	52
3. THE CREE MIGRATION: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE .....	54
3.1 Introduction .....	54
3.2 The role of Sir Alexander Mackenzie .....	55
3.2.1 Mackenzie's <u>Travels</u> .....	55
3.2.2 A note on Andrew Graham .....	57
3.2.3 Mackenzie's limitations .....	59
3.2.4 Mackenzie on the Western Cree .....	61
3.3 Twentieth century scholars and the migration of the Cree .....	73
3.3.1 Post-Mandelbaum writers .....	74
3.3.2 Early twentieth century writers .....	77
3.4 Nineteenth century observers and synthesizers..	81
3.5 Conclusions .....	88
4. WESTERN CREE AND ASSINIBOIN: EASTERN APPROACHES .....	90
4.1 Introduction .....	90
4.2 The French in the west: 1650-1763 .....	92

4.2.1	Approaches to the west: 1615-1716	92
4.2.2	Cree and Assiniboin in the west	97
4.2.3	The French in the west: 1716-1763	104
4.3	Summary	118
5.0	THE VIEW FROM THE BAY: 1612-1754	119
5.1	Introduction	119
5.2	European observations: 1612-1714	122
5.2.1	Early expeditions to the Bay: 1612-1682	123
5.3	European observations on the inland: 1682- 1720	128
5.4	The French narratives: 1684-1714	132
5.4.1	Silvy: 1684-85	132
5.4.2	Marest: 1694-1695	133
5.4.3	La Potherie: 1697	135
5.4.4	Jérémie: 1697-1714	138
5.5	The first inland account: Henry Kelsey: 1690-1692	142
5.6	Kelsey and La Potherie	146
5.7	The French inland travellers	150
5.8	James Knight: peace-making expeditions of the 1710s	153
5.9	Summary	160
6.0	OBSERVATIONS OF THE INTERIOR: 1720-1774	162
6.1	Misconceptions of the interior: 1720-1750	162
6.2	Saukamappee: an account of the early eighteenth century interior	168
6.3	The inland travellers: 1754-1775	176
6.4	The inland travellers on the Saskatchewan River: 1754-1776	180
6.4.1	Anthony Henday: 1754-60	180
6.4.2	Joseph Smith: 1763-1764	188
6.4.3	William Pink: 1766-1770	192
6.4.4	Matthew Cocking: 1772-73	205
6.4.5	Peter Fidler: 1792-1793	211
6.5	The inland travellers on the upper Assiniboine River: 1756-1774	214
6.5.1	Introduction	214
6.5.2	Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner 1756-1757: the upper Assiniboine	215
6.5.3	Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner 1757-58: the Touchwood Hills	218
6.5.4	William Tomison: 1767-1768; 1769-1770	221
6.5.5	Matthew Cocking: 1774-1775	226
6.6	The northern tier	230
6.6.1	Introduction	230
6.6.2	Pre-1781 accounts	230
6.6.3	Post-1781 accounts	232

7.	IDENTIFYING THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CREE GROUPS..	235
7.1	The Southern/Keskachewan/Christinaux/Cree	235
7.2	Andrew Graham's lists of trading Indians	237
7.3	The inland HBC journals	240
7.4	Groups trading at the Bay	241
7.5	Group size	243
8.	THE SOUTHERN TIER OF CREE	249
8.1	Introduction	249
8.2	La Vérendrye's observations of the Cree	250
8.3	The Southern Cree in the 17th century documents	252
8.4	The Muscotay and Askee Cree	255
8.5	The Mountain Cree	259
8.6	The Susuhana Cree	264
8.7	The Sturgeon Cree	269
9.	THE MIDDLE TIER OF CREE: CENTRAL SASKATCHEWAN	273
9.1	Introduction	273
9.2	The Pegogamaw Cree	276
9.2.1	Identification	276
9.2.2	History of contact	277
9.2.3	Distribution	280
9.2.4	Size of group	284
9.2.5	Summary	285
9.3	The Keskachewan Cree	286
9.3.1	Identification	286
9.3.2	Location	289
9.3.3	Size of group	290
9.4	The Beaver Cree	290
9.4.1	Distribution	292
9.4.2	The Keskachewan and the Beaver Cree	294
9.5	Summary	295
10.	THE NORTHERN TIER OF CREE AND THE CHIPEWYAN	298
10.1	Introduction	298
10.2	Historical background	300
10.3	Recent scholarly research and the Western Woods Cree	301
10.4	Identifying the Missinipi: Lake Winnipeg, Churchill River and Lake Athabasca	306
10.5	The Missinipi Cree	311
10.5.1	Lake Winnipeg Missinipi	311
10.5.2	Size of group	313
10.6	The Athabasca Cree	313
10.7	The "r" or Athabasca Cree dialect	315
10.8	The distribution of the Missinipi and Athabasca Cree	320
10.9	The Cree of the lower Churchill River	328

10.9.1	Cree and Chipewyan on the coast .....	329
10.9.2	Cree and Chipewyan in the central northern boreal forest .....	332
10.10	Summary .....	335
11.	THE ASSINIBOIN .....	337
11.1	Introduction .....	337
11.2	Historical background .....	338
11.3	The western limits of the Assiniboin .....	344
11.3.1	Early accounts from the Bay .....	348
11.4	The post-1715 HBC records .....	353
11.5	The Northern and Southern Assinipoets .....	356
11.6	Assiniboin groups .....	362
11.7	Summary .....	365
12.	RELATIONS WITH THE ARCHITHINUE: THE BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY .....	367
12.1	The Blackfoot and their allies in the early historic period .....	367
12.2	The Archithinue .....	371
12.3	The Archithinue and the HBC .....	373
12.4	Saukamappee's account of Cree-Archithinue relations .....	379
12.5	First-hand observations of Cree-Archithinue relations .....	384
12.6	Summary .....	390
13.	THE GROS VENTRE: ATSINA AND HIDATSA GROUPS IN SASKATCHEWAN .....	392
13.1	Introduction .....	392
13.2	The Gros Ventre in scholarly studies .....	393
13.3	The historical source .....	397
13.4	The Fall Indians and the Branches of the Saskatchewan River .....	403
13.5	The Hidatsa in Saskatchewan .....	410
14.	SUMMARY .....	416
14.1	The accepted view of Cree history .....	416
14.2	Mandelbaum's history of the Cree .....	417
14.3	The Assiniboin .....	418
14.4	The Archithinue .....	418
14.5	The locations of Cree groups in the eighteenth century .....	420
14.6	The southern tier of Cree .....	422
14.7	The middle tier of Cree .....	423
14.8	The northern tier of Cree .....	423
14.9	Summary .....	425
15.	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	427
15.1	Published sources .....	427
15.2	Archival sources .....	449

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		Page
1	Western Interior of Canada .....	Endpocket
2	The Canadian Northwest .....	Endpocket

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 AIM

Authorities on the historical background of Indian groups on the northern plains share a common view that the western Cree, following the introduction of the fur trade on the shores of Hudson Bay in the late 1600s, expanded westward from a homeland thought to be in northwestern Ontario or eastern Manitoba. This view sees the movement as resulting from a chain of circumstances: a dependency on European trade goods leading to a depletion of local furs which in turn motivated the invasion of new territories in the search for new fur sources. This invasion succeeded because of the almost exclusive access to guns which allowed the Cree and their Assiniboin allies to overcome their western neighbours and invade as far as present-day Alberta and the Northwest Territories by the late 1700s. As a result, there were great shifts in the locations not only of the Cree and Assiniboin in the early historic period but also of the Gros Ventre, Blackfoot, Peigan, Blood, Beaver, Slave and Chipewyan. In turn, the Snake, Kutenai and other Indians in southern Alberta were displaced. This invasion of the Cree from the east has been described often with relatively minor variations ( e.g. Curtis 1976:55, 56; Hlady 1964:24-31,46; Hodge 1971:117-118; Hyde 1959:127; Jenness

1963:284; Mandelbaum 1979:15-46; Morton 1973:11-13,18-19;Ray 1974:13,19-23).

Only two objections have been raised, these by Athapaskanists, who regard the Cree occupation of the Athabasca area as pre-dating the fur trade (Gillespie 1975, 1981; Smith 1975, 1981; 1987).

With the exception of Beryl Gillespie and James G.E. Smith, only three attempts have been made to document the migration of the Cree in the historic record. All other writers simply describe the movement briefly. The first documentation, by David G. Mandelbaum (1979), was published in 1940 by the American Museum of Natural History. Much later, Walter Hlady (1964) wrote a short article outlining the historical migrations of Indian groups in the west. He, like Mandelbaum, used only published sources and although his outline of Cree history follows Mandelbaum's, he does not refer to him. The third treatment was Arthur J. Ray's (1974), whose focus was on the Indian involvement with the fur trade. Ray was the first to use the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Although he lists Mandelbaum in his bibliography, he has no direct references to him and in his passing discussions of the migration of the Cree and Assiniboin, often refers to Hlady's work. However, Ray was indebted to Mandelbaum for his views since in an earlier article, which he expands in his book, Ray (1972:117 n.4) acknowledges Mandelbaum's "well considered" discussion of

the variables which led to the migration of the Cree. Because there are only slight differences among these three writers, the present study is addressed particularly to a re-examination of Mandelbaum's view of Cree history. He, alone, focussed on the Cree and his work, recently reprinted, has been described by his editor as "a basic work of scholarship which will be sought out, and referred to, by scholars for many years" (Mandelbaum 1979:xvii).

Despite the wide acceptance of this view of the history of the Cree, a careful examination of both archival and secondary sources reveals that it is fundamentally misconceived. There is a lack of historical evidence to support it and the presence of countervailing evidence. Further, it presupposes patterns of raiding, hunting and trapping which are inconsistent with customary behaviours of the Cree, as far as they can be determined.

This thesis has two aims. First, to examine the archival and secondary sources in detail to explain the development of this view of Cree history. Second, to set forth the identity and distribution of eighteenth century Cree groups and their neighbours.

## 1.2 AREAS OF INQUIRY

This study is an examination of the eighteenth century historic sources along the following lines of inquiry:

- i. the historical background and development of the now accepted view of Cree



history

ii. the reliability and limitations of the primary records as a source of evidence for Cree movements

iii. the reconstruction of the identity and locations of Cree groups, as far as the sources permit, for evidence of a recent migration from an eastern forest habitat

iv. an examination of the sources for the territorial limits of the Assiniboin for evidence of a migration

v. a similar examination of adjacent Indian groups for evidence that they had been forced from their homelands by invading Cree and Assiniboin.

### 1.3 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

There are both geographical and temporal limits to this study. We are here concerned with the Western Cree, those living west of a line through Lake Winnipeg and, roughly, along the Nelson River to Hudson Bay. This area includes the boreal forest west to Lake Athabasca, the parkland belt stretching from southern Manitoba to central Alberta and the northeastern plains.

The emphasis is on the historic documents written between 1682, when English and French traders appeared on western Hudson Bay, and 1781-1782 when the Cree inhabitants were decimated by smallpox resulting in the disappearance of former recognizable groups. This catastrophic event coupled with the arrival of traders on the Saskatchewan River marked a major change in Cree history. Before 1682, the only data on the inland Cree are from French missionaries and traders in the Great Lakes area. These sparse data are examined

since they have been used to delineate Cree territory prior to 1690. As well, data from after 1782 are used for some areas which were not penetrated by European observers until after that date.

#### 1.4 UNITS OF STUDY

##### 1.4.1 SUBDIVISIONS OF THE CREE

Since the first attempts in the mid-nineteenth century to construct Cree dictionaries and grammars, the Western Cree have been subdivided according to dialect differences based primarily on the substitution of /y/, /n/, /th/, or less frequently, /r/ for Proto-Algonquian \*l (e.g. Horden 1881:2; Howse 1844:316; LaCombe 1874:xv; Wolfart 1973:9 map 2). With the exception of the /r/ dialect, all are extant but their precise boundaries remain unclear (Wolfart 1973b:8-10).

The Western Cree have also been subdivided according to geographical range: the Swampy, Plains, Rocky and Woods or Thickwoods Cree. These divisions generally coincide with dialect boundaries. Thus the Plains and Woods Cree are /y/ speakers, the Swampy Cree are /n/ speakers, the Rocky Cree speak the /th/ dialect while the Athabasca Cree, now extinct, are reputed to have spoken an /r/ dialect (Hives 1943:3; LaCombe 1874:xv; Mandelbaum 1979:12; Rossignol 1939:62; Smith 1981:256).

Either of these divisions, geographic or linguistic,

would be appropriate units for discussing Cree history since they reflect differing geographic distributions and ecological adaptations. However, there are two problems with their historic identification which invalidate their use for this study.

First, there are no linguistic data for the inland areas from the 1700s which could serve to delineate dialect boundaries and locations. Where later data might suggest shifts in such boundaries, it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine if dialect differences in the same locality are a result of shifts of population, changes in dialect, or, simply, errors on the part of various observers. For example, in the York Factory area, seventeenth century French writers recorded Cree words using /l/ and /r/ forms (Jérémie 1926:22; La Potherie 1968:262-264) whereas eighteenth century HBC personnel used /th/ (Graham 1969:207-209; Isham 1949:5-64) and more recent writers use /n/ (Michelson 1936:686; Trudeau 1966:14,16).

An added difficulty is that the early observers often considered dialect differences inconsequential. Cree dialects were described as involving only "a slight difference in accent" (Marest 1968:123), and even the obvious differences between Cree and Saulteaux were considered a "trifling variation" as late as 1819 (HBCA B.159/e/1). Cree vocabularies written between the 1740s and 1820s from Hudson Bay west to Alberta and the Mackenzie all

reflect the /th/ dialect as do the few Cree words recorded by the HBC employees wintering inland from 1691 to 1772 (e.g. Graham 1969; Henry the Younger 1965; Isham 1949; Mackenzie 1970; Umfreville 1954; Kelsey 1929; Cocking 1908). Thus isolated words may reflect the existence of a dialect, but its temporal and geographical limits are unknown.

A second problem is the difficulty in determining the referents of the terms Plains, Swampy, Woods and Rocky Cree. Mandelbaum (1979:12) considers the "Woodland Cree" to include the /n/, /l/ and /th/ dialects. Smith (1976:429) uses the term "Strongwood Cree" to refer to the /y/ speakers of northern Alberta. Hives (1943:3) speaks of the "Wood Cree" who use the /th/ dialect. Butler (1883:372) speaks of the "Thickwood Indians" who include the "Rocky Mountain Stonies [Assiniboin], the Swampy Crees and the Saulteaux." Because the same terms were used in such a different manner, their occurrence in historical documents must be treated very cautiously.

Many of these general terms do not occur in the early records. The /th/ speakers of northwestern Manitoba and northeastern Saskatchewan have only recently been known in the anthropological literature by the name they themselves use, the Rocky Cree, i.e. People of the Rocky Land, or "assiniskwawidiniwok" (Rossignol 1939:61; Smith 1975; 1981). The use of /th/ is found throughout the early HBC documents and is recorded in place names as far west as Lake Athabasca

and Methy Portage (Portage la Loche). However, the use of the term "Rocky Cree" dates only to 1888 when Peter Badger, an Anglican missionary at Cumberland House, mentioned a group of "Rocky Indians" who had visited from the north (David Meyer: personal communication; PAC CMS.41 C 1/0 A.115). In 1914, Alanson Skinner (1914) used the term "Asinskau-winiuuk, Stone People" in the list of Cree groups he recorded at Qu'Appelle in 1913 but whether this refers to northern /th/ speakers is not known. James Smith (n.d.:4 n.4) has suggested that early writers on Hudson Bay may have confused the word for Rocky Cree, asiniskawithiniwak, with the /th/ term for the Assiniboin or Rocky Sioux, Assinipoetuk. Although Smith seems to have discarded this idea, the possibility of such confusion should be kept in mind.

These problems which arise in the use of the term Rocky Cree apply to the terms used for other major Cree groups as well. As Smith (1976:419) pointed out, "I should strongly note that the identification of dialect group with self-identified groups -Maskegon, Rocky Cree and Strongwoods Cree - is far from certain." As a result of this lack of data, the ambiguity in terminology, and the varying time depths in their recorded use, the present study uses the group names for the Cree which are found in the early HBC records.

The daily numbers of canoes arriving to trade at York Factory and Fort Churchill were recorded in the respective

HBC daily journals. Most often the groups of canoes or flotillas were referred to in very general terms: so many "Canoes," or "Trading Indians," or "Upland Indians" had arrived. An exception was the four memoranda concerning trading Indians kept at York Factory in 1757, 1758, 1760 and 1761 (HBCA B.239/a/42,44,47,48). Recorded in these supplements to the daily journals, and often differing from the latter, were the arrivals, identity and number of the various groups trading in those seasons. Some of these names occur sporadically as early as 1715, in the oldest surviving journals. The names often reflect a geographic feature of the home environment - frequently a prominent river or lake - such as the Red Deer, Athabasca, or Missinipi groups. Many of these names also occur, with their wider tribal affiliations, in the lists of Indian groups trading or known at the Bay found in the nine manuscript versions of Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay (Graham 1969; Isham 1949:309-317; HBCA E.2/4-13).

These groups would appear to correspond to the definitions of regional and, in some cases, the local bands as described by Helm (1965:375-378). However, this suggestion is tentative since there are few if any, data on the size of the group, its territorial boundaries, intra-group kin ties, regional adaptations or dialect affiliation. All that can be determined is that the major named groups came from certain areas and existed through time.

In great part, little is known of the groups since none are named after the smallpox epidemic of 1781-1782 which seemingly caused such havoc that these structures broke down. Named Cree groups do not re-appear in the historic record until well into the later 1800s. Unfortunately, continuous first-hand data for the inland Cree are only available after this period beginning with the establishment of the inland HBC posts at Cumberland House in 1774 and on the North Saskatchewan River in 1779. Nevertheless, these early named Cree groups are the only sub-groupings of the Cree that, to some degree, can be located in time and space.

Further, by being able to specify certain Cree groups, the common error, which has permeated all previous discussions of the history of the Cree, can be avoided. This is the mistake of treating any and all western Cree groups as being alike. Certainly, Cree groups from the southern Manitoba Escarpment, the North Saskatchewan River and the upper Churchill River differ: in the identity of, and their relations with, their immediate neighbours; in the faunal resources which they utilised; and in their exposure to the fur traders. In other words, their specific histories vary widely and it is not useful, except on a most general level, to speak of "the Cree moving west" or "the dependency of the Cree on the fur trade" without specifying which Cree groups are meant. An example of this is the widely accepted model of the seasonal exploitation cycle

developed for the Cree and Assiniboin by Ray (1972a; 1974:46-48). Because it synthesizes data from various groups, it is not applicable to any specific group, and as a result is misleading.

It must be pointed out, however, that the earliest historic data seldom refer to specific Cree groups. As a result, the early Western Cree can be discussed only at a very broad level of generalization. Nevertheless, the problem can be partly addressed by recognizing the dangers of over-generalizing and utilizing all available clues as to the identity and location of the Cree who are mentioned in the early literature.

#### 1.4.2 NOMENCLATURE

There is a lack of formal agreement on the nomenclature of various Canadian Indian groups. Use has been made of the "Glossary of Indian Tribes" of the Dictionary of Canadian Biography and, where possible, the Handbook of North American Indians. However, there are occasional differences between accepted Canadian and American forms.

A particular problem concerns those eighteenth century Cree groups for which there are no agreed forms, whose spellings vary widely in the records and whose original Cree form is either not clear, or differs from the anglicized form. An attempt has been made to select nomenclatures which will be recognizable in the historic sources and which



reflect, sometimes distantly, the Cree source. The following forms have been selected as being more appropriate than forms previously used (cf. Russell 1982b, 1988):

Muscotay, Askee, Susuhana, Pegogamaw and Keskachewan.

Following Hugh A. Dempsey (1986:8), the Blackfoot Nation includes the Blackfoot, Blood and Peigan while the Blackfoot Confederacy also includes their nineteenth century allies, the Sarcee and Atsina (Gros Ventre). "Peigan" is the official Canadian form of the American "Piegan" (p.28 note).

The term "Archithinue" is discussed in detail (see section 12.2 below). Briefly, it was the anglicized form of the Cree word for stranger and referred to any group which was neither Cree nor Assiniboin.

Following a growing Canadian usage, "Assiniboin" refers to the tribal group while "Assiniboine" refers to the river. It should be pointed out that in the HBC records, the Assiniboin were called, from the Cree term, the Assinipoet or simply the Poet or Stone Indians.

The form "Naywatamee Poets" has been selected as better following Cree pronunciation than the form "Naywatame Poet."

#### 1.4.3 CANOE ROUTES TO THE BAY

There was a network of river systems by which the trading Indians could reach the Bay. However, groups were relatively consistent in the general routes they used.

Unlike Indians from the Saskatchewan area, those from southern Manitoba seemed unafraid of the open expanse of Lake Winnipeg. They travelled to modern Norway House by way of either Lake Winnipeg itself or through Lake Winnipegosis, Mossy Portage, Cedar Lake and Grand Rapids. They then reached Oxford Lake and the upper Hayes by way of the Echimamish River.

Groups from the Saskatchewan River had a choice of two routes (Morse 1979:44-47). Persons using the Middle Track travelled to the Hayes River by way of Cedar Lake, the Minago River and Cross Lake. The Upper Track followed Cumberland Lake to Split Lake by way of the Sturgeon-weir and Grass rivers. From here either the Hayes or the more dangerous lower Nelson was taken.

Fort Churchill was reached either by way of the Churchill River itself or from Cumberland Lake by way of the Sturgeon-weir and Kississing rivers. At the same time, groups from the upper Churchill reached York Factory by way of the Burntwood River and Split Lake. These groups particularly seem to have used the lower Nelson.

## 1.5 THE NATURE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE HISTORICAL DATA

### 1.5.1 SOURCES OF DATA

Except for the three month journal kept by Henry Kelsey (1929) during his journey in eastern Saskatchewan in the summer of 1691, there is no detailed first-hand account of

the western interior until Anthony Henday's journal written during his trip from York Factory to central Alberta in 1754-1755. Although at least four Frenchmen were sent inland from York Factory in the 1690s (Kelsey 1929:84,111; Lindsay 1873:141-142) and three expeditions were sent to the northwest by the HBC in the early 1700s (HBCA B.239/a/1,2; B.42/d/1; Knight 1932:132) no journals and very few details have survived of these ventures.

Apart from the records of the HBC, the earliest data on the Western Cree are found in the several general accounts of the Bay resulting from the sporadic French occupation of posts in the York Factory area written between 1682-1714 (Jérémie 1926; La Potherie 1968; Marest 1968; Radisson 1961; Silvy 1968). Little is known of the French traders who entered the west between 1730 and 1760. Although there are many documents from the La Vérendryes (La Vérendrye 1968), these are not daily journals but rather general letters, reports and memoranda which give few details of Indian groups. Further, the La Vérendryes did not penetrate west beyond the lower delta of the Saskatchewan River. The only other data comes from a second-hand account of the founding of Fort La Jonquière on the Saskatchewan written in southern Manitoba (Saint Pierre 1887).

Neither La Vérendrye nor Saint Pierre mention the presence in the west of French "Wood-runners" or coureurs de bois although they were mentioned by the HBC as early as

1716 and again in 1732 (HBCA B.239/a/2 3 August 1716; B.239/a/14 June 16 1732). At least one such person, Joseph la France, described his experiences in southern Manitoba between 1740 -1742. His account however, was recorded in London by an early critic of the HBC who interpreted it in light of earlier published French accounts from the Bay. The published version is so vague and distorted as to be almost useless (Dobbs 1967:29-39; Great Britain 1749a:xvi-xxxi).

After the withdrawal of the French from the west in 1760 as a result of the Seven Years' War, traders from Montreal reappeared in the west in the late 1760s where they competed with the HBC until the North West Company was amalgamated under the HBC in 1821. Very little data has survived from these Montreal traders or Pedlars as they were known to the HBC and the few extant journals are mainly from after 1790.

Although there are occasional references to named Cree groups in these various accounts from the French and Montreal traders, very often the names differ from those found in the HBC records. As a result it is not possible to correlate the two bodies of information. Thus the Assinipoel and Assiniboin of the French are the Poet and Assinipoet of the HBC, the Eagle-eyed Indians and Kinougeoulini of the French seem to have no HBC equivalents, while it is not clear if the Cree of the Prairie referred to by La Vérendrye are the same as the Muscotay Indians

mentioned in the HBC records 25 years earlier.

Certainly, the largest body of data concerning the Western Cree are the data from the HBC posts established in the York Factory area after 1682 and at Fort Churchill after 1717. Most of the data from before 1714, when the HBC regained control of Hudson Bay, are missing. It was not until the Parliamentary Inquiry of the HBC in 1749 that a strict policy towards the lending of materials was enforced. Nevertheless, most of the daily journals and account books written after 1714 are extant. The most important missing records are several of the annual reports as well as most of the inter-post correspondence, although the latter may never have been forwarded. The inter-post letters often gave information about specific inland groups which was either not mentioned in the journals and annual reports or described only in very general terms. For example, a letter from York Factory might mention that the Sturgeon Indians failed to come to trade because they had gone to war whereas the General letter to London might say only that some unidentified Indians had gone to war.

Of greater importance is the loss of records due to the capture of York Factory and Fort Churchill by the French in August 1782. Although the posts were re-established late the following summer, the result is that the only accounts of the smallpox epidemic are from the inland posts at Cumberland and Hudson Houses. Thus a general perspective on

the effects of the epidemic are absent. As well, it was at this time when the Pedlars were establishing posts in the west, especially in the Athabasca area. It is unclear how much the decline of the HBC trade was due to mortality in the epidemic and how much to the change in allegiance to the Pedlars because of the lack of HBC goods.

The published early first-hand accounts of the west basic to any discussion of Cree history were all written by persons who arrived after the smallpox epidemic of 1781 when the established Cree groups had become extinct (e.g. Franklin 1970; Gates 1965; Harmon 1957; Henry the Younger 1965; Mackenzie 1970; M'Gillivray 1929; Masson 1960; Tanner 1956; Thompson 1968, 1962; Tyrrell 1934; Umfreville 1954). The few eighteenth century first-hand published accounts which pre-date the epidemic neither describe the various Indian groups in detail, nor present historical sketches of the various groups, nor describe the west as a whole (e.g. Cocking 1908; Dobbs 1967; Hearne 1958; Henday 1907; Henry the Elder 1969; La Vérendrye 1968; Rich 1951, 1952; Saint Pierre 1887 Tyrrell 1934).

Thus the post-epidemic data either reflect a situation much different from the early historic period when the Cree were said to be moving west or are from an earlier period but present no general overview by which the distribution of various groups could be determined. One means to escape this impasse is through the journals of the various HBC

employees who travelled inland from York Factory to winter with Cree groups between 1754 and 1775. The most useful of these have been published (Henday 1907; Cocking 1908). However, another nine journals remain unpublished and largely unknown except for several summaries, sometimes inaccurate, in Morton (1973) and to a lesser extent in Ray (1974). These are examined in some detail because of their importance in giving details of the daily movements of the Cree, even though several are almost unintelligible.

#### 1.5.2 THE NATURE OF THE DATA

There are surprisingly few data about the inland groups in the HBC records. The daily entries in the annual journals were in the nature of ship's logs. Most entries are brief including only the weather and wind direction, the daily chores assigned to employees, a mention of any men on sick call and any other information regarding the operation of the post which would be of interest to London. Thus the number and length of stay of Indians coming to the post were recorded as well as their purpose: to trade, to gain relief against famine, or to participate in the semi-annual goose hunts. However, the London office was not interested in the identity of either individuals or groups and as a result, these are seldom identified. Events which might affect the trade were mentioned such as warfare, disease, famine,

extreme weather conditions, the presence of French and, later, Montreal traders, and the shift in allegiance of a group from one post to another. Again, however, these were usually mentioned in only general terms.

The information most consistently given in the journals concerns the numbers of canoes arriving to trade in the summer. The value of such data varies widely. Most useful is the specific identification of a single group of canoes: e.g. 15 canoes of Susuhana Indians. Of some use are the descriptions of mixed flotillas: e.g. 75 canoes of Susuhana, Sturgeon, Keskatchewan and Assini Poets. Of little value are the majority of entries: e.g. 90 canoes of trading Indians. In this regard there was a great difference between the Fort Churchill journals in which the identities of the trading Indians are only rarely given and those from York Factory where they more often occur, at least between 1730 and 1760.

In great part, the lack of information regarding the interior was a result of the lack of knowledge about the inland geography. Details and maps were not available until after Henday's journey of 1754. At the same time, it appears that information about the interior which was of interest to the London Committee was not included in the journals and annual reports because it had already been communicated in person when the chief factors returned to England on leave. To what extent this occurred is not known



since no records exist of these conversations. Isham (1949), Graham (1969) and Falconer (PAC MG 19 D 2) all wrote descriptions of the Bay between 1743 and the late 1700s, apparently for the benefit of the London office, although, as E.E. Rich (Isham 1949:lxvi) suggests in the case of Isham, their efforts seem largely to have been ignored.

Throughout the eighteenth century documents, there is a lack of reference to geographical details which is difficult for a twentieth-century observer to understand. Cases in point are Anthony Henday's failure to describe the Rocky Mountains and La Vérendrye's failure to describe, and even to visit, the Missouri River while visiting the Mandan. For the HBC personnel at the Bay, this may reflect attitudes towards a hinterland whose features were not of direct importance. Yet a similar inattention to the landscape is found in the journals of the HBC employees sent inland between 1753-1774. The result is that few geographical details of the inland were recorded until the late 1700s.

It is impossible to control for distortions in the data, either accidental or deliberate, when, as is often the case, there is only one source to depend upon. The HBC daily journals were transcribed in fair copy before being sent to London and several rough copies still in existence show some errors of transcription in, for example, the numbers of trading canoes. Similarly, the memoranda

occasionally show differences from the journals in the date of arrival, numbers and identifications of trading canoes. Certainly, there were difficulties in transcribing Cree names. Common Cree terms were quickly anglicized but this, at times, has hidden the original Cree meaning, e.g. the Susuhana Cree.

Since these were primarily business records, the factors were anxious to place themselves in a good light and were quick to excuse a fall in trade in any season. Similarly, the Indians themselves often gave excuses for not coming to trade, especially when inland posts were established by the French and Pedlars. The various excuses include inclement winters, the outbreak of disease, inter-group warfare and the presence of Canadian traders. Very often the excuses were valid, but in at least one case a false excuse was given. Isham, who was factor at Churchill, said that the decline of trade was because the Indians had a "natural aversion" to the post due to its northern location (B.42/a/27 22 June 1745). However, his successor wrote that it was a result of Isham's mistreatment of the Indians (HBCA A.11/13 30 July 1746).

It is also difficult to know how much allowance should be made for exaggeration. This is particularly true for James Knight who said much of his attempts to establish the inland trade in the 1710s and from whom we have most of our early information on these groups. Knight had suffered a

great deal, especially after his supply ship failed to arrive in 1715, and he pointed out the effect this would have on the trading Indians. He described the great numbers of Athapaskans who were potential customers if he could only provide them with guns as protection against the Cree.

However, his successor cast doubt upon Knight's comments - which were often bitter and self-serving - by saying that

all the marten Indians and cat Indians, besides many other nations so much talked of by Knight and his hangers-on, does not exceed two hundred families (Davies 1965:94).

His tendency to exaggeration calls into question other important statements, such as that over 1000 Assiniboin were killed due to the lack of ammunition to protect themselves (HBCA B.239/a/2 22 April 1716) or that 5000-6000 Chipewyan had been killed by the Cree (ibid: 6 May 1716) or that he was establishing a peace for 1000 miles from south to northwest (ibid: 8 May 1716).

These problems with the historical sources - ambiguity, loss of records, omissions, errors and exaggerations - are counter-balanced in this study in several ways. First, reliance was not placed on a single source of data. Second, the data from an entire period was examined. A serious attempt was made to review all the historic data both published and archival up to, at least, the 1790s. The only records which were not examined in detail were the HBC records from James Bay which would have had little relevance

to the western interior except for the possible survival of some inter-post correspondence.

## 1.6 THE COURSE OF THE CREE MIGRATION

The Cree and Assiniboin are said to have moved west because of their dependency on European trade goods and the consequent need for new areas for fur exploitation. They were enabled to defeat adjacent groups through their possession of firearms. This thesis will not treat the topic of the participation of the Cree in the fur trade, nor of Cree warfare. However, several aspects of these should be mentioned.

### 1.6.1 CREE PARTICIPATION IN THE FUR TRADE

The European bias of observers has been responsible for exaggerating the dependency of the Cree on the fur trade. There are few, if any data to suggest that the Cree were forced to invade the west because of their need for more furs. The number of individuals who were dependent on, or even involved with, the trade is not clear. Thus, Mandelbaum's description of their dependency during the period 1690-1740 borders on caricature:

Knives, forks, pots, and axes soon became indispensable to the native life.... The Cree at once grasped the potentialities of the gun in defeating their enemies and in easing the

rigors of the hunt.... They soon had little use for the bow. Before long they became strongly addicted to whiskey and Brazil tobacco (Mandelbaum 1979:30).

As early as the 1710s it was said that the Cree and Assiniboin had lost the use of bows and that the lack of ammunition might well cause them to starve to death or be killed by their enemies (e.g. Jérémie 1926:40; Knight 1932:149; Ray 1974:21). Yet there are ample references to the use of the bow until, at least, the early 1800s (e.g. Franklin 1970:113; Harmon 1957:209; Henry the Younger 1965:513).

Although it is not known how much ammunition an individual needed for a year, Andrew Graham (1969:276-277) said, that on average, each Indian traded six pounds of powder and twenty of shot. Graham's average was close: in 1766, for example, 260 canoes traded an average of 8.6 pounds of powder and 18.7 pounds of shot per canoe. Yet the HBC hunters at the Bay were allowed one pound of shot and powder in proportion for each 20 geese or 40 ptarmigan they killed in Graham's time (1969:192). Although the hunters at the Bay were given extra ammunition for themselves, an average of 6 pounds of powder would not get a Cree hunter through the winter. Clearly, they were not depending solely on guns.

Cree who planned on trading with the Pedlars in the fall rather than going to the Bay in the summer would have

been disappointed in some years. For example, the posts on the Red Deer River failed to bring powder in 1757 and 1758 and were low in supplies by late winter in 1774 and 1775. Data are available for these years only because HBC inland winterers were nearby. It is not known how frequently such failures occurred. Consequently, even for Indians trading at the Bay, there was relatively little powder inland and the presence of Pedlar's posts did not guarantee a ready supply.

It is clear that only a few Cree were involved in the fur trade if the numbers of trading canoes are considered. Assuming an average of two men per canoe, which is too high an estimate (see section 7.5 below), from 500 to 800 men were trading annually from the entire area west of the Ontario border. The maximum number of canoes trading at both York Factory and Fort Churchill between 1717 and 1770 ranged from a low of about 220 canoes in 1722 to a high of about 440 canoes in 1731 and 1739. In 1764, 1765 and 1766 when the French had abandoned the west and the only traders were the HBC at the Bay, only 351, 357 and 342 canoes traded in the respective seasons. This was a maximum of some 700 men. Yet Tomison reported a camp of 200 tents, or at least 400 men, near Fort Dauphin in 1770 (HBCA B.239/a/64 1 June 1770) while Henry the Elder saw two camps totalling 300 tents of two to four families each, or 600-1200 men, in the Touchwood Hills in 1775 (Henry the Elder 1969:295, 316). It has been suggested that each canoe brought goods from

several other individuals remaining inland, yet the average number of goods traded per canoe is closer to the average that Graham said was traded per person. Even assuming individuals only traded every two or three years, the Cree and Assiniboin populations are much under-represented. Henry the Younger, whose figures are low, thought there were some 2000 Assiniboin males and 900 Cree males on the plains alone circa 1809.

It is difficult to obtain information on fur depletions before the 1780s. Although there are references to the scarcity of fur animals, these are often contradictory. Beaver were said to be depleted along the Beaver River yet a short distance up river, they were said to be plentiful (HBCA B.239/a/58 19 October, 13 November 1767). Similarly furs were said to be hunted out along the Shell/Sturgeon rivers west of Prince Albert but the Indians were given presents to encourage them to trap (ibid:20,27 August 1767). Beaver were numerous on the main Saskatchewan River in 1763 despite its importance as a travel route and the presence of nearby French posts since 1740 (HBCA B.239/a/52 August 1763). Cocking found many beaver in Eagle Creek in 1772 though this had been an important area from at least Henday's time (Cocking 1908:106). Again, he reported many beaver on the upper Red Deer and Assiniboine rivers in 1774 though there had been posts in the immediate vicinity since the 1750s. Although the evidence is anecdotal, there is

nothing to suggest that fur depletions were causing problems for the local Cree and Assiniboin, although this situation changed when intense competition started in the 1790s.

#### 1.6.2 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CREE WARFARE

For individual Cree, particularly for those Cree in the parklands for whom there are the most data, the opportunity to participate in raiding expeditions was just as important as, if not more important than, the journey to the Bay. While Matthew Cocking was on the North Saskatchewan, he observed that

they own these [war] Expeditions cause them to undergo great hardships and besides are distressed for want of Ammunition and Tobacco for Two Years after but the [desire to raid] seems to be above all difficulties B.239/a/69 March 28 1773).

It would seem that in any one year, some Cree were involved in raiding activities but the frequency for any one group is not known. There is some evidence that raids increased in frequency after the establishment of inland posts. According to William Walker, who had gone inland to Cumberland House in 1775 and became master at Hudson House in 1781,

I can remember the time altho' it is but a few years that they did not go to War above Once in Three, but now they have got such great supplies of Ammunition that...they go every Year (Rich 1952:262).



William Tomison made a similar observation: "what I must observe nothing more encourages these natives to go to wares then trading Houses Settled inland" (HBCA B.239/a/64 29 March 1770). These comments may refer to an increase in the amount of participation rather than frequency of raids, despite Walker's comments. Each of the inland HBC winterers reported raiding activities each year they were inland between 1754 and 1774. Before the establishment of any inland posts the Sturgeon Cree were said to go on raids every second year, rather than going to the Bay (HBCA B.239/a/22 4 July 1741).

The HBC were interested in raiding activities since their occurrence meant the Indians would not be down to the Bay to trade. In the several reasons given for raids, the seeking of new territories is never mentioned. Instead, the motivation was for revenge for a death in the group whether from past raids, disease or accident.

...if any person Dyes with Sickness or is Killed a Monkst them then the Must Gow to war with the Other Natives Calld Ye,artch a thyne a Wok and Kill as Many as the Con of them and then the Say that the are Eaven with them for the Death of Thare Frend or Frends (HBCA B.239/a/58 26 September 1767).

James Knight had made a similar comment much earlier: "the Devil must have so many [deaths] Every year and if they can but kill their Enemy's they be Spared themselves" (HBCA B.239/a/3 17 April 1717).

Further, the records indicate that raids were not

usually carried out on immediate neighbours but on groups lying beyond an intervening group, who themselves may or may not have been Cree. This would be especially practical for groups whose junior males were trading at the Bay. Thus the western parkland Cree groups did not attack the neighbouring Blackfoot groups but instead joined them in raids against more distant groups to the south and west (e.g. Thompson 1968; Henday 1907). The Cree of the Athabasca at least tolerated the neighbouring Chipewyan but raided other Athapaskans down the Mackenzie River (Mackenzie 1970). At the same time, Cree from the Cumberland House area attacked groups in the Athabasca district (Rich 1951:15, 94; HBCA B.42/a/56 30 June 1762). This leapfrogging aspect of Cree raids would certainly not lead immediately to territorial expansion. However, the long term effects may have been for the target populations to gradually retreat. However, it is difficult to explain the Cree presence in the far west at an early date as a result of this sort of warfare.

Townsend (1983) has demonstrated that early guns gave little superiority beyond the fright they caused by their noise. Early muskets were not efficient weapons, especially for quick raids rather than set battles. In fact, Saukamappee said that the first result of armed warfare was the cessation of such set battles as had been formerly practiced (Thompson 1968:335). Difficulties in reloading caused problems in mounted warfare after horses were

introduced on the plains before the mid-1700s. There were simple difficulties like trying to keep the powder dry (HBCA B.239/a/8 28 August 1726). Further, most groups were out of powder and shot by mid-winter and these commodities were not available again until they returned from the Bay in mid-summer unless inland posts were nearby. Thus supplies were limited for any raids carried out in the spring or early summer. Although some of the Blackfoot groups were later said to store up the powder they occasionally traded from the Cree, this meant they had to kill all "beasts" with bows (HBCA B.239/a/69 4 November 1772).

This is not to say that the possession of guns did not give the Cree an advantage in war. However, it is difficult to see that either the nature of Cree raids or the advantages from guns enabled them, before 1740, to have "swept over the Gros Ventre and Blackfoot in the west, and the Athapascans to the north" (Mandelbaum 1979:31).

## 2. DAVID MANDELBAUM: THE WESTERN MIGRATION OF THE CREE

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was taken for granted that the Cree and Assiniboin had invaded the west as a result of the introduction of the fur trade. It was not until 1940 that a serious attempt was made to document the event through historic sources. That year the American Museum of Natural History published The Plains Cree, part of David Mandelbaum's doctoral dissertation completed four years earlier: Changes in an Aboriginal Culture Following a Change in Environment, as Exemplified by the Plains Cree. The published portion formed two parts: the history of the Plains Cree between 1640 and 1880, the period in which they were to have moved from northwestern Ontario to the northern plains; and a reconstruction of Plains Cree life as it was in 1860-1870.

In recent years, there was a need for a more accessible edition of Mandelbaum's work. Not only was it the only study of a western Cree group but, until Arthur Ray's (1974) study of the fur trade, it was one of the few historical studies of a western Canadian Indian group. In 1979 a new edition was published which has since been reprinted: The Plains Cree: An Ethnographic, Historical and Comparative

Study. This new work incorporates the remaining section of Mandelbaum's dissertation: a comparison of the Plains Cree with both their eastern woodland and western plains neighbours.

Mandelbaum's work is considered authoritative on the Cree presence in the west and their effect on other Indian groups of the northern plains. Although the study is 50 years old, no critical analysis has been made of his use of sources. However, his use of the data and his conclusions are marked by internal inconsistencies, omissions and, to a lesser extent, errors of fact that are readily apparent on even a casual reading. The fact that he had serious problems in documenting the migration of the western Cree suggests that the historical sources must be re-examined. Before doing so, it is necessary to review the major problems in the history of the Cree, as developed by Mandelbaum and other nineteenth and twentieth scholars.

## 2.2 MANDELBAUM'S HISTORY OF THE WESTERN CREE

For Mandelbaum, the historical documents showed that the Cree had moved west after the introduction of the fur trade, especially with the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. There were four stages to this movement by which the Cree reached the west and modified their culture from an Eastern Woodlands to a Plains mode of adaptation:

In the period of earliest contact with Europeans [1640-1690], the Cree ... lived in the forests between Hudson Bay and Lake Superior.... There is no hint that they were reaching westward in the seventeenth century.

The period from 1690 to 1740 witnessed the establishment of trading posts in the Cree country.... and [they] became dependent upon trade goods. When intensive trapping exhausted the faunal resources ... they were forced westward to exploit fresh territory. Armed with guns, they were able to force out the former inhabitants.... These forces brought the Cree close to the prairies; their function as middlemen ... sent them deep into the lands beyond the scope of their conquests.

From 1740 to 1820 the Cree were expanding to their widest limits. Although some bands were out on the plains, they had not completely severed themselves from the forest. Toward the end of the period, the Cree on the prairies had largely ceased to waver between the two environments and were abandoning excursions into the woodlands.

The final era [1820-1880] found the invaders firmly established in the plains as a true plains tribe. They waged an unremitting warfare with the Blackfoot [and] were probably taking on new cultural forms ... (Mandelbaum 1979:45-46).

Mandelbaum documented these four stages through published primary sources. Little has been added to this body of published data since his day. Although Mandelbaum did not have access to the HBC archives, these materials have done little to encourage a re-examination of his conclusions since inland posts were not established until after 1774. Further, the major journals of the pre-1774 HBC inland travellers, those of Henry Kelsey (1929), Anthony Henday (1907) and Matthew Cocking (1908) were available to Mandelbaum. The few unpublished journals (Chapter Six below)

do not contradict the information available to him since they were often of inferior quality and simply mirror the situation of the published accounts.

The underlying problem with Mandelbaum's history of the Cree and their neighbours is not that he had insufficient data but that he interpreted the material within a body of preconceptions. These preconceptions, widespread before Mandelbaum's time, did not arise from direct observations of the Cree but can be traced to a single source, Sir Alexander Mackenzie (see Chapter Three below).

### 2.3 FIRST CONTACTS, 1640-1690

For Mandelbaum (1979:20), "The first fifty years of documented history reveal the Cree as a nomadic people occupying much the same territory between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay as do the Eastern Cree today," including the area from Lake Nipigon east to James Bay (p.16). He also feels that initially, their access to trade goods was through the Sioux who, in turn, obtained them from the French through Ottawa and Saulteaux middlemen, a misreading of the discussion in Innis (1962:44). The Cree themselves took on this latter role "following the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company at the mouth of the Nelson River in 1670" (Mandelbaum 1979:20). Although the Cree of this period were powerful and feared by their enemies, especially

the Dakota, they "[had] not yet acquired firearms to any extent, and [were] eager to obtain trade goods" (p.20).

Mandelbaum's main sources for this period were the seventeenth century letters and reports in the Jesuit Relations (see Chapter Four below). The Cree, known as the Kilistinous or its many variants, are first named in the Relations of 1640. A later Relation, that of 1656-58, described four divisions of the Cree whom the editor of the English edition of the Relations described as living "in the region of Lake Nipigon, in the country west of James Bay, between lake Nipigon and Moose River, and along the East Main River" (Mandelbaum 1979:16).

In 1667-68, Father Allouez (Mandelbaum 1979:16) wrote that the Cree, who "have their usual abode on the shores of the North Sea," travelled on a river entering a great bay which he believed to be Hudson Bay. Dablon, in 1669, met Cree at the fishery at Sault Ste. Marie where famine had driven them from their lands near the North Sea. That same year, Marquette wrote that though their rendezvous was still not known, apparently a reference to the spring aggregation sites, they lived northwest of the Sault but travelled there in the summer to trade for corn. In 1670-71, Dablon also said that the Cree were dispersed through the whole area north of Lake Superior. From these sources, Mandelbaum (1979:17) concluded "it seems that the territory between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay was then occupied by Cree bands



intermingled with bands of various other tribes." There may well have been Cree further west but the French were as yet unacquainted with those lands.

From accounts written between 1658 and 1661 by Radisson and Perrot as well as the Relation of 1672-74, Mandelbaum demonstrates that the Cree, who by 1661 were allied with the Assiniboin, were establishing their propensity for conquest by carrying out successful raids against the Dakota.

The Jesuit missionaries quickly realized the problems in trying to work with the small nomadic groups scattered in northwestern Ontario. By the late 1600s, the area was ignored as the missionaries and the fur traders turned their attention to the larger, more sedentary groups living south of Lake Superior. Mandelbaum appears to have realized this change of focus: "it is hardly to be expected that the early priests and traders could have known of the lands beyond Hudson Bay or even about Lake Winnipeg" (1979:20). Yet, he immediately continues, "there is not the slightest evidence that the Cree had a westward extension. Their travels were strictly in a north and south direction" (p.20). Thus, Mandelbaum's several statements that the Cree did not extend beyond Lake Superior before 1690 were based solely on the lack of data for that area, not on evidence that the Cree were not found there. However, as Mandelbaum later reveals, there was clear evidence from 17th century observers on Hudson Bay of both Cree and Assiniboin west of Lake

Winnipeg.

#### 2.4 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FUR TRADE, 1690-1740

Mandelbaum, like most scholars writing in this period, assumed that Indian groups had an overriding need to obtain European trade goods. Thus, in his view, the fur trade necessarily effected rapid and profound changes in Cree life. These changes were triggered by the establishment of the HBC in 1670 which gave the Cree direct access to European goods by way of the posts on the western shores of James and Hudson Bay. By 1740, they had become dependent on the fur trade posts not only for weapons, tools, utensils and clothing but also for tobacco and liquor (1979:29-30).

The thrust of Mandelbaum's argument is that the rapid involvement of the Cree in the fur trade was a result of several factors. The fur traders were themselves forced to penetrate into Cree territory when the areas around their settlements became depleted of beaver (p.29). Because the Cree already hunted over a wide territory in small groups and because they were adept in using canoes, they were able to trap beaver efficiently and transport the hides to the trading posts (p.30). Their familiarity with the trade meant they were eminently suited to become middlemen. Further, their access to guns enabled them to "reach into far lands [and] repel the previous inhabitants" (p.30). In

these efforts, they were motivated "by their insatiable desires for liquor and tobacco" (p.30); the depletion of furs in their own lands; increases in the cost of European goods; and the frequent squandering of a year's labour "in one grand spree" that forced them to work even harder to obtain more goods (p.30).

As a result of these factors, the Cree, within 100 years of the arrival of the whites, had moved west. In the process "the wave of Cree conquest swept over the Gros Ventre and Blackfoot in the west, and the Athapascans to the north" (p.31). Thus by 1740, the conquering Cree had reached "the fringes of the prairie country" while, according to Mandelbaum, as middlemen, they "travelled into the plains to carry goods to distant tribes" (p.31), apparently the same groups they were attacking.

Mandelbaum explicitly states that the 17th century Cree did not extend beyond northwestern Ontario (1979:20,45,261,). However, he contradicts himself by suggesting that the Cree occupied a more western area than his argument supposes. Referring to Emile Petitot (1883), Mandelbaum (1979:24) writes that even "before the advent of the English," the Cree were pushing back Athapaskan groups from Lake Athabasca to Great Slave Lake. In a curious aside, he also writes that "we cannot be certain, it is true, that buffalo hunting was not occasionally practiced by some Cree before the advent of Europeans" (p.262).

Mandelbaum begins his discussion of the post-1690 migration of the Cree by referring to 17th century observers on Hudson Bay. Yet these writers all describe Cree and Assiniboin around or west of Lake Winnipeg before 1700. Most important are the first-hand observations made by Henry Kelsey during his journey inland in 1690-92. Although Mandelbaum gives no hint of Kelsey's itinerary, his editors place him on the Saskatchewan plains beyond Red Deer River (Kelsey 1929:xxxviii n.2), a position still accepted today. Mandelbaum (1979:29) considered Kelsey's guides to the area to be Cree without noticing that Kelsey describes himself with groups clearly adapted to plains bison hunting (Kelsey 1929:13,14). In fact, his guides were Assiniboin (Kelsey 1929:xx) as were, apparently the several camps he mentions meeting in his three-month journal. Yet Kelsey gives strong inferential evidence for Cree in the area. His geographical features are named in Cree, his Assiniboin are anxious to take good care of him for fear of reprisals from the Cree, and the Cree attacked the Naywatamee Poets whom Kelsey had travelled so far out into the plains to meet. Although Mandelbaum (p.21) discusses these last two points, he fails to notice their relevance in establishing the presence of western Cree in 1691.

According to Mandelbaum (p.21), the Cree "in the twenty years that the Hudson's Bay posts had been established, were already firmly entrenched as middlemen...." Kelsey is

silent in this regard. However the statement reveals a curious error on the part of Mandelbaum in light of the importance he places on the introduction of the fur trade. He (p.20) writes that "posts were established at the mouth of the Nelson, Moose, and Albany rivers" in 1670. Thus he thought that Kelsey's observations were of groups with twenty years experience with the fur trade. In fact, Moose Factory was established in 1674, Fort Albany in 1679 and the Nelson River posts near York Factory in 1682. Kelsey's groups had only eight year's exposure to direct trade at Nelson River while there is no evidence that they travelled to James Bay.

The 17th century French observers at the Port Nelson posts clearly show the Cree were far west of Lake Superior, although little was known of the inland geography. Father Silvy wrote in 1685 that the "village" of the Cree and Assiniboin lay beyond Lake Winnipeg, 15 or 20 days inland (Mandelbaum 1979:22). Father Marest, in 1695, wrote that the Cree and Assiniboin were the most distant tribes while he called Lake Winnipeg the "Lake of the Cree" (p.22). In 1697, La Potherie described the Cree as "a numerous people with an immense territory. They extend as far as Lake Superior" (p.23). He (1968:259) also wrote that the true country of the Cree was Lake Michinipi or Lake Winnipeg, an observation not noticed by Mandelbaum.

Mandelbaum next refers to the various papers of the La

Vérendryes who established the first French posts west of Ontario in the 1730s and 1740s. Here there is mention of the Cree of the Prairies in a memorandum dated to circa 1749, which Mandelbaum dates to 1730. These Cree, along with the Canoe Assiniboin, had asked that Fort Dauphin, west of Lake Manitoba, be established. The memorandum states that La Vérendrye's son ascended the Saskatchewan "as far as the fork [the area of The Pas, Manitoba], which is the rendezvous every spring of the Cree of the Mountains, Prairies, and Rivers to deliberate as to what they should do- go and trade with the French or with the English" (Mandelbaum 1979:26; La Vérendrye 1927:487).

For Mandelbaum, this is the "first authentic and plausible notice in the literature that the Cree were living in the plains country south of the Saskatchewan...it appears that in 1730 [sic], a good part of the tribe was already out on the prairies" (p.26). Other Cree bands were found at the mouth of the Winnipeg River, on Lake Winnipegosis, and on the northeast shore and to the south of Lake Winnipeg. Apart from the brief discussion of Petitot's remarks on Cree in the Lake Athabasca area, Mandelbaum makes no mention of Cree west of the present Manitoba/Saskatchewan border. Yet he (p.25) states that the La Vérendryes, who mention only trading with Cree and Assiniboin, had established posts "almost to the Rockies" (p.25), an opinion questioned by La Vérendrye's editor (La

Vérendrye 1927:491 n.1; Heday 1907:319) and now rejected (Morton 1973:237).

The period 1690 - 1740, according to Mandelbaum (1979:31), was marked by the arrival of the Cree only as far as the fringes of the prairies although they carried out long-distance trade with tribes further west. This conclusion is largely drawn from the La Vérendrye papers where only Cree and Assiniboin groups of the eastern parklands are described. Quite simply, the lack of references to a more western distribution of the Cree was because La Vérendrye never travelled northward from the south end of Lake Winnipeg and his sons did not go west of The Pas, Manitoba (La Vérendrye 1927). Again, Mandelbaum interprets the absence of data regarding the western Cree to mean the Cree themselves were absent from the west.

## 2.5 CONQUEST OF THE WESTERN FORESTS, 1740-1820.

There are two themes in Mandelbaum's discussion of the period 1740-1820: the expansion of the Cree to their widest limits and their movement onto the plains where they still maintained ties to the forest. It is not surprising, given his dissertation topic, that he focuses on these ties. However his discussion is hampered by a simplistic view of vegetation zones.

For Mandelbaum, in his discussion of Plains Cree

history, there are only the plains and the forest: "the two environments" (pp.35, 46); "the transition from forests to plains" (p.31); "... not yet totally sundered from the forest" (p.40); "... broke with the Woodlands entirely and remained on the plains" (p.262). There is no mention of the parkland, the large aspen belt which, today, in Saskatchewan, is almost equal to the plains in extent. Yet in the Introduction to his study, Mandelbaum makes clear reference to the importance of the parkland for the Plains Cree:

The Plains Cree live on the northern edge of the Great Plains, chiefly in the Park Belt, the transitional area between the forests and plains. They have occupied this territory only since the beginning of the nineteenth century, for it was formerly inhabited by the Assiniboin and Gros Ventre in the eastern part and by the Blackfoot in the western section.

The Canadian Park belt, within which the Plains Cree lived, is ... characterized by luxuriant grass vegetation and dotted with patches of hilly woodland (1979:7-8).

Because Mandelbaum then ceases to identify the parklands as an intermediate zone between the forest and plains, he is forced to regard any movement of some Cree bands from the prairies as being directed to the forest. These ties to the forest, which supposedly characterize the Cree until 1820, are in turn used to support the assumption that the Cree were only recent migrants from it.

During this period, from 1740 to 1820, Cree groups had entered the plains but, even at the end of the period "had



not completely severed themselves from the forest" (Mandelbaum 1979:46. This conclusion is reached through recourse to a series of observations recorded by traders in the latter half of the period. As we shall see, Mandelbaum's interpretations of these data are seriously flawed.

The historic basis for believing that the Cree were seasonally "shuttling in and out of the prairies" (p.31) was derived from autobiographical details of Saukamappee dating to the 1730s (Thompson 1968:328-344; see below section 6.2). Saukamappee was a Cree who was later adopted by the Peigan. As a youth he had joined them in several battles against the Snake or Shoshone. In his account, Saukamappee spoke both of Cree and Assiniboin camps within five days travel of the borders of the Snake and of his parents travelling to the "low country of the lakes," seemingly the lower Saskatchewan Delta. Thus, the westernmost Cree in 1730, were familiar with the far plains while still utilizing the forested lake country far to the east (Mandelbaum 1979: 31-32.)

Other accounts are used to show that the Cree were still centered east of the prairies. Arthur Dobbs (1967), writing in 1744, "knew something about the prairies and their inhabitants, [yet] it is significant that he does not mention Plains Cree" (Mandelbaum 1973:32). Instead he described the true country of the Cree as being about "a

great lake, called Michinipi" while the boundary between the Assiniboin and Cree was formed by Lake Winnipeg (p.32).

Mandelbaum (p.32-33) supports this eastern distribution of the Cree through Jonathan Carver's (1774) remarks learned at Grand Portage from visiting Cree and Assiniboin from the lower Assiniboine River: "the Cree dwell mainly about Lake Winnipeg, and along the Nelson River" (Mandelbaum 1979:33).

Evidence that the Cree were shuttling between the plains and in the forests in the late 1700s is found in the journals of Matthew Cocking (1908) and Edward Umfreville (1954). Cocking, a HBC employee, wintered near the North Saskatchewan River in 1772-73. Here, he described Cree and Assiniboin travelling to the east to trap wolves and pound bison while his own group later joined a mixed camp of Assiniboin, Cree and Blackfoot at a pound. Cocking's group later built canoes in order to travel to the Bay. Thus, Cocking was observing "Cree sufficiently acculturated to Plains life to build bison pounds [while] they had not yet given up the use of the canoe" (Mandelbaum 1979:33).

Mandelbaum found Edward Umfreville's (1954) account of the Cree, published in 1790, very puzzling since he described Cree who were a "woodland-dwelling, canoe-using people" yet who seemed also to have used horses, hunted bison and used plains methods of warfare. "We can only conclude that the Cree known to Umfreville were characterized by an ambivalence between the two

environments" (Mandelbaum 1979:35).

There are serious problems in Mandelbaum's use and interpretation of these accounts. However, it must be pointed out that a missing portion of David Thompson's Narrative, which was not discovered until 1957 (Thompson 1962), shows that Saukamappee was born in the area of The Pas, Manitoba. It was from this area, apparently, that he travelled west to aid the Peigan. However, Saukamappee's story tells of the battles of the Peigan, not of the history of the Cree who remain almost unmentioned (see section 6.2 below). Thus, there are no details of the location of Saukamappee's parents' summer camp before they went to the "lowlands of the lakes," their homegrounds. Nor are there any data showing that the Cree and Assiniboin, within five days of the Snake borders, were people whose homeland also lay in the forests to the east.

Mandelbaum's problems lie with his discussion of the accounts after Saukamappee. Dobbs, an Irish critic of the HBC, learned of the Canadian west only second-hand from seventeenth century French writers at the Bay and the very confused account that he learned directly from Joseph La France, a Metis who had briefly lived in the Lake Winnipeg area (see section 4.2.3 below). The information Mandelbaum used from Dobbs was copied directly from La Potherie's 1697 account from which Mandelbaum himself quotes (p.23). A plagiarized account from 1697, when the interior was little

known, cannot be used to describe the western boundaries of the Cree in the 1740s.

Jonathan Carver knew little of the west since he did not travel beyond the upper Mississippi River. His Cree informants were not in a position to speak of the far west since they were from the lower Assiniboin River. Thus they describe only the Lake Winnipeg area with which they were familiar. Yet Mandelbaum uses the limited data from Carver to support the flawed data from Dobbs.

Mandelbaum only briefly alludes to the journal of Matthew Cocking. Yet Cocking's detailed account of his 1772/73 wintering between the Eagle Hills and the lower South Saskatchewan was, and remains, the second-oldest published journal of the west (see section 6.3.5 below). His journal indicates Cree and Assiniboin bands were living between the Branches of the Saskatchewan, when they were supposedly invading the west, and were allied with the Gros Ventre, the Blackfoot Nation and the Sarcee. The Cree remained on the prairie on the south edge of the Eagle Hills until severe weather forced them back to the parkland. Most importantly, some of his group had left for the west in the fall: to Manito Lake and to the Rockies. Although those Cree trading at the Bay built canoes in the spring, it is difficult to see the western Cree as being invaders still tied to the forests.

There is a simple explanation for Mandelbaum's

puzzlement over Umfreville's description of Cree who are at one and the same time oriented to both forest and plains. Umfreville (1954:16,74) clearly indicates that he is describing two different parts of the country. Thus he describes first the forest Cree bordering Hudson Bay where he was employed by the HBC for eight years. Second were the Cree whom he later knew at the westernmost post on the North Saskatchewan River when he spent four years with the rival NWC. Umfreville's Cree were not manifesting a dual persona as a result of shuttling between two environments but were two separate and distinct groups.

It is most surprising, given the range of material that Mandelbaum consulted, that he fails to discuss the lengthy journal of Anthony Henday (1907; see below section 6.3.2) who travelled from the Bay to winter in central Alberta in 1754-55. This work is of critical importance in any discussion of the history of western Canadian Indian groups since it is the first sustained account of the west and, until the 1790s, our only view of central Alberta

Henday shows that in 1754, the Cree and Assiniboin were not only wintering in the Red Deer and Edmonton areas but were accompanying the local Indians, probably Blackfoot or Gros Ventre, on their raids to the southwest. Thus, within 60 years of the time when the Cree supposedly had no westward extension from Lake Superior, they were camping within sight of the Rockies and amicably trading with the

very groups whom they presumably had battled for possession of the prairies.

There is no ready explanation for Mandelbaum's failure to use the data from Henday. Since Mandelbaum had access to Cocking's published journal, he would have had equal access to Henday's, which was published only a year earlier and under the same aegis: the Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada. Indeed, Mandelbaum had some acquaintance with Henday's work since he wrote that the inland Indians "proffered a variety of reasons to Kelsey and Henday, the upshot of them all being simply that they did not want to trap beaver for the English" (Mandelbaum 1979:29; cf. Henday 1907:338).

Mandelbaum derives the warlike character of the Cree and their invasion of the west from Alexander Mackenzie's (1970) description of the geography and peoples of the west published in 1801. Briefly, Mackenzie outlined the boundaries of the Cree and discussed grand population movements throughout the west. Mandelbaum interprets this to mean that through their possession of firearms, the Cree had invaded the west from Lake Winnipeg to the Edmonton area and north to Lake Athabasca. According to Mandelbaum (p.36-37), they did not yet control the area south of the North Saskatchewan, the future home of the Plains Cree, although by this time they "were already on the down grade."

The seminal nature of Mackenzie's work in the formation

of scholarly views of Cree history warrants its discussion in detail in the next chapter, particularly since the work has been ill-used. More important than Mandelbaum's use of only selected portions of Mackenzie is his failure to realize the influence of Mackenzie's work on all later discussions of Cree history including his own.

Mandelbaum concludes that by 1820 "the Plains Cree were no longer vacillating between the forest and woodlands [sic], as they had been in the middle of the eighteenth century. Although not yet firmly entrenched in the prairie lands, their woodland excursions were becoming less habitual" (1979:39). The support for this conclusion comes from David Thompson, who said Cree from north of the North Saskatchewan "still preferred their ancient mode of life to living on the plains" (1979:36); Alexander Henry the Younger, who said that Cree in the same area hunted bison and the plains and trapped in the forest in the winter (1979:38); Lewis and Clark, who said that Cree living between the Missouri and the Qu'Appelle still resorted to the "marshy or wooded lands" (1979:39); and Daniel Harmon who wrote of Cree bands living in the forest at Swan River while others raided the Gros Ventre and Blackfoot on the plains (1979:39). Yet all these are descriptions not of Cree in general but rather of specific groups in specific localities. Further, Harmon (1954:75) also described Cree and Assiniboin wintering as far west as Last Mountain Lake

while Lewis and Clark had only a confused view of the Qu'Appelle since they were never north of the Missouri Valley.

The period from 1740 - 1820 was crucial to Mandelbaum's history of the Cree since this was the supposed height of the invasion, a period in which ties to the forest still remained. Although Mandelbaum used a wide range of historic accounts to support his argument, it fails largely because of the information in the few published eighteenth century journals. From Henday, we learn that, in fact, Cree and Assiniboin groups were well established in central Alberta in 1754-1755. From Cocking, we learn that Cree of the Eagle Hills area were wintering on the plains and only retreating to the parkland (not the forest) when inclement weather forced them to follow the bison who were seeking shelter.

## 2.6 THE OCCUPATION OF THE PLAINS, 1820 - 1880

The period 1820 - 1880, when the Cree reached their maximum extension, lies outside the limits of this study. However, it continues to show the weaknesses in Mandelbaum's work. Briefly, Mandelbaum focuses on two aspects: wars with the Blackfoot and the smallpox epidemics. The Cree had become "a bone fide Plains tribe" by 1845, apparently as a result of population increases in the Lake Nipigon area and a scarcity of game around Hudson Bay (Mandelbaum 1979:40-



41). The movement was characterized by the intermittent warfare between the Cree and Blackfoot in this period. At this time, however, they were also being decimated by smallpox "one important factor in the decline of the Cree (p.42-43). It is not clear how, in this period, the Cree, who were going downhill by 1800, were undergoing decimation by disease and who were being killed by the Blackfoot Confederacy, were yet able to reach their maximum extension. Yet, in fact, this extension did not go much further than the Red Deer/Edmonton area where they were in 1754 nor beyond Slave River where evidence of them was seen in 1772 by Samuel Hearne, the first European in that area.

Mandelbaum does not discuss the development of the Plains Cree who during the period "were probably taking on new cultural forms" (p.46) as they evolved from a forest to a plains oriented group. It will be remembered that this process was the thrust of the title of his dissertation. The evidence from the eighteenth century, at least in regard to the location of the Cree, suggests that these processes had been occurring long before 1820.

## 2.7 SUMMARY

For Mandelbaum, Cree history was straightforward. In 1690 the Cree groups left their homeland north of Lake Superior and reached the fringes of the plains by 1740. Until 1820, they continued to move between the forests and

the prairies trapping in winter and hunting bison in the summer. Finally, they severed their connections to the forest and after 1820 became a true Plains group.

They were motivated in this movement by their dependency on trade goods which forced them to seek new fur resources, first as trading middlemen and then for their own trapping as furs in their own lands became depleted. Their possession of guns allowed them to easily defeat their western neighbours, the Gros Ventre and the Blackfoot.

On the surface, Mandelbaum's history is plausible and attractive; he is able both to describe and explain the movement of the Cree. But, as we have seen, his account will not stand examination in light of the sources he uses. He omits, passes over or misinterprets the evidence. Yet Mandelbaum's work has stood uncriticised for 50 years; in large part because he was not introducing a new view of Cree history. Instead, he was offering documentation which only supported a view that was widely held in his time and which had been held previously for over 100 years. Because this is not apparent from his work - Mandelbaum does not put his work into the context of scholarly studies - it is necessary to examine how the idea of a Cree migration developed.

### 3. THE CREE MIGRATION: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Authorities for over 150 years, with few exceptions (see section 10.3 below), have consistently projected the same view of early Western Cree history: the view which Mandelbaum attempted to document. Since these authors only rarely refer to the historic record for support, it is necessary to determine how they reached their conclusions, especially in the light of Mandelbaum's failed attempt. Either Mandelbaum simply erred in demonstrating what was, in fact, a valid view or there has been a long-standing, pervasive misunderstanding of Cree history.

The following traces the development of perceived Western Cree history beginning with Sir Alexander Mackenzie and his immediate nineteenth century successors - Sir John Franklin, Sir John Richardson, Captain John Palliser and Sir William Francis Butler. Then follows the use of these accounts to describe the Cree by later writers - Edward S. Curtis, Albert Gallatin, Diamond Jenness, James Mooney, A.S. Morton and Henry Schoolcraft, . The continuity of the accepted view of Cree history is briefly reviewed through studies written after 1940, Mandelbaum's date of publication: works by Walter Hlady, George E. Hyde, Robert

Lowie and Arthur J. Ray.

### 3.2 THE ROLE OF SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

#### 3.2.1 MACKENZIE'S TRAVELS

In 1801, Alexander Mackenzie (1971, 1980) published an account of his explorations to the Arctic and Pacific oceans: Voyages from Montreal, on the River St. Lawrence, through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans; in the Years 1789 and 1793. With a Preliminary Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Fur Trade of that Country. The book was an immediate success. Within two months Mackenzie was knighted and the following year saw six new editions in England, the United States, France and Germany. Editions continued to be published in these countries and even, in 1806, a Russian synopsis (Mackenzie 1970:35,36).

Mackenzie stands alone in the breadth of information he presented on the northwest. Although the first fifth of the book is entitled A General History of the Fur Trade from Canada to the North-West, it includes much information on the geography of the west. It traces, in great detail, the canoe route from Montreal to the Athabasca by way of the Sturgeon-weir and Churchill rivers. Mackenzie includes detailed comments on the adjoining country, its history and its inhabitants, including the area west of Lake Winnipeg which lay outside this route. Further, there is a lengthy

ethnographic description and short vocabularies of the Cree and Chipewyan. The daily journals of his travels to the Arctic and Pacific oceans both begin with his departures from Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. Although presented in the form of daily journals, he again skillfully addresses the general public by including explanatory details.

Generally unnoticed are the final six pages of his book, included within the Pacific Ocean journal, which summarise his generalizations of the west presented in his History of the Fur Trade.

Both Mackenzie's book and its success stand in contrast to the only two previously published descriptions of the west. Edward Umfreville's account, published in 1790, was primarily a diatribe against his ex-employers, the HBC, and gave only brief general descriptions of Indian groups and game species. Samuel Hearne's account, published posthumously in 1795, described in detail his journey from Fort Churchill to the Coppermine and included ethnographic and faunal descriptions. However, it was of little relevance since no Europeans were to explore the Barrenland until 1893. Further, it offered no historical generalizations of the west.

Mackenzie's book, which was readily available through numerous editions, was to have a powerful influence on later travellers to the northwest. His knighthood guaranteed his personal reputation. His first-hand knowledge of the

establishment of the fur trade in the far northwest gave great authority to his comments about the history of the west. Finally, his detailed description of travel routes was required reading for anyone wishing to visit the west.

### 3.2.2 A NOTE ON ANDREW GRAHAM

There is only one instance of a discussion of Cree movements which predates that of Mackenzie's. These statements precede Mackenzie's account by some twenty years yet remained unpublished until 1949 (Isham 1949:309-310). The comments are those of Andrew Graham (see section 7.2 below) and are found in the final versions of his Observations on Hudson's Bay (HBCA E.2/9,10,12) which were transcribed between 1772 and 1791 (Graham 1969:342-361). In a section describing the Cree Indians, Graham writes:

At the time the English first settled in Hudson's Bay different tribes of this nation [i.e.Cree] inhabited the country from the sea-coast [i.e.Hudson Bay] up to the Lakes; but either to avoid Europeans, or in order of [sic] search for furs to barter, or because food grew scarce by the large numbers of animals destroyed for their furs and skins, one or more of these reasons has caused them gradually to retire farther inland, until they came amongst the buffalo, and they now extend from the head of Nelson [Saskatchewan] River down to the Grand Portage [Kaministiquia].... But a remnant remained about the Factories and at present constitute what we call the home-guard Indians ... and although extremely debilitated and depraved from their ancestors, yet the language has undergone no alteration (Graham 1969:191).

At first glance, these statements appear to lend

independent support for Mackenzie and the accepted view of Cree history, although no connection can be traced between the two men. However, Graham is not offering evidence that the Cree invaded the west but is simply trying to explain the similarity between the coastal and inland trading Cree. This is apparent in the preceding version of his Observations. Here, Graham gives his reasons for believing the groups were related. We see that he offers no evidence for believing that the coastal Cree, or Home guard, had priority of occupation. Graham writes that the inland Cree

talk the same language that the ... home-guard Indians does and as they have the same manners and customs &c. which makes me firmly of the opinion that both are one and the same people and that the English settling along the coast obliged them to look for food farther inland. Indeed the Assinepoets looks upon them as interlopers never allowing them to penetrate far into their country (HBCA E.2/7 f.30).

Graham's comment about the relations with the Assiniboin was omitted from his later manuscripts. It is contradicted by the HBC employees sent inland between 1754 and 1774 (see chapter Six) who all record amicable relations between the Cree and neighbouring Assiniboin, but perhaps not between the Saskatchewan River Cree groups and the Southern Assinipoets (see section 11.5). Further, Graham contradicted himself in these same early manuscripts by complaining of "considerable numbers of Keskachewan [Cree] Indians harbouring and strolling among the Archithinue and Asinepoet Indians for the sake of good living" (1969:268,

see also p.269).

### 3.2.3 MACKENZIE'S LIMITATIONS

Although Mackenzie spoke with authority in regard to many features of the west, there were topics which he knew only second-hand and on which he could only speculate. Further, he approached these latter topics, especially the history of Indian groups, within a specific intellectual framework. Unfortunately, scholars have not examined his limitations nor his historical paradigm. Instead, his statements have all been imbued with the same authority despite the limitations of both his experience and knowledge.

After a year spent as a trader in Detroit, Mackenzie was sent in 1785 to Ile-à-la-Crosse on the upper Churchill River which had been established in 1776. In 1787, when his firm was absorbed by the North West Company (hereafter NWC), he was sent to work under Peter Pond at the "Old Establishment" on the lower Athabasca River. Pond, who had established the first post on the Athabasca in 1778, had traded earlier at Fort Dauphin in 1775 and at Sturgeon Post, near modern Prince Albert, from 1776-1778. Thus Pond was the likely source for much of Mackenzie's background knowledge of the west. He was enthusiastic to reach the Arctic Ocean, which he had heard of through Indian report, and is reputed to have ordered Mackenzie to the Arctic



(Mackenzie 1970:13) although he himself left the west in 1788. An indication of his interests is the series of three maps he made in 1785, the first major maps of the northwest (Wagner 1955:endpocket).

On June 3, 1789, when he was 25 years old, Mackenzie left Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca on his journey to the mouth of the Mackenzie River. He was back 102 days later on September 12. In 1791-92, Mackenzie returned to England in order to become more skilled "in the sciences of astronomy and navigation" (ibid:58). In October, 1792, he left Fort Chipewyan to establish Fort Fork on the Peace River to enable him to get a quicker start on his way to the Pacific. He left from there on this second journey on 4 May 1793 and was back to Fort Fork by 24 August and then wintered on Lake Athabasca. Here he suffered depressions and resolved to leave the northwest at the age of thirty after having spent seven years in the Athabasca country. He never returned: "For I think it unpardonable in any man to remain in this country who can afford to leave it" (ibid:453).

Clearly, the nature of Mackenzie's feelings towards the west were much different from those of others of his time such as David Thompson and Peter Fidler. More important is the fact that his description of the prairie and parkland was based entirely on second-hand data as he did not know the Saskatchewan River west of Cumberland Lake. His entire experience in the northwest was in the Athabasca district.

### 3.2.4 MACKENZIE ON THE WESTERN CREE

For almost 200 years, comments by Alexander Mackenzie have been understood to mean that the Cree and Assiniboin moved west in order to participate more fully in the fur trade, their possession of guns allowing them to defeat their outlying neighbours. However, as we shall see, his comments are made in various contexts and often lack a specific time frame. Further, he has little to say about the history of the western Cree. When we examine the available literature, both the published and unpublished sources, we find that there is no justification for this view of the Cree and Assiniboin. That the two groups moved from a more eastern homeland is not denied (e.g. Siebert 1967). But there is no evidence to suppose that this was either a historic event or that it was associated with the fur trade.

Mackenzie's opening paragraph sets the tenor for his views of the effects of the fur trade on the Indians:

The fur trade, from the earliest settlement of Canada, was considered of the first importance to that colony. The country was then so populous, that in the vicinity of the establishments, the animals whose skins were precious, in a commercial view, soon became very scarce if not altogether extinct. They were, it is true, hunted in former periods, but merely for food and clothing. The Indians, therefore, to procure the necessary supply, were encouraged to penetrate the country... (1970:65).

These few statements embody three assumptions that underlie almost all later views of the effects of the fur trade on the western Indians. First that the Indians became so dependent on trade goods that they rapidly intensified their hunting and trapping. Secondly, local areas soon became depleted in furs. Thirdly, that it was necessary to search out new lands to obtain new fur resources. Mackenzie considered these to be self-evident truths and provides no evidence to support them. Although these assumptions can be questioned in light of the historic data, they provided the context within which Mackenzie's readers interpreted his later statements (e.g. Mandelbaum 1979:29).

However, Mackenzie is speaking of neither the western Indians, nor the Cree in particular. He is speaking of the initial fur trade of the St Lawrence River/ lower Great Lakes area where there were fur depletions due to high population densities and where large population movements had occurred. It is not until later that he outlines the development of the fur trade beyond Grand Portage (1970:70).

It is when he is describing Indian groups of the Saskatchewan area, that Mackenzie offers the widely quoted remark that has been used to establish Cree history:

there is no question of their having been, and continuing to be, invaders of this country [the Saskatchewan River area] from the Eastward. Formerly, they struck terror into all the tribes whom they met; but now they have lost the respect that was paid to them;

as those whom they formerly considered barbarians, are now their allies, and consequently become better acquainted with them, and have acquired the use of fire-arms (1970:117).

Almost all later writers of the west have paraphrased these lines to describe the early history of the Cree but few have acknowledged their source (e.g. Richardson, in Franklin 1970:69, original 1823; King 1836 vol 1:57; Palliser 1968:375; Hector 1860:251; Mooney 1971:117-118; Morton 1973:15-19; Jenness 1963: 254,284; Patterson 1972:91-92; Ray 1974:12,23,98). An example of the reliance on Mackenzie is Sir John Richardson's description of the Cree written while he accompanied Franklin to the Arctic from 1819-1822:

the Crees having early obtained arms from the European traders, were enabled to make harassing inroads on the lands of their neighbours, ... but their enemies being now as well armed as themselves, the case is much altered (in Franklin 1970:69).

Richardson's statements, in turn, were given great authority through his association with first, the Franklin expeditions and later, the Franklin searching expeditions. A fellow of the Royal Society, he later wrote an account of the west where he (1852:266,268) briefly mentions an Algonquian movement from the east but refers the reader to his earlier descriptions of the Cree in Franklin's (1970) Narrative of his explorations. Although Richardson seems to be supporting Mackenzie's statements, he is simply copying

them.

Mackenzie's statements about the Cree conquest mentioned above lose their directness when they are examined in context. They were not written to explain either the effects of the fur trade on the Cree or even Cree history in general. Rather Mackenzie was describing all the various Indian groups found along the Saskatchewan drainage. He was hypothesizing continental movements of all western Indian groups in order to explain their distribution in his day. More importantly, he does not relate any of these movements with the fur trade. Thus the Assiniboin, who had split off from the Sioux "at a time before our knowledge" were moving northwest from the upper Mississippi and lower Missouri (1970:112); the Fall or Big Bellies who were related to groups on the Bend of the Missouri are also moving northwest. Mackenzie could only assume the Blackfoot groups were also from that direction as he knew of no other languages similar to theirs. The Sarcee were Athapaskans and had therefore come from the northwest. It was only after describing all these groups, that Mackenzie goes on to mention the Cree. Clearly, since they were Algonquian-speakers and related to the many groups living as far east as the Atlantic (1970:131), there could be little doubt that they had moved from this area sometime in the past.

That Mackenzie considered the movement of the Cree to have been independent of the fur trade is found in the final

pages of his book. Here, Mackenzie reviews the geography of the west then turns his attention to its inhabitants. He suggests that he is thinking of the distant past:

Much has been said, and much more remains to be said on the peopling of America. On this subject I shall confine myself to one or two observations, and leave my readers to draw their inferences from them (1970:414).

Mackenzie then goes on to review the movements of the Indians: the Eskimo have moved west along the coasts from Greenland; the Cree west from the Atlantic and banks of the St Lawrence River; the Chipewyans and their related tribes have moved east from a traditional home in Siberia; and finally, the Assiniboin have moved northwest from the south. These statements of the movements of Indians are made as explanations of how they came to be located where they were in Mackenzie's day. As his mention of Greenland and Siberia indicate, they were not related to the fur trade.

Mackenzie does not say that the possession of guns enabled the Cree to invade the west. Rather, the people whom the Cree considered to be barbarians "now have guns and have become their allies." However, the identity of these former enemies is not clear. It is commonly assumed that these must be the groups lying immediately west of the Cree: the Gros Ventre and Blackfoot tribes. But their relationship with the Cree must be described in precisely opposite terms. All accounts from Saukamappee through to Matthew Cocking and even David Thompson show that the

western Cree groups were allied with the Blackfoot Nation from the 1730s to the early 1780s. It was only in the last decade of the 1700s that the hostilities broke out which were to characterise the relations between the groups, so often described by the writers of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the group Heday visited had guns by at least 1754. It is possible that Mackenzie is referring to the Snake, whom the Indians were surprised to see with guns in 1785 (HBCA B.87/a/8 26 December 1785) although the Cree and Snake were never allies.

These comments of Mackenzie's are more appropriate to the far northwest where he saw his only direct evidence of Cree raids, raids carried out against groups on the Mackenzie and upper Peace rivers. His remarks at one point are very similar to his comments on the Saskatchewan area. Although the Beaver Indians had made peace with the local Cree, other Cree kept attacking them until they were able to obtain guns: "they still entertain a great dread of their natural enemies, but they are since become so well armed, that the others [the Cree] now call them their allies" (Mackenzie 1970:253-54). It seems that Mackenzie, who had never been near the Saskatchewan area, has extrapolated his knowledge of a specific, localized group of Cree to apply to any and all groups of Cree in the west.

Apart from these contemporaneous raids beyond the Athabasca, Mackenzie gives three instances reflecting the

invasion of the Cree, none of which apply to the Saskatchewan area. These are in his descriptions of Frog Portage lying between the upper Sturgeon-weir and the Churchill river of northeastern Saskatchewan; of Ile-à-la-Crosse on the upper Churchill River in northwestern Saskatchewan: and of Peace Point west of Lake Athabasca in northeastern Alberta. However, in all of these, he is very vague, if not silent, concerning the dates, the people and the motivations involved.

Mackenzie (1970:121) states that the Churchill River received its Cree name, Missinipi, when the Cree "first came to this country, and either destroyed or drove back the natives whom they held in great contempt." To show their contempt for these people, especially their attempts to trap beaver and prepare their skins, the Cree stretched the skin of a frog and hung it on Frog Portage which " was, at that time, the utmost extent of their conquest or war-faring progress West...."

Mackenzie gives us no hint of who these original inhabitants might have been nor when the event occurred. References to beaver skins suggest that the fur trade might have been involved, but Mackenzie's next comments suggest the presence of the Cree in the area preceded this period.

Mackenzie explicitly avows his ignorance of the arrival of the Cree in the upper Churchill area in his discussion of Ile-à-la-Crosse:



Who the original people were that were driven from it, when conquered by the Knisteneaux [Cree] is not now known, as not a single vestige remains of them. The latter, and the Chepewyans, are the only people that have been known here; and it is evident that the last-mentioned consider themselves as strangers... (1970:125).

Mackenzie is now speaking of the place where he had spent two winters and where he knew the people well. This was only 100 years after the introduction of the western fur trade yet nothing could be determined as to who the early people might have been.

Mackenzie's third reference to a Cree conquest is also his most detailed. He says that Peace Point, about 50 air-miles up the Peace River from Lake Athabasca, received its name when the Cree and Beaver Indians "settled their dispute":

When this country was formerly invaded by the Knisteneaux, they found the Beaver Indians inhabiting the land about Portage la Loche; and the adjoining tribes were those whom they called the slaves [sic]. They drove both these tribes before them; when the latter [Slave] proceeded down the river from the Lake of the Hills [Lake Athabasca], in consequence of which that part of it obtained the name of the Slave River. The former [Beaver] proceeded up the river; and when the Knisteneaux made peace with them, this place was selected as the boundary (1970:238).

Here we are, perhaps, hearing of an event for which there is contemporary evidence. Morton (1973:12) dates the event to the smallpox epidemic of 1782/1782 and Yerbury (1981:34) to Matonabee's efforts in 1765. However in the HBC

journals written at York Factory between 1715 and 1721, there are references to a Cree leader named Captain Swan who went into the Athabasca area to make alliances with the local Indians (see below section 5.6, 10.8). Swan described the Athabasca River and its tar formations and a large lake, Lake Athabasca. He made several trips into the area, wintering with the unnamed Indians with whom he arranged a truce, the two groups exchanging children.

It is likely that it was Swan's efforts in the 1710s which were remembered at Peace Point. However, Swan makes no mention of Indians being driven from the Portage la Loche area, rather he had to go to Lake Athabasca to meet the group. Further, it is difficult to understand how the Beaver and Slave were driven from the la Loche area when there was no memory of other than Cree at Ile-à-la-Crosse, only 160 km to the south. Even if we take Mackenzie's account at face value, it says nothing of the Cree invasion from the east but rather their movement into the Athabasca basin from a position already far in the west.

In both the journals written of his trips to the Arctic and the Pacific, Mackenzie records evidence of Cree raiding parties. However, they are not evidence of the expansion of the Cree. In all cases the remains of these camps, for that is what he observed, lie beyond all known distributions of the Cree. Furthermore, intervening groups lay between the home area of the Cree and the area in which they were

raiding.

On his Arctic trip he saw evidence of what were reported to be Cree raids on the west shore of Great Slave Lake (1970:174); near the mouth of the Liard River (1970:179); and near present Wrigley, nearly 580 km from Great Slave Lake. Jenness (1968:32,284,424) has stated, using these data, that the Cree were raiding as far as the delta of the Mackenzie River, but it is clear that the Cree were then some 1000 km from the mouth.

On his trip to the Pacific, Mackenzie (1970:271,275) also saw evidence of what he was told were the remains of Cree raiding parties as far west as the Peace River Canyon near modern Hudson Hope, British Columbia. They (1970:318) later met a woman near modern Prince George on the Fraser River, who said she had been captured by Crees and carried east over the mountains but had escaped and returned to her home. Again, these raids were being carried out over a distance of, at least, 900 to 1200 km from the Alberta/Saskatchewan border. Clearly these raids had nothing to do with territorial aggrandizement.

In his ethnographic sketch of the Cree, Mackenzie (1970:132) gives their distribution. In northwestern Ontario, their southern boundary followed the watershed between Hudson Bay and Lake Superior:

It then proceeds till it strikes the middle part of the river Winipic, following that water to the discharge of the Saskatchiwine into it; from thence it

accompanies the latter to Fort George [65 km west of the Alberta/Saskatchewan border], when the line, striking by the head of Beaver River to the Elk River [Athabasca River], runs along its banks to its discharge in the Lake of the Hills [Lake Athabasca]; from which it may be carried back East, to the Isle a la Crosse, and so on to Churchill by the Missinipi [Churchill River]..... Some of them, indeed, have penetrated further West and South to the Red River, to the South of Lake Winipic, and the South branch of the Saskatchiwine.

Mackenzie, who had never seen the edge of the northern plains and adjacent parkland knew little of the Cree of that area and greatly underestimated their western boundaries. The earliest data from southern Manitoba indicate the Cree were south of Lake Winnipeg in 1738 (La Vérendrye 1968:298-99) and groups west of Dauphin were described as the Cree of the Plains (p.485). Although the Cree seldom moved up the South Saskatchewan River past Moose Woods, even in the early nineteenth century, they were familiar with the adjacent area in 1754 (Henday 1907). At that time, groups visited the modern Red Deer, Alberta area and wintered south of modern Edmonton, which were some 275 km and 175 km from Fort George. Thus, Mackenzie is in error in saying that the western boundaries of the Cree followed Lake Winnipeg to Fort George on the North Saskatchewan River.

These, then, are the statements that Mackenzie made about the Cree, a group he was familiar with only through the small population in the Ile-à-la-Crosse and lower

Athabasca River areas. We see that Mackenzie occasionally refers to a Cree "conquest" of the west but he never suggests that this was a result of the fur trade. Although he does refer to the advantage which the Cree had because of their possession of guns, this was in reference to the far northwest. The specific raids of which he had direct knowledge were carried out far beyond even his recognized boundaries of the Cree and would not have served to expand Cree territory.

Furthermore, his term "conquest" must be understood in a particular sense. He is speaking in terms of a migration from an eastern homeland unrelated to the fur trade. As we have seen, Mackenzie knew the Cree were related to groups as far east as the Atlantic Seaboard. It is not surprising that he regards the Cree as having migrated west but as to when this occurred, he is either silent or refers to a distant undated past.

It must be remembered that Mackenzie never visited the plains and parklands of the west. When he speaks of the Cree of this area, it appears that he is extrapolating from his knowledge of the Athabasca area.

His book has had a profound influence on all the later perceptions of the history of the west and of Indian groups. Specifically, his views became the framework for a very definite and particular history of the Cree although, as we have seen, he is at times silent, ignorant and even wrong

about specific events.

We will now examine the path by which Mackenzie's scattered references to the Cree came to have such influence. First, we will examine the debt owed to Mackenzie in the treatment of Cree history by twentieth century scholars, both after and before Mandelbaum. Then we will trace how this influence developed in the nineteenth century through writings which appeared to lend support to Mackenzie but which, in fact, most often used him as an unacknowledged source.

### 3.3 TWENTIETH CENTURY SCHOLARS AND THE MIGRATION OF THE CREE

David Mandelbaum's (1979) study of Plains Cree history forms a watershed for twentieth century thought regarding the Western Cree. He was the first to intensively examine the historic record in order to demonstrate that the Cree had, in fact, moved west.

Not only was Mandelbaum's work one of the last "classic" ethnographies of a northern Plains group but it marked the beginning of a hiatus in fieldwork among Saskatchewan Indians which lasted many years. This was accompanied by a general shift of academic focus away from not only Indian groups but the entire fur trade period. As a result, scholars have been forced to rely on Mandelbaum and have been strongly influenced by his views.

Writers contemporaneous with, and immediately prior to, Mandelbaum indicate the store of common knowledge from which Mandelbaum worked and serve to clarify the contributions of nineteenth century authorities to our conception of Cree history. However, as we shall see, these authorities do not offer additional data to support Mackenzie, instead they refer back to his statements. Thus the whole framework of our understanding of western Cree history has a fragile base.

### 3.3.1 POST-MANDELBAUM WRITERS

George E. Hyde in his synthesis of the northern plains Indians, Indians of the High Plains, offers the general view held of the Cree and Assiniboin:

Equipped with firearms by the French and English, the Cree and Assiniboins began to terrorize neighboring tribes. By 1690 they had pushed westward beyond Lake Winnipeg and up the Churchill River from Hudson Bay, and during this advance they seem to have driven the Blackfoot, Atsenas and Arapahoes ... from their older homes, perhaps in the valley of the Red River, forcing them to retire into the district west of Lake Winnipeg and south of the Saskatchewan (1959:127).

In 1954, Robert Lowie (1963) published his synthesis of the Plains groups, Indians of the Plains. According to the Jesuit Relation of 1666-67, the Cree were in the country between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay.

With the coming of the Hudson's Bay Company ... the demand for beaver made them penetrate further west, displacing the older inhabitants

with the aid of the Europeans' guns. By about 1730 a detachment of Cree was reported south of the Saskatchewan, and they had certainly reached Lake Winnipeg.... they were now depending on the traders for weapons, clothing, utensils, and even food. The advantage due to firearms, however, decreased as other tribes likewise got guns.... In 1772 the western advance guard was impounding buffalo, but still clung to the canoe (1963:211).

Although these works were written primarily for an American audience only peripherally interested in the Canadian west, their authors had sufficient prestige that their statements were more widely influential. However, the same views are found in the more recent syntheses of Canadian Indians. E. Palmer Patterson II in a widely used text, summarizes Mandelbaum. He speaks of the Cree as being originally from east of Lake Winnipeg but "armed with guns and seeking furs, they pushed out gradually into the Prairies, where they formed an alliance with their Assiniboine neighbours..." (1972:91-92).

One of the few attempts to review the published primary data was made by Walter Hlady, an avocational archaeologist from Manitoba, whose statements became influential among archaeologists of the northern plains. Hlady interpreted the archaeological data to indicate that the Cree had been in eastern and central Manitoba from prehistoric times. However, Hlady also saw the Cree as historic migrants into the farther west: "With the acquisition of firearms, the Cree became much more expansive than the gradual westward



movement of earlier centuries" (1964:26). Although Hlady (p.24) considered the prehistoric movement to be triggered by a population buildup of a people who needed large areas of land on which to subsist, the motivation for the later movement is unstated, although it seems to have been vaguely associated with the fur trade.

The most detailed assessment of both the published data and the HBC archives is Arthur J. Ray's (1974) study of the western Indians, primarily Cree and Assiniboin: Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Hunters, Trappers and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660 - 1870. Ray (1974:12), utilizing the data from the Relations places the Cree first around and east of Lake Nipigon in 1658, in the Rainy River area by 1688, and in the forest between the lower Nelson River and the lower Saskatchewan River by 1690. However, his map of the period shows the "probable limits of the Cree, 1658 - 1690" as still lying east of Lake Winnipeg (p.5 figure 1).

After allying themselves with the Assiniboin and "using the arms they obtained at the Bay, they quickly assumed the role of middlemen in the evolving trade network and expanded their trading areas with force" (p.23). By 1720 the Cree and Assiniboin moved into the forest and northern edge of the Parkland Belt from southern Manitoba west to the Alberta border and north to the head of the Churchill River to expand "their trapping and trading area" (p.19). In the

late 1780s, the Cree "turned southward and began pushing more vigorously into the grasslands and parklands located to the south of the North Saskatchewan River" and into the lower South Saskatchewan and upper Qu'Appelle rivers (p.98). This later movement was a result of a shift in the role of the Cree in the fur trade from being trappers to being suppliers of provisions, i.e. bison meat (p.104).

Neither Hlady nor Ray refer to Mandelbaum, although their positions are not basically different from his. They add a prehistoric perspective, but the Cree are still, in the early contact period, in eastern or central Manitoba. As a result of the fur trade, they begin a rapid migration northwest across Saskatchewan and into eastern Alberta. Since 1940, then, there has been a general consensus that varies only in details. We then must ask whether Mandelbaum changed the earlier view of Cree history, or whether he merely documented what was already, by his time, the accepted view.

### 3.3.2. EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY WRITERS

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked a florescence in the study of the fur trade. It was during this time that most of the primary documents were published or translated (e.g. Henday, Cocking, Thompson, Kelsey, Jérémie, La Vérendrye, Henry the Younger, Harmon, the Masson collection). However, the editors of these works

had little interest in tracing the role that the Indians played in the development of the fur trade or in examining what these documents revealed about their history.

For example, A.S. Morton (1973, original 1939), one of the first historians allowed access to the HBC archives, barely mentions Indians in his monumental study: A History of the Canadian West to 1870 - 71. Being a History of Rupert's Land (the Hudson's Bay Company's Territory) and of the North-West territory (including the Pacific Slope) .

When he does, his critical sense is weakened, and he accepts sources and makes interpretations that he avoids in speaking of the Europeans. More importantly, he does not critically examine the printed sources in light of his archival data. However, he does try to sketch the locations of the western Indian groups at contact.

Morton (1973:26) writes that the Cree were east of Lake Winnipeg in 1749 while the Assiniboin were on the plains to the west and south. He then notes that traditionally the Cree were said to have welcomed the Assiniboin to the plains, and that in 1691 the Assiniboin and Cree lived on the plains between the Red Deer River and the Touchwood Hills. Morton suggests that the Blackfoot tribes moved southwestward from the North Saskatchewan and drove out the original inhabitants, the Snakes and Kutenais (p.18). The Gros Ventre moved into the resultant vacuum

driven before the Crees and Assiniboins, armed with guns. They [the Gros Ventre] occupied the

open plains to the south, while the Assiniboins took possession of the North Saskatchewan, the Eagle Hills, and the lower Battle River. The Crees possessed themselves of the north bank of the Saskatchewan and the wooded country north of it (p.19).

Morton's brief discussion of Indian groups was simply to set the background for his description of the fur trade. Other writers of the time attempted to synthesise the new fur trade data that were being published. Most important among these were the works of Diamond Jenness (1963; original 1932), Edward S. Curtis (1976; original 1928) and J.S. Mooney (1971; original 1907). The first edition of Jenness's work, The Indians of Canada, was published in 1932. It was an ethnographic and historic description of the Indians of Canada using both primary and secondary sources. However, he does not often indicate his sources or examine the rationale of his views.

Jenness clearly recognizes that the western limits of the Cree cannot be determined in the early period. At one point he suggests that the original home of the Cree was in "the hinterland of James Bay" from which they "marched northwest... and raided the whole valley of the Mackenzie river" as they defeated groups who were unable to get guns from Hudson Bay (1963:32). However, elsewhere, he states that the Cree

in the early sixteenth century [sic] ... appear to have wandered over part of the country west of lake Winnipeg, perhaps between the Red river and the Saskatchewan. As soon as they obtained firearms from Hudson bay,

however, they expanded westward and northward until, in the middle of the eighteenth century they controlled northern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta (p.284).

These movements resulted from the demands for furs: the over-trapping of land caused them to "expand into new areas, often invading the territories of their neighbours" (p.254).

Edward S. Curtis, in his multi-volume study of The North American Indian, writes that

[The Cree] movement into the open country in pursuit of buffalo was westward up the Saskatchewan....It was the advance guard of the western Woods Cree that expelled the former Athapascan inhabitants of the country south of Athabasca lake, only to be forced in turn southward to the Saskatchewan...(1976:55-56).

The Cree had been in close association with the Assiniboin with whom "they joined forces in pushing the Blackfoot, Bloods, and Peigan southwestward out of the plains bordering the Saskatchewan river" while the Woods Cree "were limited to dispossessing the Athapascans of their territory between the Saskatchewan and Athabasca lake" (pp. 56-57). Evidence for these statements is then provided through quotations from Mackenzie and Franklin.

In the encyclopedic Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, James Mooney's article on the Cree (Hodge 1971:117-118) considers that although the Jesuit Relation of 1640 indicates that a portion of the Cree lived in the James Bay region, the Relations of 1661 and 1667 indicate that the

larger part of the tribe lived further to the northwest. Some of them appear to have lived in the Red River area according to a tradition collected by Lacombe, and were soon attracted to the plains by the presence of bison. Here they welcomed the Assiniboin and the two tribes united to drive the Siksika and their allies to the southwest from the Saskatchewan River. After they obtained guns, they carried out raids as far as the Rocky Mountains and the Mackenzie River.

All these twentieth century writers have a common theme: the Cree were originally in the east, whether in Manitoba or northwest Ontario. As a result of the fur trade and because of their access to guns the Cree, allied with the Assiniboin, moved west through the forest and parkland then onto the plains where they displaced the original inhabitants, pushing them to the north and southwest. The one exception to this general view is Jenness who, for unstated reasons, is willing to consider the Cree to have been far into the west as early as 1525, although, as we have seen he is self-contradictory on this point. Nevertheless, it is clear that Mandelbaum was not breaking new ground in his discussion of Cree history; rather he was filling out the details of an already accepted view.

### 3.4 NINETEENTH CENTURY OBSERVERS AND SYNTHESIZERS

The roots for the common view of Cree history held by

twentieth century writers might be expected to lie in the nineteenth century. However, neither the travellers in the west nor scholars with access to historical data present any information not found in Mackenzie.

In the Canadian west the most influential travellers were no longer fur traders but members of various scientific expeditions. Of these, the most renowned were the Sir John Franklin expedition to the Arctic of 1819-1822 and of 1825-27; the overland Franklin searching expeditions later made by Richard King under Sir George Back in 1833-35 and by Sir John Richardson in 1848; the expeditions to explore the Canadian plains by Captain John Palliser in 1857-60 and by Henry Youle Hind in 1857-58; and Sir William Samuel Butler's fact-gathering journey to the plains in 1870.

These expeditions all resulted in popular editions, except for Palliser (whose account remained available through Parliamentary Blue Books), of travels in the northwest giving descriptions of both the lands and people. Few primary sources were available to the authors except that of Alexander Mackenzie, who as we have seen, was regarded as authoritative. Since the west was undergoing great changes, particularly after the amalgamation of the rival HBC and NWC in 1821, it is not surprising to find these authors depending on Mackenzie, particularly for the historical portions of their works. Also important, for our discussion, is that all these writers witnessed the serious

outbreak of hostilities between the Cree and Blackfoot Confederacy which lasted from the early until the late 1800s. These hostilities seemed to vividly illustrate Mackenzie's statements of the Cree invasion of the west.

Sir John Franklin's account of his journey to the Arctic Ocean includes several chapters on his party's wintering at Cumberland House based on journals kept by Robert Hood (1974) and Sir John Richardson. Richardson supplied a historical sketch of the western Indian groups:

The Asseenaboine, termed by the Crees Asseeneepoytuck, or Stone Indians ... originally entered this part of the country under the protection of the Crees, and in concert with them attacked and drove to the westward the former inhabitants of the banks of the Saskatchewan. They are still the allies of the Crees, but have now become more numerous than their former protectors.... The nations who were driven to the westward by the [Assiniboin] and Cree are termed, in general, by the latter, Yatchee-thin-yoouc, which has been translated Slave Indians, but more properly signifies strangers [the Fall, Peigan, Blood, Blackfoot and Sarcee] (Franklin 1970:107-108).

Richardson realized that "the origin of the Cree..., is, like that of the other Aborigines of America, involved in obscurity." However, he suggested that the Cree had moved to the shores of Hudson Bay and westward to "the plains which lie betwixt the forks of the Saskatchewan" (Franklin 1970:62). Franklin's journal contains one contemporary reference to the Cree immediately northeast of Lake Winnipeg who "have of late years been gradually deserting the low or



swampy country, and ascending, where animals are more abundant" (p.37). However, his statement that this was a recent phenomenon indicates that it has nothing to do with the suggestion that the Cree had moved west with the introduction of the fur trade some 140 years earlier.

In an ethnographic sketch of the Cree, Richardson explains that

the Crees having early obtained arms from the European traders, were enabled to make harassing inroads on the lands of their neighbours, and are known to have made war excursions as far westward as the Rocky Mountains, and to the northward as far as McKenzie's River; but their enemies being now as well armed as themselves, the case is much altered (Franklin 1970:69).

Here we see the great debt that Richardson owes to Mackenzie although there is never a hint that these observations were not based on his wintering on the Saskatchewan.

Further evidence that statements regarding Cree history were based on Mackenzie, rather than on their own experience in the west, is found in Richard King who visited Cumberland House in 1833 on his way to the Arctic:

[The Cree] are no longer the intrepid and hardy warriors who conquered the inhabitants of the Saskatchiwine and Mississippi rivers, and drove before them the Slave nations, their natural enemies. Having obtained arms and ammunition from the first European traders, they were enabled to attack the neighbouring tribes with the most fearful success... they have been known to penetrate as far west as McKenzie's River (1836 vol 1:57).

The government-sponsored expeditions of the 1850s, who were given a specific mandate to collect information on the Canadian prairies, reflect the continued, but unacknowledged debt to Mackenzie. Although the Palliser expedition spent several summers on the plains and wintered at Fort Carlton, none of the observations made by the expedition provide data on Cree history other than what is found in Mackenzie. James Hector, a member of the Palliser expedition, in an address to the Ethnological Society of London, gives us the view which the members of the Palliser expedition held:

The Cree Nation was at one time very numerous, and as they were the first of the Rupert Land Indians to obtain firearms, they overran and made a temporary conquest of the greater part of the country, the tradition being that they even crossed the Rocky Mountain and reached the Pacific Coast (Hector and Vaux 1860:251).

Thomas Blakeston, in the official papers of the expedition, submitted a report which David Mandelbaum said "summarizes other evidence we have been considering and so is worth quoting ..."

In fact the Crees generally may thank the traders for the greater part of the interior they now have in their hands, for it is not a great many years since the Blackfeet held the whole Saskatchewan plains, at which time the Stone Indians ... inhabited the [Assiniboine River], and the Crees were confined mostly to the thick-wooded-country to the north of Lake Winnipeg, and between that lake and Hudson's Bay. On the fur trade, however, being pushed up the Saskatchewan and the Crees obtaining fire-arms of the traders, they drove the Blackfoot and Fall Indians, or Gros Ventres west... (Palliser 1859:46 in Mandelbaum 1973:41-42).

In the same period, Hind who had travelled in southeastern Saskatchewan through the Qu' Appelle valley and then followed the South Saskatchewan to Fort Carlton then back to Red River settlement. He, alone, of the western explorers, does not offer any historical background of the plains Indians although he devotes much space to the history of the Iroquoian-speakers of southern Ontario. He writes of the "great Algonquin family, whose hunting grounds then extended from the north west side of the valley of the Saint Lawrence to Hudson's Bay" when the Jesuit missionaries penetrated southern Ontario in 1615 (1971 vol.ii:181). Otherwise, he lends indirect support to the Cree conquest by speaking of the warfare between the Cree and Blackfoot groups and suggesting that the Cree were recent arrivals

The rings of stones marking the site of Cree encampments on the Qu'Appelle are of comparatively modern date, and belong doubtless to the ancestors of the present races of the country (vol.ii:121).

Sir William Francis Butler (1968; original 1872) was sent through the west to survey the effects of the smallpox epidemic of 1870-71. His work is regarded as one of the travel classics of the Canadian west (Peel 1973:342) and had undergone 19 editions by 1924. His specific task was to gather information on the Plains groups but he was able to do little more than paraphrase Mackenzie, again without acknowledgement.

The Cree, having been the first to obtain fire-arms from the white traders, quickly

extended their boundaries, and moving from Hudson Bay and the region of the lakes overran the plains of the Upper Saskatchewan (1968:375).

While these travellers were moving through the west and describing the Cree in what are almost identical terms and with no specific details, others in the east were trying to collect and collate information about North American Indians.

Albert Gallatin between 1823 and 1836 attempted to present a synopsis of all the Indian languages north of Mexico, but was restricted to 81 groups because of lack of data. He was in direct communication with fur traders and was familiar with the works of Umfreville, Hearne, Mackenzie and Franklin (1973, original 1836:18-19). Although he was a linguist, his work was influential because he offered the first synthesis of North American Indians, especially of the western groups. In his discussion, he writes that the Cree "now extend, in consequence to recent conquests already alluded to, from Hudson's Bay to the Rocky Mountains (1973:23). The conquests are seemingly a reference to the Athapaskans, whose southern boundary was Lake Athabasca "before encroachments had been made on their territory by the [Cree]" (p.17) and to the Athabasca River, "which is now in the possession of the [Cree], who have driven away the original inhabitants" (p.19-20). This information was seemingly from Mackenzie whom Gallatin refers to, but he is

not clear on this point. Later, he mentions that the Cree have driven the Blackfoot "away from the easterly portion of the Saskachawin country, and call them the Slave Nation," information which he apparently just obtained from Kenneth Mackenzie, a trader at Fort Union on the mouth of the Yellowstone River (p.133 note).

Henry Schoolcraft, although primarily concerned with groups in the east does make scattered comments about the Cree and their conquest in the west (e.g.1969, original 1851, Part 1:27,259; Part 3:401; Part 6:32-33). However, it is clear that he is depending on Mackenzie for these statements (e.g.Part 1:19, 27; Part 5:164) since he presents quotations and information from Mackenzie's account.

### 3.5 Conclusions

For over 150 years perceptions of early Cree history have been essentially unchanged. For most of the 1800s, writers simply reworked Mackenzie's comments without adding further details. In the twentieth century, with the publication of original sources, the new data were made to fit the established view although as we have seen in the case of Mandelbaum, especially, this often led to inconsistencies. This is despite the fact that Mackenzie does not actually refer to a historical invasion of the west by the Cree. Nevertheless, he was so interpreted and his comments became so pervasive in the literature published on

the west by later writers, that his statements were never questioned. Further, although later nineteenth century writers appeared to be offering independent support for Mackenzie's statements, they were, in fact, repeating them.

#### 4. THE WESTERN CREE AND ASSINIBOIN: EASTERN APPROACHES

##### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The historic record of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has been interpreted to show that the Cree and Assiniboin arrived in the western interior as a result of the fur trade. Since the HBC archives were not readily available to researchers until the 1960s, and published accounts of the western interior did not begin before the late 1700s, researchers were forced to look at the seventeenth century published material from the French exploration of the Great Lakes area. These early references to the Cree and Assiniboin from northwestern Ontario were then combined with later references to these groups in the west to support the view that a migration from Ontario had occurred in the historic period.

In recent years, this view has been disputed. Syms (1985:81-83) considers that the assumption of a historic migration is based on what he calls the "Fallacy of Displaced Observation". He points out, as has Smith (1976:415, that it was not the native groups who moved west but rather the European observers who were moving west and simply becoming more knowledgeable of the western distribution of Indian groups.

Neither of these opposing views has yet been

substantiated by a detailed examination of the evidence. The following is a discussion of the French exploration of the west in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to evaluate the evidence for a seventeenth century Cree homeland in northwestern Ontario.

This immediate examination deals with only one of three groups of data bearing on the distribution of the Cree and Assiniboin. First are the records of the French who entered the western Great Lakes area in the mid-1600s and eventually reached the Saskatchewan River 100 years later where they occupied posts until the end of the Seven Years War in 1763.

The second body of data (see Chapter 5) concerns the knowledge of the Cree and Assiniboin gained from observers on the western coast of Hudson Bay. These begin with the exploration of the west coast of Hudson Bay in 1612 and continue with the establishment of posts at the mouths of the Hayes and Nelson rivers in 1682. Possession of these posts vacillated between the French and English until the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 which established HBC ownership. With few exceptions the traders did not try to penetrate the interior and the only information regarding the inland groups was second-hand, obtained from the Indians as they came to the Bay to trade.

This changed in 1754 when, as a result of the inroads made by French traders into the Saskatchewan River area, the HBC began regularly to send employees inland to winter with



the Cree and persuade the inland Indians to come to the Bay to trade. These inland travels stopped with the establishment of inland HBC posts in 1774, although there were several later exceptions. Several of these men kept regular journals, and it is this first-hand information which forms the third body of data and offers the earliest first-hand detailed accounts of the inland area (see Chapter Six).

#### 4.2 THE FRENCH IN THE WEST: 1650- 1763

##### 4.2.1. APPROACHES TO THE WEST: 1615- 1716

The Jesuit Relations are the main source for early ethnohistoric details concerning the Indian groups in central Canada and the adjoining United States. These are a series of reports written by the Jesuits and published in France from 1632-1672 in order to attract support for their missionary efforts among the Indians. The Relations, with other documents dating from 1610-1791, were published in parallel translation in 73 volumes at the end of the nineteenth century (Thwaites 1896-1901).

These, with several memoirs written by explorers travelling south of the Great Lakes to the upper Mississippi River, are almost the sole sources of data on the Cree and Assiniboin of this period. As we shall see, because of the nature of this exploration and the resultant fur trade, the

Cree and Assiniboin are mentioned only incidentally in these later records.

In 1615, Samuel Champlain opened the Ottawa River route for the French entry into the Great Lakes area. Although missionaries had penetrated as far west as Lake Nipigon by the 1640s, the outbreak of the Iroquois Wars, which ended finally in 1650, hindered French utilization of the area (Stone and Chaput 1978:602). It was not until 1656 when two unnamed Frenchmen, (probably Groseilliers, but not Radisson, despite his account (Nute 1978:23-24,27), returned to New France with a rich cargo of furs, that attention was fully directed to the potential fur resources of the western Great Lakes. Previously, the fur trade had been largely dependent on the Indians bringing furs to Montreal.

In 1659, Medard Chouart Des Groseilliers returned inland with his brother-in-law, Pierre-Esprit Radisson, thus beginning the partnership that was so instrumental in the development of both the French and English fur trade. After wintering south of the west end of Lake Superior they crossed the lake to rendezvous with a group of Cree. In later years Radisson (1961), whose various accounts are self-serving, was to write that the two men had also journeyed to Hudson Bay that summer, but this has been rejected (Nute 1978:65-66). Nevertheless, Radisson recorded the first ethnographic details of the Cree of Lake Superior whom he (1961:147) described as "a wandering nation, and

containeth a vast country." As well, he had heard of Lake Winnipeg or the Stinking Lake and, long before La Vérendrye, of a route to the South Sea (Nute 1978:116).

More importantly, the information they obtained made them realize that

the great fur trade center of the North American continent lay west and northwest of Lake Superior, and that the easiest route thereto was not by the difficult route through the Great Lakes but on shipboard to Hudson Bay and thence by canoe up either of two rivers, the modern Hayes and the Albany... (Nute 1978:73).

They never returned inland but, instead, focussed their attentions on establishing posts on Hudson Bay so as to have easier access to the furs of the interior.

After disputes with the administration of New France and attempts to reach Hudson Bay from New England, the two men made their way to England where they again found sponsors. Finally, the success of their third attempt, in 1658, to reach the Bay resulted in the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670.

The colonial officials of New France were quick to realize the threat to their fur trade presented by the English presence on the Bay under the guidance of Groseilliers and Radisson. The French intensified their actions in the western Great Lakes. In 1671, Saint-Lusson held a ceremony at Sault Ste. Marie formally claiming the area in the name of the King of France. Missionary efforts

and explorations had already increased, especially to the south of the Great Lakes, although these were increasingly hampered by rivalry between the Jesuits and other missionary orders.

Inland posts were also established for the fur trade. Greysolon Dulhut, who had established a peace between the local Cree and Sioux at the head of Lake Superior, established posts at Kaministiquia (Thunder Bay, Ont.) and at Lake Nipigon in the late 1670s partly in order to prevent the Cree from taking their furs to the English on Hudson Bay (Zoltvany 1969:262-64). These posts remained in operation until the late 1690s (p.261) when the French, who then had posts on the Bay, banned the western inland trade. Following the English possession of the Bay in 1713, the Kaministiquia and Lake Nipigon posts were re-established in 1717 and were to be the stepping stones for La Vérendrye's expeditions to the west in the 1730s.

The first trader known to have moved west of Lake Superior was Jacques de Noyon. A report, dated 1716, seems to be based on a lost memoir of his journey of 1688. The report outlines the canoe route from Lake Superior to the Mer du Ouest, through Rainy Lake, where Noyon seems to have wintered, to Lake of the Woods and so to Lake Winnipeg. The report then gives a short account of plans which were never carried out:

Les Sauvages Assiniboiles ont voulu mener  
à la Mer de l'Ouest de Noyon, voyageur, il y a

environ vingt-huitans (1688). Il avoit alors hiverné à l'entrée du Lac des Cristinaux, sur la rivière Ouchichiq, qui conduit au Lac des Assiniboiles et de là à la Mer du Ouest, et luy proposèrent au printemps d'aller avec eux à la mer du Ouest, où les Sauvages allèrent en guerre... (Margry 1879-1888 VI:496-497).

Despite these names, there is nothing to suggest, in this brief second-hand account, that the Assiniboin occupied Lake of the Woods (Ray 1974:11) nor that the western limit of the Cree was at Rainy Lake. Further, the names of the lakes may reflect the usage of the later 1700s when both the Lakes of the Assiniboin and of the Cree were associated with the Manitoba Lakes system (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:18,56). For example, the itinerary quite properly refers to and describes "Takamaniouen" River, the Cree term for Rainy River, but refers not to Rainy Lake but to the Lake of the Cree, a curious mistake for someone who had wintered on the lake.

After the 1680s, the interest in expanding the fur trade west of Lake Superior declined. In 1696, because of the glut in the European fur market, financial difficulties caused by the war with England from 1689-97 and complaints by the Jesuits, the western forts on and south of Lake Superior were closed and fur trade licenses were revoked until 1715. Officially, there was no reason for French traders to be in western Lake Superior.

After the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, when the French were finally denied posts on the Bay and thus access to the

interior, interest was once more revived in the west: as a source of furs; as a route to the western sea; and as a means of cutting off the English trade. The result of these events, which were more complex than can be described here, was that no further exploration was carried out west of Lake Superior after 1688, until 1717 when Robutel de La Noue was directed to find a route to the northern sea and establish posts first at Kaministiquia "after which he is to go to Takamamisoun [Rainy Lake] in the direction of Lac des Christinaux to set up a second, and through Indians to obtain the necessary information for setting up the third at Lac des Assenipoelle" (Margry 1879-1888 VI:505 in Voisine 1969:581).

#### 4.2.2 CREE AND ASSINIBOIN IN THE WEST

Although the Cree and Assiniboin were mentioned by the French as early as 1640 (Thwaites vol. 18:229-31), the references remain brief and vague even in later years. The early missionary interest in these scattered, small and nomadic groups quickly declined with the realization that their efforts would be far more productive among the larger, more sedentary, agricultural groups to the south.

One of the more detailed and, in the twentieth century, influential accounts of the Cree is from the Relation of 1657-58 (Thwaites vol. 44:249) which described various recently discovered nations in the west and north. The

ninth nation described is the Assinipoualak (Assiniboin) or Warriors of the Rock who live "thirty-five leagues or thereabouts" from Lake Nipigon. The tenth nation were the Kilistinons (Cree) who were divided into four tribes: the Alimibegouek Kilistinons; the Kilistinons of Ataouabouscat Bay; the Kilistinons of the Nipisiriniens; and the Nisibourounik Kilistinons. Thwaites (ibid:325 f.n.21) identifies these Cree groups as being those about Lake Nipigon; those west of James Bay; those between Lake Nipigon and Moose River; and, finally, a group on the Eastmain River. It was on the basis of these identifications that Mandelbaum (1978:15-16) placed the pre-1690 Cree around and east of Lake Nipigon and Ray stated that the "Relations of 1658 suggest that the tribe was centred in the region between James Bay and Lake Nipigon" (1974:12).

The source of the information in the 1657 Relation is said to be Father Gabriel Druillettes then based at Tadoussac. He initiated the establishment of the western missions and, although he himself did not reach Sault Ste. Marie until 1670

(Campeau 1966:281-82), he was eager for information of the west. Druillettes had obtained his data from two unnamed Frenchmen who had "made their way far inland and partly from several Savages" (p.237). Which of the information came from the Frenchmen who had been west and which from the Indians who were probably familiar with the north, is not

known. One of the Frenchmen was probably Groseilliers who had just returned, in 1656, from his visit to the Great Lakes, probably the Huron/Michigan area (Nute 1966:224).

The same two Frenchmen had also told others in Montreal that the Cree "surpass all the above [tribes] in extent, reaching as far as the North Seas" (Thwaites vol 42:221). However, the two men could have had only hearsay knowledge about the country west of Sault Ste. Marie and it is not surprising that Druillettes' knowledge did not extend beyond Lake Nipigon.

Several years later, Druillettes (Thwaites vol 45:217-39) again described the Cree. Here, however, most of the information came from an Indian who had spent two winters travelling on Lake Superior and from there to James Bay and on to Tadoussac. This Indian, apparently while he was at James Bay, "noticed especially the Kilistinons, who are divided among nine different residences ..." (ibid:227). The Indians west of Lake Superior, who are unidentified, "get European goods either from the southern or western sea" (ibid:223). The Indian also described a river flowing north of Lake Superior leading to Hudson Bay from which Port Nelson could be reached. The latter comment is most likely the opinion of Druillettes, who had access to English maps of Hudson Bay.

Druillettes also described the travels of two Frenchmen who had just returned after wintering on the shores of Lake



Superior, probably the expedition of Radisson and Groseilliers of 1659-60. Here, surprisingly, in view of Druillettes' interests, there is no mention of Crees nor of Hudson Bay. This raises the possibility that Radisson's (1961:144-147) description of the Cree and of James Bay may have been learned, at least in part, through his conversations with Druillettes who in turn had his data from the unnamed Indian. As we have seen, Nute has rejected the idea that Radisson made such a trip to James Bay. Very little reliance can be placed on the geographic distribution of the Cree in the 1657 Relation as reflecting anything more than a vague idea of those Cree immediately north and northeast of Lake Superior.

Throughout the 1600s, there is nothing in the French documents which can be used to place a western limit on the Cree and Assiniboin, since the area west of the Great Lakes, with one exception to be discussed, remained unknown. The Jesuits, by 1666, had reached Lake Nipigon and western Lake Superior, but they remained ignorant of the country to the north and west. For example, they were still not sure of the relationship between Hudson Bay, known to them from English maps, and the North Sea, known from Indian reports. Claude Allouez, who established the first mission at the west end of Lake Superior in 1666-1667, wrote that

towards the Northwest there is a nation which eats meat uncooked...while beyond these people lies the North Sea. On this side are the Kilistinons, whose rivers enter into Hutston's

Bay....

The Kilistinons have their usual abode on the shores of the North Sea, and their canoes ply along a River emptying into a great Bay, which we think is, in all probability, the one designated on the Map by the name of Hutson. For those whom I have seen from that country have told me that they had known of a Ship; and one of their old men declared to me that he had himself seen, at the mouth of the River of the Assinipoualac, some peoples allied to the Kilistinouc, whose country is still farther Northward (Thwaites 1896-1901 vol 51:55,57).

This could refer to any of several expeditions: of Hudson to James Bay in 1610-11; of Button to the mouth of the Nelson River in 1612-13; or of James to the same area in 1631-32. Nevertheless, it indicates an awareness that the Cree extended beyond the known northwest.

Although the Jesuits became more familiar with the west, their statements about the Cree and Assiniboin remain vague. Father Jacques Marquette wrote in 1669-70 that

The Kilistinaux are nomadic people, and we do not yet well know their rendezvous. They are toward the Northwest of the Mission [at the west end of Lake Superior], are always in the woods, and have only the Bow to live by (Thwaites 1896-1901 vol.54:193-95).

The Assiniboin were not much better known. They " are Westward...being fifteen or twenty day's journey distant on a lake... I heard that there was in their Country a great River leading to the Western Sea," either the Winnipeg River, the Nelson, or even the Missouri. By 1671, almost the final published Relation, it was still not known if the Assiniboin lived in one large village or in thirty small

ones. They were said to be two weeks' journey from Lake Superior and at the same time close to the North Sea. By contrast, the Cree were simply said to be "dispersed through the whole Region to the North of this Lake Superior" (Thwaites 1896-1901 vol.55:99).

Daniel Greysolon Dulhut (also Duluth) had established a post on Lake Nipigon in 1684 in order to cut off the English trade. He wrote (Margry 1879-1888 vol. VI:50-51) that from there he would be able to send letters to the French at the Hayes River, indicating that the local Indians were familiar with the route there. He wrote that "les Kilistinons, les Assinipoualacs, les Gens de la Sapinière, les Opemens d'Acheliny, les Outouloubys et les Tabitibis, qui composent toutes les nations qui sont à l'ouest de la mer du Nord" (p.51) had promised to meet him next spring at the post, Fort La Torette, he proposed to build at the end of Lake Nipigon. Further, the following summer he proposed to build a post "dans le pays des Kilisinos" which would completely cut off the English. This post, Fort des Francais, was actually built on the junction of the Albany and Kenogami rivers, some 300 km east of Lake Nipigon. The initial foray into the northwest was made by Jacques de Noyon, whose wintering at Rainy Lake in 1688, was not to be duplicated, at least officially, until La Noue's wintering of 1717 and La Vérendrye's explorations beginning in 1731-32. No writings of Noyon are known, but as we have seen, (Margry

vol. IV:496-97) the Assiniboin of the area had offered to take him to "la mer du Ouest," apparently Lake Winnipeg. There is no mention of the Cree other than in the name "Lac des Crists ou Cristinaux." However, the Assiniboin had told Noyon of people further off, white and bearded, who lived in fortified villages, a similar story to that which later led La Vérendrye to the Missouri River. According to this same report, Jérémie, who was at Fort Bourbon on the mouth of the Hayes River from 1696-1714, had been brought two of these people (see also Jérémie 1926:33).

The seventeenth century documents, then, give no western limit for the Cree. Instead, whenever and wherever the French approach northern and northwestern Ontario, there are vague stories of Cree groups beyond. There are only vague ideas of Lake Winnipeg and, perhaps, of the Missouri River. The geographical area with which the French were familiar was curiously circumscribed given the interest in the west. There are no first hand accounts of the country beyond Lake Superior, nor would any exist until the 1730s. Certainly, the data do not support the view that the homeland of the Cree, in 1658, lay east of Lake Nipigon. Instead, that area then marked the limits of western geography with which the French were familiar, even at second-hand. For direct information on the distribution of the Cree and Assiniboin, it is necessary to look at the travels made west of Lake Superior in the 1730s, 70 years

after Radisson and Groseilliers' began the exploration of Lake Superior.

#### 4.2.3. THE FRENCH IN THE WEST: 1716-1763

The renewed interest in the west both as a source of furs and as a potential route to the western Sea culminated in the western expeditions of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de la Vérendrye. As early as 1717, Zacharie Robutel de la Noue had been sent to re-establish the post at Kaministiquia (modern Lakehead, Ontario), and at Rainy Lake and to build a third at Lac des Assenipolle, (Lake of the Woods ?) with the aim of reaching the Western Sea. Indian hostilities prevented him from going beyond Kaministiquia (Voisine 1969:581; Zoltvany 1974:248 but cf Burpee 1908:7,93) and were to delay further expansion until the 1730s.

In 1728, La Vérendrye succeeded his brother as commander of the Poste du Nord based at Kaministiquia. Using data he mostly obtained from the Cree, he was able to influence government policy and shift the search for the Western Sea from the Mississippi River drainage to the northwest. In 1730, it was decided to send him to build a post at Lake Winnipeg. The post "would not only facilitate the discovery of the western sea but also greatly benefit French commerce since the area was rich in peltries, peltries which were going to the English on Hudson Bay through the Crees" (Zoltvany 1974:247-249).

It was five years before La Vérendrye actually reached Lake Winnipeg, meanwhile he had heard reports of the Mandan/Hidatsa villages on the Middle Missouri and rumours of the Spanish trade. Thinking this was the route to the Western Sea, he concentrated on reaching the Missouri and sent two expeditions there from his post at modern Portage la Prairie, established in 1738. He realized too late that fulfillment of his hopes might better lie to the north. It was while organizing an expedition in 1749 to the Saskatchewan River, on whose lower reaches he had posts established in 1741, that La Vérendrye died in Montreal.

His death did not mark the end of the French presence in the west but the interest in the west began to focus on the fur trade which was faced with increasingly serious problems. The Seven Years War, 1756-63, meant there were serious difficulties in getting government support for exploration and in obtaining manufactured trade goods from Europe. As well, men were needed back east to defend New France from the attacks from the English Colonies. The result was a rapid turn-over of the commandants of the "Post du'Ouest" as the entire fur district in the west was called. Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre succeeded La Vérendrye (Chaput 1974:374-76). Although based at Fort La Reine (Portage la Prairie), Legardeur de Saint-Pierre sent men up-river from modern The Pas, Manitoba, to establish, briefly, Fort la Jonquière, near or above modern Nipawin

(Legardeur 1887). This was, apparently, the last effort directed at establishing a base for reaching the Western Sea.

In 1752, Louis de La Corne was appointed to a three year term (Russ 1974:332). Fort Paskoya (The Pas) was improved and a post established at Fort des Prairies (also called Fort St. Louis and, later, Fort à la Corne) below the Forks of the Saskatchewan River. This marked the furthest penetration of the French into the west. The strategy was now to intersect the Indians as they made their way to Hudson Bay by either the lower Saskatchewan Delta or by way of Cumberland Lake.

A policy change regarding the western trade opened it to the highest bidder, and in 1756 Louis-Joseph, son of La Vérendrye was appointed commandant until 1758. However, he operated the post while he remained in Montreal (Champagne 1974:243). In a report dated 1757 (Bougainville 1908:185-90), based on information obtained from La Corne (p.185 f.n.31), we have the only general account of the western trade after La Vérendrye. The area, called the "Sea of the West," consisted of seven posts between Rainy Lake and the Forks of the Saskatchewan:

... the forts Saint-Pierre, Saint-Charles, Bourbon, de la Reine, Dauphin, Paskoia, and des Prairies, all forts of upright pickets.... The savages who come there to trade are the Cristinaux and the Assiniboels; these two nations form each a dozen villages of two hundred and fifty men, each one supporting the

other (p.185,187).

In 1758, the "Poste de l'Ouest" was taken over by Charles-Rene Dejordy de Villebon, the last commandant. He apparently remained at Fort la Reine while a clerk took care of the remaining two posts at Dauphin and The Pas. Dejordy returned to Montreal in 1760, only to find it had capitulated to the English on 8 September. This marked the end of the officially licensed French trade in the west. However, it appears from HBC documents that individual traders or coureurs des bois continued to visit until the arrival of the Montreal traders on the Saskatchewan in 1767 (Champagne 1974:171; Russell 1982a:111) .

Although the French occupied the Saskatchewan River for twenty years, there is only one brief general account of the area and it is second-hand. By contrast, when the HBC sent men inland between 1754 and 1774, the result, as we shall see, was eight lengthy journals and two summary accounts. Thus there is a great difference, both qualitatively and quantitatively, in the respective bodies of data.

Unlike the personnel at the English posts on the Bay, who were expected to submit journals, account books and annual reports to the HBC head office in London, the French traders left almost no records of their ventures in the west. There was no head office to report to and they arranged their own financing with the merchants in New France. For much of La Vérendrye's sojourn in the west, his



business associates accompanied him and carried out business while he attempted to organize his search for the western sea. Since he was seeking the western sea under the permission of the crown, it was necessary that he report to the Governor in New France, who in turn reported to the Minister of Marine in France.

It is from this official correspondence (La Vérendrye 1968), consisting of brief reports, memoirs and abstracts, that we find incidental references to the Cree and Assiniboin in the west. Because there are only two journal segments, both concerned with the journeys to the Missouri River, there is surprisingly little mention of the locations and identities of the various Indian groups west of Lake Winnipeg. However, much background information was probably communicated personally by La Vérendrye or his representatives in their many journeys back east to plead for extra support.

La Vérendrye made few general statements about the distributions of the western Cree and Assiniboin. The clearest picture comes from a memorandum (La Vérendrye 1968:483-488) on the discovery of the Paskoyac (i.e. Saskatchewan) River written by his son in 1749. Here, the groups trading at the various posts can be determined:

Fort St. Charles, Lake of the Woods: Monsonis and Cree  
Fort Maurepas, Lower Red River: Strong Wood Cree  
Fort la Reine, Assiniboin River: Assiniboin  
Fort Dauphin: Cree of the Prairie, Canoe Assiniboin

Fort Bourbon, Red Deer River: Cree of the Lakes and  
Little Rivers.

As well, this memorandum mentions that the Cree of the lower Saskatchewan River knew of the Rocky Mountains since they described its source as "very far, from a height of land where there are lofty mountains" on the other side of which lay a great lake, "the water of which was undrinkable" (p.487).

The "Fork" of the Saskatchewan was described as the meeting place each spring of the Cree of the Mountains, Prairies, and Rivers where they decided whether to trade with the English or French. This Forks was not the present Forks of the North and South Saskatchewan (cf. La Vérendrye 1968:487 f.n.1) but rather the forks of the route from the lower Saskatchewan by which Hudson Bay could be reached: either the portage into Cumberland Lake or the Moose Lake system. Similarly, the Cree of the Mountains were not from the Rocky Mountains but rather the Manitoba Escarpment whose various hills are still called "mountains" today.

In a recently discovered memorandum of La Vérendrye (1982), is a description of the identity and size of various groups along the route from Sault St Marie west to Fort la Reine. There is little information on the western Cree and Assiniboin as the memorandum was apparently written shortly after 1741, before posts were established west of the mouth of the Saskatchewan River. However, it shows that Cree and

Assiniboin were well-established in southern Manitoba, information which had before been only inferred:

... The Barriere [on the lower Winnipeg River] is inhabited by Cristinaux of that name; they number 25 to 30 men who speak that same language, and the Monsonis.

... the Barriere to Fort Maurepas, at the bottom of the great Winnipeg River ... is inhabited by the Northern Cristinaux who number 50 to 60 men. They speak a corrupted Cristinaux derived from the inland people [gens des terres]. There are hardly 25 to 30 of these gens des terres, who speak bad Sauteux with a lot of accents.

[The area] from the Tête de Bouef [Bull Head] which divides [Lake] Winnipeg from Lake Bourbon ... to Fort Bourbon, which is at the bottom of the Postkoyac River ... to the discharge of [Lake Winnipeg] ... is inhabited by the true Cristinaux who claim to be about six hundred men, most of whom are neighbours to the English.

The country to the north of [the Assiniboine] River belongs to the Cristinaux of the strong woods [du bois fort], of the fisher[du Pecan] and to those of the rough water [de l'eau Trouble]. They could number altogether three hundred men, and a large part of them are allied to the Assiniboine.

The south side of the [Assiniboine] River belongs to the Assiniboine, who also claim the Red River. They are said to number 14 or 15 villages, of which the smallest have 20 to 30 lodges, while several have 100, 200 and 300. They all speak the same Assiniboine language. They occupy about 300 to 400 leagues of country, all of it prairie.

La Vérendrye's maps have little information on Indian groups; instead they focus on geographical features (La Vérendrye 1968; Warkentin and Ruggles 1970). His earliest map of the west (La Vérendrye 1968:52; Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:77), drawn in 1728-29 before he left Kaministiquia, shows his Cree informants were familiar with

the lower Saskatchewan and its source in the "Montage de Pierres Brilliantes," the Shining or Rocky Mountains. A 1734 map shows Cree and/or Assiniboin trails to the Mandan villages and, as detailed on a later map of 1741-42, a war trail to the upper Missouri (La Vérendrye 1968:98; Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:79). A map drawn in 1737, while the furthest west post was Fort Maurepas I at modern Winnipeg, shows Cree living west of the Manitoba lakes, the Assiniboin beyond the Manitoba Escarpment, while on the upper Saskatchewan River lived the "Hiattchiritiny," the various Blackfoot groups and their allies (La Vérendrye 1968:116).

There are only three other accounts of the west as a result of the French Regime, those of Father Aulneau, Legardeur de Saint-Pierre and La France. The information about the Cree and Assiniboin in these is very similar to that of the earlier period: details are very scant and there is little attempt to sketch broad descriptions. As the French moved further west, they continually encountered Cree and Assiniboin and there was no mention of possible western limits on the distribution of the two groups. There is no discussion of the history of the two groups and certainly nothing which suggests that either group was a recent arrival in any area under observation.

The first account is the letter from Lake of the Woods, headed "Fort St. Charles, among the Kristinaux," written in April 1736 by Jean-Pierre Aulneau, a Jesuit priest

accompanying La Vérendrye. Five weeks later he was killed by the Sioux along with some of La Vérendrye's men (Aulneau 1893:70-9).

Aulneau described his difficulties in converting the Cree but was looking forward to the summer when he and La Vérendrye were to go to Lake Winnipeg

... with the Assiniboels, who occupy all the land to the south of it. The lands on the remaining sides are taken up by the Kristinaux who occupy not only all the northern part as far as the sea, but all the immense stretch of country beginning at the Lake of the Woods and extending far beyond Lake Ouinipigon also belongs to them (Aulneau 1893:73).

They then planned on travelling to the Mandan/Hidatsa villages with the Assiniboin

who start every year, just as soon as the streams are frozen over, for the country of the Kaotiouak or Autelssipounes [Mandan and/or Hidatsa] to procure their supply of corn. It is to evangelize these tribes that my superiors have sent me (p.73).

Aulneau also hoped to follow the Missouri River as the Cree told him that they had seen "sea-wolves," which he took to be a sure sign that the Western Sea was nearby. The Cree had also described three rivers flowing from Lake Winnipeg into the sea beyond Port Nelson (p.73).

The second account is a memoir written in 1753 by Legardeur de Saint-Pierre (1887) describing events at Fort la Reine and the founding of Fort la Jonquière on the Saskatchewan River in 1751. Saint-Pierre does not present an overview of the west and only mentions specific incidents

involving either the Cree or Assiniboin. His efforts to discover a route to the Western Sea from Fort la Reine were hampered by the wars between the Cree and Assiniboin and the "Hyactchélini, the Brochets and the Gros Ventres." The Hyactchélini or Archithinue simply means "Strangers" in Cree and meant any group who was neither Cree nor Assiniboin (see chapter 12 below). The Gros Ventre were the Hidatsa (see chapter 13 below), while the Brochet, who lived above the Hidatsa on the Missouri (e.g. La Vérendrye 1968:288, map V) were an unknown, but perhaps related group.

Legardeur arranged a truce with one of the latter groups at Fort la Reine and was to meet "all these nations," who would take him to the source of the Missouri, at a post to be established on the Saskatchewan River, Fort la Jonquière (p.clxi). The expedition failed but Legardeur's account of the events at Fort la Jonquière, which was learned second-hand, is very confusing since he did not know the area personally and used unfamiliar names for Indian groups. It seems that the Assiniboin attacked a visiting group of "Yhatchélini" at Fort la Jonquière, who were to take him to the Brochet Indians who were, in turn, to guide him to the sources of the Missouri.

Other than stating that the Cree "are the moving spirits of all these Continents" (ibid:clxv), Saint-Pierre hardly mentions the Cree. He met a couple of Cree in the Lake of the Woods area who had been released by the Sioux

and he speaks of holding a council of Cree on the lower Winnipeg River. More important, thirteen years after the founding of Fort la Reine, and at a time Mandelbaum considered the Indians to be highly dependent on the fur trade, were the attempts to destroy it. First, in the fall of 1751, a group of 200 Assiniboin forced entry to the post and, with the support of Legardeur's Cree interpreter, threatened to kill and rob him. The next spring a different band of Assiniboin appeared and pleaded for forgiveness. Despite this repentance, they burned the post four days after Legardeur left for Kaministiquia (p.clxvi-clxvii).

The third French account, the first description of the country immediately west of Lake Winnipegosis, comes from a man whose life in the west is poorly understood (c.f. Bowsfield 1974). In 1742, a Metis, called Kenedy Corne by the HBC, arrived at York Factory (B.239/a/23 June 4, 1742). He had been born at Sault Ste. Marie and had trapped and collected furs in the Michilimakinac area. After disputes with the French officials over trade licenses, he decided to seek employment with the HBC. Not empowered to hire him, the Factor, James White, sent him to London where he met Arthur Dobbs, a leader of the movement to get the HBC charter annulled. Dobbs recorded Corne's biography, whom he called, and who is known today as, Joseph La France. Dobbs included this biographical sketch in his description of Hudson Bay (Dobbs 1967:29-45) and the sketch was also

published in the papers of the 1749 Parliamentary Inquiry into the HBC (Great Britain 1749a:Appendix II). La France, himself, could not be called as a witness to the Inquiry since by then he was dead (Bowsfield 1974:341-42).

It is impossible to determine how much of this garbled account is the result of La France's confusion and how much was due to Dobbs' misunderstanding. However, it is clear that Dobbs interpreted La France's description of the interior in light of La Potherie and Jérémie, whom he had quoted in detail earlier. This, as we have seen, caused problems for Mandelbaum. Further, there are discrepancies in the events recorded by Dobbs and those recorded at York Factory. According to Dobbs, in 1739, La France, then 30 years old, left the Great Lakes area to seek employment with the HBC after the French refused to give him a trading license. He made his way to "little Ouinipique" (Lake Winnipegosis) in the spring of 1741 and spent the next year in the area of Lake Du Siens (Cigne = Swan Lake?), Lake Cariboux (Red Deer Lake or Moose Lake ?) and Lake Pachegoia (Basquia = Cedar Lake?) before leaving for York Factory by way of the Savanne or Epinette River (Minago River).

However, La France told James White that he had "lived amongst the Indians for these 14 Years past and Usd to go to ye french Settlements to trade as Indians did, but upon some ill Usage to his Consort and himself he had left them and would very willingly have staid here.... [and would rather



starve] then he would ever see ye french more" (HBCA B.239/a/23 4,9 June 1742). Perhaps it was because of his anger that La France said nothing to Dobbs, and nothing further to White, of the French posts he passed throughout the west.

La France gives a general description of the Indians in the Lake Winnipeg area:

Upon the west side of Lake Quinipique are the Nation of the Assinibouels of the Meadows, and farther North a great Way, are the Assinibouels of the Woods. To the Southward of these are the Nation of Beaux Hommes, situated betwixt them and the Sieux Indians. The Indians on the East Side are the Christinaux, whose Tribes go as far North on that Side as the Assinibouels do on the other (Dobbs 1968:35).

Both La France's detailed description and map of the west, as it has been passed on by Dobbs, is difficult to understand. The map especially is confusing and seems to be based on a literal reading of La France's account who, perhaps, was dead when Dobbs drew it. La France (Dobbs 1968:36-7) wintered on the northeast shore of Lake Winnipeg in 1740-41 and spent the next year in the Lake Winnipegosis area. The nearby River Du Siens had two branches, one leading westerly to the "Nation of Vieux Hommes," named for a group of old men who had separated from their original group. The other easterly branch led to mountains where the nation of "Cris Panis Blanc" lived, seemingly the Manitoba Escarpment. Lake Cariboux was inhabited by Christinaux on

the east side and Assinibouels of the Woods on the west. The River De Vieux Hommes (seemingly the Saskatchewan), was 200 leagues long, without rapids, muddy, and entered Lake Pachegoia from the west. From this river, Indians travelled to the "Manoutisibi or Churchill River," a reference to the portage into the Cumberland Lake and Sturgeon-weir River system.

This last statement shows that La France's earlier comment that Cree territory lay on the east side of Lake Winnipeg is in error, probably a result of Dobbs' misinterpretation. La France was apparently still with his Cree companions when he wintered west of Lake Winnipegosis and mentioned the Panis Blanc Cree to the west. Further, he arrived at York Factory in company with 80 canoes of "Keiskachewan" Cree who came from the upper Saskatchewan River (see section 9.5 below).

The French records throughout the 1600s and early 1700s do not indicate any western limits to the Cree and Assiniboin. Instead, wherever the French penetrate west of Lake Superior, they found themselves hearing of still other Cree or Assiniboin further to the west. There is nothing which suggests that either group were newcomers to the west. Since the French did not reach central Manitoba until the late 1730s, however, it is necessary to look at the body of data from Hudson Bay. Here information about the inland area dates to the late 1600s.

#### 4.2.4 SUMMARY

Between 1659 and 1753, the French reached Lake Superior and then penetrated westward as far as the Forks of the Saskatchewan River. According to the accepted view of Cree history, the Cree began their conquest of the west about 1690, leaving their homeland located east of Lake Nipigon or, at the most, east of Lake Winnipeg. This movement of the Cree should be reflected in the French documents of the time. However, a careful reading of this material does not support the accepted view. Although the French observers were constantly in contact with Cree as they moved west, there are no statements that the Cree were also migrating. Instead, we find either that there is no discussion of the identity of groups to the westward, that accounts of such groups are garbled and second-hand, or that there are vague hints that such groups included the Cree. In light of the deficiencies of this material, it is necessary to look at the contemporary records from the western coast of Hudson Bay.

## 5.0 THE VIEW FROM THE BAY: 1612-1754.

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The historic documents from the west coast of Hudson Bay differ very much from those of the French exploration of the interior. Many more documents have survived and they are of a highly varied nature: daily journals, accounting ledgers, annual reports, general descriptions of life on the Bay and, more rarely, informal correspondence between posts. From this body of information, we have many references to inland groups. Unfortunately, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to determine their geographical locations since, with only a few exceptions, employees were not sent inland until after 1754. Thus, there was only a vague and confused picture of the interior geography.

The traders, both English and French, were initially interested in the interior. Despite the well-known accusation made in 1752 by a disgruntled former employee, that "the Company have for eighty years slept at the edge of a frozen sea; they have shewn no curiosity to penetrate farther themselves...." (Robson 1752:6), they in fact had a strong interest in the interior when the HBC posts were first established. The directives from London often stipulated that men were to be sent inland (Rich

1948:48,141; Rich 1957:65,66,79,115). An example is the order to Henry Sergeant, appointed Governor to Fort Albany in 1683:

... you are to choose out from amongst our serveants such as are best quallified wth. strength of body and the Country Language to travaile & to penetrate into the Countrey to Draw downe the Indians by fayre & gentle means to trade wth. us (Rich 1948:75).

The experiences of first inland travellers would seem to have discouraged further attempts. The three HBC employees who were eventually sent inland all suffered great hardships which are, perhaps, reflected in the severe mental depressions that Alexander Mackenzie describes in personal letters almost 100 years later (Mackenzie 1970:454-55); the visionary experience of David Thompson (1962:43-4), and the religious conversion of Daniel Harmon (1957:161-63).

In 1690, Henry Kelsey, aged 23, was sent on a two-year journey into the interior from York Factory. He stands alone in outlining the fears he underwent, an acknowledgement that is missing in the formal accounts of later explorers and which would enable us to better evaluate their observations. Kelsey (1929:1) places his journal in perspective through the introductory poem he wrote summarizing his experiences:

Now Reader Read for I am well assur'd  
 Thou dost not know the hardships I endr'd  
 .....  
 Likewise many other things wch I cannot here  
 unfold  
 For many times I have often been oppresst  
 With fears & Cares yt I could not take my rest

Because I was alone & no friend could find  
 And once yt in my travels I was left behind  
 Which struck fear & terror into me

It is perhaps because of his experiences that Kelsey does not give the slightest hint of this trail-blazing trip in any of his later official journals. The single exception is in his memorandum of his life at the Bay, written about 1722, where he described the year 1690 very simply: "... I was sent away wt ye stone Indians in whose Country I remaind 2 years Enduring much hardships" (ibid:111).

William Stuart died a "lunatick" in 1719, aged 41, four years after his wintering in the Barrens. How much this experience contributed to his breakdown is not clear, but he also underwent severe hardships. His group first suffered an outbreak of illness and was then reduced to such starvation on the frozen Barrens that they were forced to eat their dogs. Stuart, who feared he would not survive, wrote back to York Factory, "I do not think I Shall see you any more but I have a good heart" (B.239/a/2 22 April 1716). In fact, the Cree who brought this letter said that Stuart "was in great fear of being starved & weeps very much to think of their misfortunes and for fear of being starved" (ibid:22 April, 1716).

Richard Norton was sent into the Barrens from Fort Churchill in 1717 when he was 17 years old, the last HBC employee to be sent inland in this period. Because of missing archival material, almost nothing is known of the

five-month trip he made. Years later he was questioned about his experiences by an old acquaintance, but "I did not find anything remained in his memory, but the danger and terroure he underwent" (Coats 1852:32). Although both Kelsey and Norton rose to become in charge of York Factory and Fort Churchill, respectively, their post journals do not indicate any knowledge whatsoever of the interior.

No daily journals survive from the French occupation of York Factory, but they too sent employees inland. James Knight (HBCA B.239/a/2 May 9 1716) had complained that the French, before Jérémie's time, had sent men inland to aid the Cree in their warfare. However, as we shall see, there is evidence of only two such trips.

Despite these inland travels and the information brought by trading Indians, the inland geography was not well understood. As a result, it is difficult to interpret the information about inland groups until after 1754 when detailed first-hand observations were written. However, the information which we do have, from the coast of Hudson Bay and from the inland, indicate that the Cree and Assiniboin were well to the west of Lake Winnipeg by 1690.

## 5.2 EUROPEAN OBSERVATIONS: 1612-1714

The Indians living on the west coast of Hudson Bay, although not directly exposed to the fur trade until 1682, had access to European goods at the same time as Champlain

was first exploring the route up the Ottawa River to the eastern Great Lakes in 1615. Thus both the local Cree and inland Indians were readily disposed to accept the traders and their goods when they finally appeared at Port Nelson in 1682. The initial sources of these goods were the abandoned vessels left from expeditions to Port Nelson in 1613 and at Fort Churchill in 1620. It is from later comments about these expeditions that we learn of a continuity of an Indian occupation, no doubt Cree, of the western Hudson Bay Lowlands long before the fur trade was introduced.

#### 5.2.1 EARLY EXPEDITIONS TO THE BAY: 1612-1682

In 1612, Thomas Button was sent to look for Henry Hudson who had been abandoned the year before by a mutinous crew after wintering on the east coast of James Bay. However, Button's formal instructions ordered him to look for the Northwest Passage (Eames 1966:144) and he ended up sailing along the west coast of Hudson Bay where he wintered his two vessels at the mouth of the Nelson River. His own journal is lost but limited information on his expedition was later collected by Luke Fox in preparation for his own search for the Passage in 1631 (Christy 1894 vol.i). Because Fox was not interested in Button's sojourn at the Nelson River, we know nothing of Button's wintering other than that he was forced to abandon his "great ship" because many of his men had died, probably from scurvy (p.166 note



1).

It would appear that Button had not met any Indians up to 22 December 1612 since it was then proposed, among other activities, to "search the River... that we may meet with some Inhabitants" (ibid:171). Whether they later met Indians is not known. However, the large quantity of stores which were abandoned were probably plundered, as were similar remains to the north.

These other remains, at Churchill harbour, were the result of Jens Munck's (1897) wintering of 1619-20. Later observers at the Bay were only vaguely aware of this expedition since Munck's journal, published in Copenhagen in 1624 and 1723, was not translated into English until 1897. This Danish expedition, also in search of the Northwest Passage, also suffered tragic loss of life. Munck and two others, the only survivors of a crew of some 64 men, were forced to abandon their frigate but managed to sail their sloop back to Europe. Munck did not see any local inhabitants apart from a black dog, mistakenly shot for a fox, which showed evidence of having worn a muzzle. However, as we shall see, later accounts told of the plundering of Munck's relics by local Cree as well as Chipewyan and Eskimo groups.

The next two expeditions to sail the west coast of the Bay in 1631 have left extant journals. Thomas James (Christy vol.II 1894) sailed by, but did not land at either

Churchill or Port Nelson. Although he later wintered on James Bay, his journal is irrelevant to this discussion.

Luke Fox stopped briefly at the mouth of the Nelson River in the summer of 1631. An abbreviated version of his journal was first published in 1635. It was later re-published (Christy 1894 vol. II) augmented both by the original manuscript, "differing from the published account in many ways" (ibid vol.i:cviii), as well as by a manuscript journal kept by his ship's master. Here we find the first European observations of evidence of coastal Indians who, it seems, were Cree.

Fox landed at several spots as he sailed south along the coast of the Bay. Near modern Eskimo Point, some 250 km north of Churchill, they found "a piece of a rib of a Canoe, such as in Canada, for it hath been boarded with birch-rind, a piece of a bow, an arrow headed with a nail, the head flat beaten," of which the ship master wrote, "I suppose it came from Port Nelson" (p.333 f.n.1).

The use of a canoe rather than a skin kayak indicates Indians rather than Eskimo, and the use of birch canoes strongly suggests Cree rather than Chipewyan. Although the latter made canoes (Hearne 1911:134), these were very small and were used only for crossing streams inland. Furthermore, birch sufficient for canoes did not grow in the Barrens. Indeed, for many years, the HBC people at Churchill thought the Chipewyan never made canoes since they

never saw them in use.

Fox did not visit Munck's site at Churchill but he landed at Port Nelson in mid-August 1631, where he saw the remains of Button's expedition:

... the relics of a decayed ship, as anchors, cables, a tent covered with old sail-cloth, a gun, an iron crow... great stores of shot of lead and iron (Christy 1894 vol. II:344, note 4).

Further up-river, they found "the footing of a man" and shortly after "the broad footing of Deere, and hard by them, the frame of a Tent standing which had lately been made, with the studdle of a fire, the haire of Deer, and bones of fowle, left here" (p.347). The ship's master, however, wrote that "we found many Savage's Tents, but had been longer made, with part of an arrow" (p.347 n.2).

Fox's comments are the earliest direct documentary evidence of inhabitants in the area, and it would appear that these were Cree. With the single exception of a report of an Eskimo umiak sighted at Severn River, historic documents contain no reference to Eskimo or Chipewyan so far south as the mouth of the Nelson.

More important than Fox's comments in identifying these inhabitants are the traditions among the local Cree regarding both the Button and the Munck sites which must have developed almost as soon as the sites were abandoned. Le Moyne d'Iberville, who wintered at York Factory in 1694, wrote that he had seen where two ships had wintered and the

larger ship was abandoned: "These were the first Europeans that ever appeared in that place, according to the Indians. I do not know the year" (Nute 1978:285).

There was also a tradition among the local Cree at York Factory concerning Munck's site at Churchill. According to Nicolas Jérémie (1926:18-19), who was at York Factory between 1694 and 1714, when the natives reached the site the following summer, "they were much astonished to see so many dead bodies." Initially terror-stricken, they ran away but returned out of curiosity to scavenge the site. Unfortunately, they were unfamiliar with gunpowder: "They foolishly set fire to it, with the result that they were all killed, and the house and everything in it were burnt up. So that others who came later got nothing except the nails and pieces of iron.

This scavenging is independently reported by James Knight who established Fort Churchill in 1717. The Indians had broken up some of the Cannon left by Munck, and a Chipewyan group, who had come to York Factory, had been digging about "this Summer A Mile round" to look for Iron (Knight 1932:120-21). Chipewyan captives told Knight that although they had obtained iron at Churchill, they seldom came "for fear of there Enemies they had been killed Sevll times by there going there" (HBCA B.239/a/2 6 1716). The lower Churchill River was known to the local Cree as the "Strangers' River " apparently a reference to Munck's

expedition (Jérémie 1926:18).

This evidence, although circumstantial, indicates that the local Cree about the Nelson and Hayes rivers had occupied the western coast of Hudson Bay since at least the early 1600s, much earlier than the French expansion of the fur trade into the western Great Lakes area in the 1650s.

### 5.3. EUROPEAN OBSERVATIONS ON THE INLAND: 1682-1720

Ironically, in view of the few data we have on the Cree and Assiniboin from the French fur trade in the western interior, the only general descriptions of the interior we have from the Bay, in the early period, are from French writers. Although HBC personnel may have written similar accounts, almost all the pre-1714 records from the Bay have been lost.

After their trip to western Lake Superior in 1659-60, Radisson and Groseilliers realized that the potential fur resources of the western interior could best be reached through posts on Hudson Bay, especially from Port Nelson. Following the granting of the HBC Charter in 1670, two settlements were planned: one at the post already established in 1688 at Rupert River on James Bay and one at Port Nelson "with designe to make that their Chiefe Factory" (Rich 1948:363). Despite the importance placed on Port Nelson, all attempts made to establish a post there starting in 1670 failed until 1682 when, suddenly, there was a

surfeit of posts. Radisson, who had returned to the French, established his on the Hayes River. The HBC had an establishment on the lower Nelson River, some six miles overland. Finally, a post of a group of Boston interlopers, led by the son of the HBC ship's captain, was established farther up the Nelson River. By clever manipulation, Radisson managed to capture the other two which had been unaware of each other.

Although interlopers were always feared they never again presented an actual threat to the HBC, but the Company was to remain wary of any expeditions to the area, even when they were officially sanctioned. However, the shambles of the winter of 1682-83 gave a foretaste of the future. The English regained the Port Nelson area, known as Fort Bourbon under the French, in 1684, but with the outbreak of war in 1689-97, the posts changed hands several times until, under the Treaty of Ryswick of 1697, the French retained possession. However, the War of the Spanish Succession from 1701-14, resolved by the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713, resulted in France relinquishing possession of HBC territories. Except for their brief abandonment in 1781-82 when they were destroyed by Lapérouse, both York Factory, which was repossessed in 1714, and Churchill, which was established in 1717, remained in HBC hands throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Little is known of the early attempts to build at Port Nelson. Some data are to be found in

several depositions made much later in 1687 (partially quoted in Rich 1948:363-34; Nute 1978:142). There is a short account given by a participant of the abortive attempt of 1670 (Gorst 1978:291-92). As well, there are indirect references in the earliest history of the Bay written in 1707 based on now lost journals kept at James Bay (Oldmixon 1968). This evidence, as scattered and scant as it is, shows that the Cree were seasonal occupants of the coast as was suggested by the data from records of the early expeditions.

The 1670 Port Nelson account states that some of the men "lay in an Indian Tent overnight" (Rich 1948:363).

According to another account

There were ye remaines of some of ye Natives Wigwams & Sweating houses & some peeces of dressd Beaver skins, & they supposed the Indians had not long been gone from that place further Southward or higher into the Country (Nute 1978: Appendix 2, 291-92).

According to testimony made 14 years afterwards, an expedition returned to Port Nelson with Groseilliers for two weeks in July 1673. No Indians were seen but they "saw several Wigwams, where they had lately been, and supposed them to be gone up the Country" (Oldmixon 1968:384). Some presents were left "that the Indians finding the Same might be induced to be there the next year" (Nute 1978:142), but this attempt to establish a post in 1674 failed as did, apparently, a reputed attempt in 1680 for which no

documentary evidence exists (Rich 1948:364).

Jérémie, who was at Fort Bourbon between 1696-1714 described the history of the area and mentioned several local Indian traditions of the early expeditions. However, his account confuses the HBC attempts to settle Nelson River in the 1670s with Button's wintering in 1612 which Jérémie supposed to have occurred after the Danish expedition. According to Jérémie, Button was said to have arrived late in the fall and been unable to meet any Indians as they had already gone inland for the winter. After raising the arms of England, Button left.

He also hung a big kettle on a tree, and in it placed some small articles. These the Indians made use of in the springtime, when they came back to the sea coast. As they already had samples of these kinds of goods through the disaster which happened to the Danes, they felt sure that the same people, who had left them such a rich store would come again next year. They waited until the end of the season. The English returned, as was expected... (Jérémie 1926:22-23).

By 1682 when Port Nelson was settled, the local Cree were expecting the arrival of traders. Not only were they familiar with European goods as a result of the abandoned ships of Button and Munck, but, on at least one occasion, goods had been left for them. Furthermore they were familiar with the posts at the Bottom of the Bay (Radisson 1961:191,196) and would have known that the Company was planning on establishing a post in the area. Lastly, they were probably familiar with the French traders on the Great



Lakes (e.g. p.218). No doubt word of these various events was widespread throughout the inland, which helps to explain why the fur trade was so quickly established at the Bay.

#### 5.4 THE FRENCH NARRATIVES: 1684-1714

As a result of the sporadic French occupations of the posts in the Port Nelson area, four general descriptions of the area were written. As well, we have Radisson's (1961) two narratives of his experiences in 1682 and 1684 although he did not describe the interior.

##### 5.4.1 SILVY: 1684-85

Antoine Silvy, a Jesuit who had spent ten years as a missionary in the Great Lakes and later the Tadoussac areas (Tremblay 1969:607-08), accompanied La Martinière in 1684-5 to re-supply Fort Bourbon. Finding it in the hands of the English, they were forced to set up a post in opposition for the winter. Silvy's (1968) account of the wintering, first published in 1904 and translated in 1931, is concerned mainly with the events of the sea-voyage out and back and the difficulties with the English. He did not like the local Indians, "only a handful of very wretched people" who preferred the English and laughed at attempts to convert them. He only briefly mentions the Assiniboin and Cree, whom he differentiated from the local Indians, the former coming from fifteen to twenty days from "their village which

is beyond the great lake of the Assiniboines [Lake Winnipeg], of which Port Nelson is the outlet, according to what we hear" (p.68). In June, at least three groups of Cree came to trade, totalling 90 canoes. Not knowing just when, or if, the Assiniboin would come, and wanting to catch the spring tides, the French left in early July. Therefore, it is not known how many more canoes may have come to trade that summer.

#### 5.4.2 MAREST: 1694-1695

As soon as he arrived in Canada, Father Pierre-Gabriel Marest was assigned to accompany Le Moyne d'Iberville in his expedition to regain York Factory in 1694-95 (Hutcheson 1969:454-4). According to his English editor, Marest's letter was written about 1706, long after he had left Hudson Bay and was in the Illinois country. Its details indicate that the letter must have been based on a journal kept during the winter of 1694-5. Marest stayed at the post the following year until, in September, 1696, it was recaptured by the English, "The details I related to you when I recrossed to France..." (Marest 1968:129). However, he does not present any information about this second wintering.

Marest (1968:128) wrote that he was able to write a Cree dictionary through the help of an Englishman "who knows the language very well" and a Frenchman, M. de la Motte, of whom nothing more is known. If, as seems likely, Henry

Kelsey was the Englishman (Hutcheson 1969:454), then Marest's discussion of the various Indian groups gains added weight.

Marest wrote that "seven or eight nations ...have dealings with the fort," but he discusses only two groups in detail:

The most distant, the most numerous, and the most important are the Assiniboines and the Crees.... The Crees and Assiniboines are allies ... [with] the same enemies and carry on the same wars.... The Crees are numerous and their country is much the larger. They reach nearly to Lake Superior whither some go to trade. I have seen some who have been at Sault Ste. Marie and ... [even] as far as Montreal. Bourbon [Nelson] river goes as far as the lake of the Crees, which is twenty or twenty-five days' journey from the fort. The Assiniboines are thirty-five or forty days' journey from the fort (1968:123-24).

Marest describes other Indian groups who did not trade. The Ikovirinioucks, 100 leagues to the north, "never trade with us because of wars with the Indians of this country." These, who were also referred to as the Louzy Indians in other documents, were the Chipewyan (see section 10.9.1 below). "Farther off, the Eskimos are to be found, and alongside the Ikovirinioucks a great nation allied to them called the Alimouspigut ...[who] extend down to the Assiniboines with whom they are almost always at war" (Marest 1968:127-8). Literally, the Alimouspigut (Alimouspigui in the French version) are the Dogrib (ibid:n.1) but here the term seems to have been generalized

to other western Athapaskans. Thus the Assiniboin were not simply in the Lake Winnipeg area, but extended further west as far as the "Dogribs."

#### 5.4.3 LA POTHERIE: 1697

In the summer of 1697, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville recaptured Fort Bourbon. Accompanying him was the historian, Claude-Charles Le Roy de la Potherie, who incorporated a series of letters regarding the events in his History of North America written, perhaps, in 1702 but not published until 1722 (Pouliot 1969:421-4). Of particular interest are Letter V, "Manners of the Indians who come to trade at Fort Nelson," and Letter VII, "An Account of the Tribes that come to trade at Fort Nelson...."

His description of the various Indian groups, the only such list for the next fifty years, is important enough to be quoted in detail. With these descriptions are included a summary of the identifications made by J.B. Tyrrell, his editor.

The tribe that lives nearest the fort are the Ouenebigonhelinis which means "the people by the sea-shore." [a Cree group; Winnipeg=the sea]

The Monsaunis, "people of the marsh", live in a country which is full of marshes and which is higher than the country of the Ouenebigonhelinis.... These people were anxious to prevent other tribes from bringing their peltries to the fort, but the English forced them to give free passage.... [Monsoni, perhaps the Crane band of Trout Lake and the Severn River]

The Savannahs "people of the swamps", are

more remote as we go towards the south. There are only swamps, meadows, and beautiful hills in this region.... [the Maskegons or Swampy Cree]

The Christinaux or Crees, that is to say, "Indians who live by the lakes", are one hundred and sixty leagues distant.... They are a numerous people with an immense territory. They extend as far as Lake Superior. At times they go to trade at Sault Ste. Marie....

The Migichihilinous, i.e. "Indians with eagles' eyes", live two hundred leagues away. [possibly a Cree band near Lake of the Woods]

The Assiniboines live in the west and north. They are considered one and the same nation on account of the similarity of their languages. The name means "men of the Rock" ... and live two hundred and fifty leagues away....

The Oskquisaquamais live as a rule on fish. They kill few beavers, but the furs they wear are the best.... [possibly Saulteaux from the north shore of Lake Huron]

The Michinipicpoets, i.e. "men of stone of the great lake", live three hundred leagues distant, running north and south. [the Sioux of the great lake, possibly an Assiniboin band near Lake Manitoba]

The Netaouatscmipoets, i.e. "men of the dawn", live four hundred leagues distant. [probably a band of the Sioux confederacy]

The Attimospiguaies. The word means "dog's rib." There has been no trade opened with them yet because they dare not traverse the territory of the Maskegonehirinis with whom they are at war.... These people tell us of a strait at the end of which there is a sea of ice that opens into the Southern sea. [refers to all the northern Athapaskans, rather than the Dogrib proper].

La Potherie's descriptions of the Cree and Assiniboin are taken directly from Marest (1968:123-240). The only additional information is that the Assiniboin apparently formed two groups, one in the west and one in the north. His

reference to the home of the Michinipicpoets "running north and south" was seemingly the result of a confusion with the Cree word Michinipi which simply means big water. The term was applied to several places including Lake Winnipeg and the Churchill River (see section 10.4). The original version reads that "Cette nation habite Nord & Sud" (ibid:356), echoing his earlier statement that the Assiniboin formed two groups.

Elsewhere (p.259) La Potherie described the Nelson River as coming from "a great lake called Michinipi, which is the true country of the Cree, who are in communication with the Assiniboines although they are widely separated from each other." The latter comment makes sense only if La Potherie is speaking of different groups of Cree and Assiniboin and, again, has become confused by the Cree term Missinipi.

La Potherie (p.258) said that Nelson River was in the land of the Savannahs who were also called the Maskegon (Swampy Cree) who, today, are still found in northeastern Manitoba. Although the Ojibwa are not mentioned in this list, they are mentioned elsewhere as the Nakoukouhirinous, the name by which the Ojibwa were known to later HBC personnel (e.g. Graham 1969:204). La Potherie (1968:260) wrote that they lived "at a great lake that they call Nameousaki, or Sturgeon river," reached by way of, apparently, the Shamattawa River. Similarly, the

Hakouhirmious are not on the list but are said elsewhere to live to the north. They were not Eskimo as Tyrrell suggests (p.258 note 5) but were Chipewyan, the Ikovirinioucks of Marest. La Potherie appears to differentiate the Chipewyan from other Athapaskans as he states that the Churchill or Danish River "takes its source in the country of the Atticmospicayes."

The Netaouatscmipoets were not "men of the dawn," as identified by Tyrrell, but, in the original, "hommes de pointe." They were the mysterious Naywatamee Poets whom Kelsey visited in central Saskatchewan, probably a Hidatsa group (see below section 5.5 and 13.4). There is no reason to place the Oskquisaquamais on Lake Huron. Instead, the term seems to be derived from the Cree uskee, a name used by the HBC for plains-living Cree of eastern Saskatchewan in the early 1700s (see section 8.4). Their diet of fish is hard to explain unless this refers to the Sturgeon Cree who wintered in eastern Saskatchewan but utilized the sturgeon fisheries of the lower Saskatchewan delta in the summer (see section 8.7 below).

#### 5.4.4 JEREMIE: 1697-1714

Nicolas Jéréme was the most experienced of all the French writers at the Bay. Before his arrival, he had worked at many of the posts in the Tadoussac area and had married a Montagnais (Rousseau 1969:296-300). He

accompanied Iberville to the Bay as interpreter and director of the fur company, when Fort Bourbon was re-established by the French in 1694. In 1696, he and others were captured and taken to England, but in 1697 he again accompanied Iberville and retook Fort Bourbon where he remained as lieutenant and interpreter. In 1707 he took leave and was made commander of the post which he reached in the summer of 1709 and, under the Treaty of Utrecht, handed over to the HBC in 1714. Jérémie's Account of Hudson Strait and Bay was published in 1720 although it may have been written as early as 1714.

Jérémie differs from the other French writers in his treatment of the interior Indians. Rather than presenting a brief specific account of them he mentions them incidentally as he describes the interior geography.

Ray (1972) has discussed the problems in trying to understand Jérémie's description of the inland waterways. Although Jérémie was familiar with the Cree terms for various inland lakes and rivers, he was not sure of their locations. As a result, his discussion of inland groups is confused.

According to Jérémie (1926:31), the Indians came down the Bourbon or Nelson River as far as Split Lake where they then crossed to the Hayes River. Lake Tatusquoyaou-secahigan or Lake of the Forts (Split Lake) lay up this river and the Quisisquatchiouen or Swift Current River (Saskatchewan =



Nelson) entered its north side. The source of this latter river was Michinipi or Big Water Lake which was the largest inland lake. Several rivers flowed into it by which the Churchill River and the country of the Dogrib could be reached.

In the country around this lake [Michinipi] and along these rivers there are many natives, some of whom are called the People of the Big Water, while the others are Assinibouels....

At the end of the Lake of the Forts [Split Lake], Bourbon river is again met with. It comes down from another lake which is called Anisquaoui-gamou, meaning junction of the two seas [Landing Lake].... Here the country of the Cree commences.... The west side of the lake is full of very fine prairies in which are many of those oxen I have mentioned. All these regions are occupied by Assinibouels.....

A hundred leagues further to the west south west, following along this river, another lake occurs which they call Ouenipigouchib, or little Sea [Winnipegosis]. The country is nearly all the same as the preceding one. Assinibouels, Crees and Sauteurs occupy the regions near this lake.... At its extremity is a river which discharges into another lake called Tacamioen [Rainy Lake].... Deer River empties into this lake, a river of such a length that our natives have never yet been able to reach its source [Saskatchewan?]. By this river it is possible to reach another river, which flows to the west... (p.32-33).

Despite the problems with the exact identifications of these lakes, Jérémie is describing central and western Manitoba. Jérémie tried to send Indians to find if the river which flowed west discharged into a sea, but they were at war with a group who prevented such travels. However, the

Indians had brought prisoners from this nation to Jérémie, and they described bearded men who lived in stone houses while others cultivated the land and grew maize (p.33), seemingly the horticultural groups of the Middle Missouri. It will be remembered that the French at Quebec were hearing of these same groups at this time.

Jérémie wrote that the Seal River, north of Churchill, extended into Dogrib territory, a term he used as did the earlier French, to refer to several Athapaskan groups. Although there were copper mines in their country, the only iron they had was obtained from Munck's site at Churchill. The Maskegons, "the people with whom we trade" (Jérémie 1926:20), were at war with them and brought back copper whenever they went to their country.

From these various accounts resulting from the French occupation of the posts at the mouth of the Hayes and Nelson rivers, we have several descriptions of the interior. Although the accounts were written immediately after the introduction of the fur trade, in none of them do we find a hint that the Cree and Assiniboin were advancing from a homeland in northwestern Ontario.

There is no mention of wars with groups to the immediate west, only with the Athapaskans and the Missouri River group. We hear of Assiniboin groups living so far west as to be in raiding distance of the Dogrib. The groups were familiar with the Missouri River area and the rivers

leading to the Athabasca country: either the upper Churchill or the Athabasca River itself. It would seem the groups were also familiar with the upper Saskatchewan river, if this was the lengthy Deer River. Throughout the eighteenth century, the Cree regarded the Nelson River as being a continuation of the Saskatchewan River and this may account for some of Jérémie's problems.

The western distribution of the Cree and Assiniboin seems to have been limited only by the geographical knowledge of the French. Nowhere is there any detailed description of the country west of the Manitoba Lakes, but this is not surprising since there are so few distinguishing geographical features, unlike the Manitoba Lakes, that could be used by the Indians to give a sense of the country.

#### 5.5 THE FIRST INLAND ACCOUNT: HENRY KELSEY: 1690-1692

Henry Kelsey's inland expedition of 1690-92 to east-central Saskatchewan, the only first-hand series of observations of the interior before 1754, apparently contributed little to contemporary knowledge of the inland geography. However, it is crucial for understanding the locations of, at least, some Indian groups, only nine years after the introduction of the fur trade at the Bay.

All that is known of the trip is from several contemporary statements in the York Factory documents and the brief journal Kelsey kept from 15 July to 12 September

1691: A Journal of a voyage & Journey undertaken by Henry Kelsey through Gods assistance to discover & bring to a Commerce the Naywatame poets in Anno 1691. Although the manuscript of the journal, as well as portions of other journals written by Kelsey at Hudson Bay, was not discovered until 1926 (Kelsey 1929:ix), his Inland Journal had been published, in slightly abbreviated form and in duplicate copies with minor variations, in the Papers of the English Parliamentary Inquiry of 1749 (Great Britain 1749b:58-70).

Neither Kelsey, except for a brief comment in a later memorandum of 1722 (Kelsey 1929:111-12, nor any later surviving HBC documents make further reference to the trip. Joseph Robson (1752:72,note; Appendix I:19), who had been at the Bay in 1733-36 and 1744-47, said that tradition had Kelsey running away from York Factory with Indians and stated that the published journals were clearly a forgery (p.73). William Coats (1852:40), who was at the Bay as ship's captain from 1727-51 (Williams 1974:127-8), mentions only that he was not sure if Kelsey had gone inland with Indians living northerly or southerly from Lake Winnipeg.

Kelsey travelled up the Carrot River to reach first an open plains and then wooded hilly country which has long been accepted as being the Thickwood Hills uplands (Bell 1928; Davies 1969:310; Morton 1973:112). Here he met the Naywatamee Poets and his journal ends, although he later

added a short account of how the latter were attacked by Cree during the winter. There is no evidence for recent conjectural reconstructions of his route to the Eagle Hills of western Saskatchewan (Whillans 1955:111-125) or even to the area of modern Saskatoon (Russell and Russell 1978:2).

Kelsey was sent inland in 1690 with a group of Assiniboin to persuade the "remoter" Indians to come to York Factory to trade. There is no information of his travels that winter. However, he sent word to the Bay for additional trade goods the following summer and, after receiving them, set out deliberately to meet the Naywatamee Poets. At this point, he began his journal.

After leaving Deering's Point at The Pas, Manitoba, he canoed a short way up the Carrot River until his party were forced to abandon their canoes. The small group followed the Carrot River valley to a point near modern Carrot River, Saskatchewan where they struck south across the head of the Red Deer River. After crossing several open plains, they reached a wooded hilly area which they considered to be enemy territory and here they finally found, according to pre-arrangements, the Naywatamee Poets. They agreed to come to the Bay the following spring but shortly after, they were attacked by Cree and the next spring Kelsey was sent word that they refused to go. The Naywatamee Poets, with one exception, are never again mentioned in the literature.

The identity of the Naywatamee Poets, which is a matter

of controversy, is discussed more fully later (see section 13.4 below) where it is suggested that they were probably Hidatsa Indians based on the Middle Missouri River. The term "Poet" clearly indicates that they were a Siouan group and not a Blackfoot or Atsina group as has sometimes been suggested. They were enemies of both the local Assiniboin and Cree and, further, the need for a translator (Kelsey 1929:15) indicates they spoke a mutually unintelligible Siouan language.

Kelsey's journal is a simple factual account of daily events. There is no attempt to give broad descriptions or generalizations except, at the end, a brief summary of the Cree attack on the Naywatamee Poets. However, it is clear from the account that the Assiniboin groups whom he met were well adapted to the area. One band was named the Mountain Poets, probably after the nearby Manitoba Escarpment. His reference to a group called the "Eagles brich" Indians is not clear. Apparently, they were Assiniboin, rather than Cree, but this is not stated. This problem has a bearing on the later discussion of the confusion between the Eagle and Blood Assiniboin (see section 11.5 below). Although Kelsey did not mention meeting Cree in his brief journey, it is apparent that the Cree were well established in the general area. Kelsey seems to have had a facility with Indian languages: he was first described as a lad "Delighting much in Indians Compa., being never better

pleased then when hee is Travelling amongst them. ..." Rich 1957:18); he is almost certainly the author of the earliest extant Cree dictionary (Wolfart and Pentland 1979); and he was responsible for instructing the HBC personnel in the "Indian Language" (Davies 1965:389). Yet despite being with the Assiniboin, apparently, for the previous year, he gives the Cree terms for the only geographic features he identifies: the Red Deer and Assiniboin rivers.

Further evidence of Cree presence is the fact that three Cree women had been killed by the Naywatamee Poets the previous winter, and the Cree were to avenge their deaths the following winter. It is not surprising that Kelsey does not mention Cree in the area since his journal ends on September 12 while he was still in the Touchwood Hills area. According to all the later observers, the trading Cree groups from this area would have only started their way inland after summering to the east (see section 6.4 below).

## 5.6 Kelsey and La Potherie

With one exception, that of La Potherie, the various accounts written at the Bay appear to be independent. La Potherie, who reached York Factory on 3 September 1697 was occupied until 13 September in attacking the English post. He left on 24 September with "the garrison of the fort" (La Potherie 1968:268), apparently the English prisoners. It is clearly impossible that La Potherie would have learned

everything he describes in his Letters in the 21 days he was there which, after the military engagement, would have been taken up with arrangements for setting up the French post and preparing for the return to France.

It is very likely that Henry Kelsey was a prisoner on La Potherie's ship and was one of his sources on the inland Indians. La Potherie (1968:218) specifically names "Mr. Henry Kelsey, a King's lieutenant and the deputy governor," as being one of the negotiators at the surrender of York Factory. As well, Kelsey's position as second in command at York Factory would have allowed La Potherie to approach him as an equal on board ship. Further, it has been suggested (Hutchinson 1969:454) that Kelsey was the informant who helped Marest with his now-lost Cree dictionary: "an Englishman, who knows the language very well, has given me many more [words]" (Marest 1968:128).

That La Potherie used other sources and amended them is clear from an unacknowledged debt to Marest. According to Marest (1968:124), the Assiniboin

are sedate and seem to be phlegmatic. The Crees are more sprightly, always in motion, always dancing or singing. Both are brave and love war. The Assiniboines have been compared with the Flemings and the Crees with the Gascons.

La Potherie (1968:263-64) repeats these statements almost exactly and converts Marest's distances of 20-25 days and 35-40 days travel for the Cree and Assiniboin



respectively to 160 and 250 leagues.

La Potherie also lists several other groups of Indians from both French and English sources. His use of "poet" to refer to Siouan speakers was specific to the HBC personnel while the French used "-hilinious" and "-boiles," apparently from Algonquian dialects in southern Canada. In the list is the only other reference to Kelsey's "Naywatamee Poets:" the Netaouatscmipoets. The original French reads "homme de pointe" which Tyrrell translates as "men of the dawn." Morton (1973:113) who considered the group to be Gros Ventre (ibid:16), translated the Cree as "living on a cape or point of the river, nayou, at the bottom of the hill,netamutin, which would be a possible description of the 'point' of the Saskatchewan below Nipawi falls." In the dictionary ascribed to Kelsey, the Cree Wau tew is given as "hole in the Ground," whose meaning is very similar to that initially used by La Vérendrye (1968:107) to refer to the Mandan, "the Sioux who go Underground." It also similar to the unidentified "Wahtee or Vault Indians" whom Cocking described as being one of the enemies of the Cree (HBCA B.239/a/69 1 December 1772).

La Potherie is also the first to mention the Migichihilinious, literally the Eagle Indians but which he mistakenly translates as the "Indians with eagles' eyes." An indication of the unacknowledged influence of La Potherie on the major writers of the eighteenth century are the many

references to these wrongly named Eagle-eyed Indians: Dobbs 1967:24, Isham 1949:115, Graham 1969:206, Coates 1852:41.

Dobbs (1967:24), who copied a section of La Potherie in his book, refers to the "Eagle-eyed" Indians in his account of La France's travels but said that La France (ibid:35) said the name derived not from qualities of sight but from the numbers of eagles on the lake they occupied between Lake Winnipeg and Lake of the Woods. James Isham (1949:115), experienced at both York Factory and Churchill, interjected a note in his account of the Bay, after reading Dobbs, to say that he had never seen the "Eagld. Ey'd. Indians...but are sensible they are the same nation as the sinepoets, or stone Indians, speaking the same Language." The remark is curious in that it is the only group from Dobbs' book whom Isham specifies. Coates (1852:41) lists the Eagle Eyes as one of three groups trading at Albany. Graham (1969:206) identified the Mekesew, i.e. eagle in Cree, as an Assiniboin group trading at York Factory. However, in his copy of Henday's journal, who described meeting the "Mequesue or Eagle Indians," Graham (Henday 1907:331 n.3) noted that "since 1755 the Eagle-eyed Indian have traded annually at York Fort...".

If La Potherie derived some of his data from Kelsey, it would give his comments about the inland people added weight. Of the groups he lists, the Cree and Assiniboin entries were copied from Marest; the Ouenebigonhelinis,

Savannahs, and Attimospiquaies were either local or well known at York Factory. This leaves the interior groups all of which were likely known to Kelsey from his inland travels: the Eagle Indians and Naywatamee Poets both of whom were mentioned by Kelsey; the Oskquisagamais, probably a plains group, and the Missinipi Poets who were apparently from the Lake Winnipeg area.

#### 5.7 The French inland travellers

Henry Kelsey was not the only European sent inland from the Bay, but almost no data have survived from these other trips. On their arrival at Hayes River in 1682, Groseilliers was left to build the post while Radisson, his nephew Jean-Baptiste Chouart, and another man travelled inland to notify the Indians of their arrival. After travelling for eight days "about 40 leagues up the river" (Radisson 1961:169) they met a group of nine canoes consisting of 26 people, apparently males since the leader was given a present to take to his wife and there is mention only of "young men." These people, who had only "a piece of flat iron" with them, were persuaded to come to trade at the post which they had "wished for ever since the days of our fathers" (ibid:170). After their return to York Factory, Radisson again sent his nephew and another man inland with the Indians "to make the several sorts of Indians to come to traffic with us" (Radisson 1961:176).

Chouart returned next spring, before break-up. Since he was not travelling by canoe, he could not have gone far inland and he probably wintered with the local group mentioned above. He immediately made a second brief trip inland, "to proceed farther unto the Indians" (ibid:192), but returned shortly after break-up.

Chouart was again sent inland for the winter of 1685-86 and was not expected down until the following spring, according to the reply sent from London to a now-lost letter from Radisson (Rich 1968:198). Nothing more is known of this trip. Chouart is "regarded by some as the first white man to explore far into the hinterland..., even anticipating Henry Kelsey. Whether he did so at all is uncertain" (Nute 1966:227). Rich (1960 vol.I:185) also said "it is doubtful if [the trip] was ever made." There is little reason to doubt Radisson in this regard. He had wanted to send Chouart and others inland in 1684 but was over-ridden by his superior. Radisson's letter to London was dated 15 September 1685, by which time the Indians, and Chouart, would have had to have left on their way inland to avoid freeze-up, since this date is according to the Old Calendar. Further, the London reply does not refer to a proposed trip but rather that "you had sent your Nephew."

However, there is confusion about Chouart's trip. Kelsey (1929:111) wrote in his memorandum of employment at the Bay:

In 90 ye Compy. employed 2 french men viz  
 Gooseberry & Grammair [Chouart and Grimmard]  
 ... to go amongst ye natives to draw ym to a  
 trade but they did not go 200 miles from ye  
 factory upon wch I was sent away wt ye stone  
 Indians....

Morton (1973:111) assumed this to mean that Chouart went inland in 1690 but both Chouart and Grimard had returned to England in 1689 (Nute 1978:251-52). Thus Kelsey's reference to 1690, as suggested by the other dates in this account, are marginal headings referring to the relevant year he is discussing. The year does not refer to the date of Chouart's journey.

There are two further references to a mysterious inland trip in 1796-97. In the Articles of Capitulation signed when the English recaptured York Factory on 31 August, 1696, it was agreed that "the two Frenchmen who ought to return with the Indians shall be received in the Fort on their return" and be returned to France. The following spring, Kelsey (1929:84) wrote in his journal of 3 June 1697 that "several cannoes came down this afternoon amongst which came one of the french men." Kelsey often referred to this man who helped with daily chores but there is no mention of the second man nor of his fate. The fact that the French man came down after break-up when the large inland flotillas were arriving would strongly suggest that he had been far inland, but this must remain conjectural. Much later, James Knight wrote that the French "did not onley encourage the

Indians in thare wars but Sent Men with them to Assist ym in it twill Monsr. Jeremie came to be Governour (HBCA B.239/a/2 9 May 1716). For these apparent journeys inland, however, there is no further evidence.

The result of these inland trips was that word of the posts on the Bay had been spread well inland by the end of the seventeenth century. As Ray (1974:fig.22,23) has shown, more guns, gunpowder, and shot were traded than at any later time. Further, groups as far as southern Saskatchewan, if not the Middle Missouri River, were aware of the traders. However, the Athapaskan groups to the northwest remained little known.

#### 5.8 James Knight: peace-making expeditions of the 1710s

An attempt had been made in 1689 to tap the fur resources of the Athapaskans by building a post at Churchill and by sending Henry Kelsey into the Barrens, but both attempts failed (Kelsey 1929). However, after the HBC retook possession of the Bay in 1714, James Knight sent three expeditions inland from the Bay. Although they contribute few details to our knowledge of the geography of the interior, we do learn something of the range of the northern Cree.

James Knight was in his seventies when he took over York Factory from the French in 1714. He rapidly developed three obsessions: to establish a peace "a thousand miles

round" between the inland Indians; to discover the route to the western seas; and to find precious minerals in the west. Knight was instrumental in obtaining a peace, at least among the western Cree and Athapaskans but he, and the crews of two ships, died on Marble Island off present Rankin Inlet in the attempt to fulfil his last two dreams.

Knight's journals from York Factory are filled with endless discussions of the frustrations he faced in trying to attain his goals. Although there are many references to various inland groups, the small amount of factual information is almost lost in his lengthy diatribes. It is not clear how well Knight could understand his informants. His main Chipewyan source whose information was the basis for sending an expedition northward "Speaks this Country Indian [i.e.Cree] Indifferently" (HBCA B.239/a/1 24 Nov. 1714). Certainly Knight asked his informants leading questions: they almost all spoke of the interior in similar terms, regardless of their origin. As well, over time, Knight exaggerated their original statements in successive entries in his journals.

These problems aside, Knight's journals present more data on the inland than was to be recorded until the 1750s. His attempt to establish alliances between the northern groups furnishes the only account of the stretch of country between the Churchill and the Athabasca country until Hearne's travels in the early 1770s. In June, 1715,

Knights organized two expeditions to the northwest of York Factory whose primary aim was to establish alliances between the northern Cree and their neighbouring Athapaskan groups. In effect, Knight had planned a "pincer" movement. One Cree group went north from the head of the Churchill river to make a peace with groups in the Lake Athabasca area. The other group approached the same region from the east. They travelled to the mouth of the Churchill then circled northwest across the Barrens to the tree-line. By the beginning of the 1700s, then, the Cree are found extended throughout the northern boreal forest following the length of the Churchill River into the Athabasca drainage system. The few data that are known of these expeditions are, therefore, important for what they show of the range of the Cree.

On 27 June 1715, Governor James Knight sent a group northwards from York Factory to establish a peace with the Chipewyan Indians and bring them back to trade. As La Potherie (1969:265) had described, fear of the intervening Cree had prevented them from coming to the posts on the Bay. The party consisted of William Stuart and upwards of 150 Home Guard or coastal Cree, apparently including their families. They were guided by the Slave Woman, later known as Thanadelthur (Thorman 1969:628-9), a Chipewyan who had been captured by the Cree several years before and whose life was remembered into the twentieth century (Curtis



1976:8-9).

Various members returned during the next spring with stories of hardships. Sickness broke out when they reached Churchill and then, when they reached the Barrens in the late fall, all except two small groups of men had to turn back because of starvation. One group killed many of the adult male Chipewyan in the camp they met and turned back out of fear of reprisals. Finally Stuart himself returned on May 7, 1716 with word of success. A truce with the Chipewyan had been established through the mediative abilities of Thanadelthur (HBCA B.239/a/2).

Morton (1973:131-3), who was the first to bring Stuart to public attention in 1939, wrote that "it was not possible to say definitely" where Stuart had gone. But, he continues, Stuart's description "can hardly mean anything but that they had crossed the Barren Grounds diagonally, and had come into the wooded country east of Slave River and south of Great Slave Lake (ibid:133)." This is now the accepted view (Williams 1969:615; Rich 1960:435; Davies 1965:416).

However, it is probable that Stuart was not much beyond the present Manitoba-Saskatchewan border.

According to Stuart (Davies 1965:416)

they went away NNWt for about 400 miles from the factory... then they went NWt to Cross that Baren Desarts and when they had cross'd them they went WNWt and came into a very Plentifull Country for Beasts....

Stuart thought that he had travelled about 1000 miles

but since he had returned in 60 days, and since they had their families with them, Knight thought they had not gone so far.

The only similar trip was made by Samuel Hearne from Fort Churchill in 1770. His journals indicate that it took his experienced group 60 days to travel between Fort Churchill and the area between modern Kasba Lake, immediately north of the present Manitoba-Saskatchewan boundary, and Labyrinth Lake, 200 km further west. Considering that Stuart was travelling from York Factory, 200 km further south and was with a group not experienced in travelling in the Barrens, it would seem highly unlikely that he was anywhere near Great Slave Lake but rather was only halfway there, probably between Nueltin and Kasba lakes. The third HBC employee sent inland was Richard Norton who, at the age of 17, was sent to take word inland to the Chipewyan of the newly established post of Fort Churchill (Johnson 1974:489-90). He left on 18 July 1717, "for that Long Journey" (Kenney 1932:122) and had returned sometime the following winter but as the post journal for that year has not survived, little else is known. Information was later published of the trip, perhaps based on traditions at Churchill, but they cannot be substantiated (Dobbs 1744 in Isham 1949:xlii). The few data in the Churchill account books simply record giving goods to 13 Northern Indians who had brought Norton back in a starving

condition (B.42/d/1). These Indians were given powder and shot "to preserve their Lives in their Return back into their own Country they being obliged to go through the Mishinnipee Indians Country" where they would be in danger of being killed. Thus, the Missinipi Cree were west and sufficiently north of Churchill to present a danger. Further, one of Norton's companions had been at York Factory "when peace was made" (ibid), apparently a reference to Stuart's expedition when he had brought some Chipewyan back to York Factory.

The final inland journey, actually a series of trips, was equal to Kelsey's in importance. These were the journeys of the Cree leader, Captain Swan or "Waupisoo" to the Athabasca area between 1715 and 1721 (HBCA b.239/a/1-6). In 1715, Captain Swan and other Missinipi Indians had shown Knight samples of "salt & brimstone" and described a "Great River" which

runs down into ye other Sea beyond Churchill River head, or Missheenipih ... on the Back of this Country & they tells us there is a Certain Gum or pitch that runs down the river in such abundance that they cannot land but at certain places (B.239/a/1 June 26, 27).

Knight sent Captain Swan with twenty-five canoes (Davies 1965:61) to make a peace with the neighbouring Athapaskans who were not Chipewyan but, rather, their friends (Knight 1932:163). Swan returned two years later (B.239/a/3 5 June, 1717) bringing a young lad from the group

of "6 Great tents." Swan had met these people on the high banks of a river and they told him of the western sea which bordered them. After an initial alarm, the groups had feasted for several days and agreed to a "general meeting" the next winter. One of the men offered to go to the Bay, but after three months returned home with one of Captain Swan's men.

Swan, who only visited the Bay every second year, returned inland, where he established a peace that fall. Two or three families wintered with him but, when they were building canoes to come to the Bay, panicked and returned home. Swan, himself arrived in June 1719 with a sample of the pitch but said he was unable to persuade the Indians to cross "the borders of this people's Country" (HBCA B.239/a/5 12 June 1719). A final entry in 1721 mentions that Swan had made a peace and wintered "with those Indians at the head of Churchill River ... Giving them all his Goods" (HBCA B.239/a/6 9 May 1721).

It is commonly agreed that the description of the Great River with its deposits of pitch can only refer to the oil sand deposits of the Athabasca River and the "western sea" was Lake Athabasca (Neatby 1969:617; Morton 1973:134). Swan was not sent to make peace with the Chipewyan, which was the purpose of Stuart's trip, but with their friends. These were the Dogrib of earlier record, probably the modern Beaver as both Morton and Neatby suggest. As we have seen, it was

probably these series of truces which were described by Alexander Mackenzie at Peace Point.

### 5.9 Summary

There is nothing in any of observations made on the west coast of Hudson Bay up to 1720 to indicate that the homeland of the Cree lay to the south and east in northwestern Ontario. Traditions indicate that the local Cree were familiar with the relics of early expeditions at the mouth of the Churchill and Nelson rivers immediately after they were abandoned as early as 1612. Since this was before Champlain had begun to explore southwestern Ontario, this presence of the Cree in the far north had nothing to do with the fur trade.

Descriptions of the western interior were only written after the establishment of posts at the mouth of the Nelson and Hayes rivers in 1682. In none of these are there references to either a Cree or Assiniboin conquest of the west. Indeed, the two groups appear to have extended west as far as the traders had knowledge. In the one area for which there is some documentation, the Athabasca, the Cree were not invaders but rather negotiators for peace. This is not to say that raids were not taking place; we have had passing evidence for raids on the Missouri, Athabasca and south-central barrens and we shall later see that Knight often pointed out how he was trying to establish a peace

"for a 1000 miles around." Yet this evidence for sporadic raids does not support a large-scale migration of the Cree from the east. We shall now turn our attention to the first-hand observations made in the interior between 1754 and 1772 to see if such evidence lies in this important body of data, our first detailed view of the west.

## 6.0 OBSERVATIONS OF THE INTERIOR: 1720-1774

### 6.1 MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE INTERIOR: 1720-1750

After the disappearance of James Knight on his northward voyage of 1719, there are few details of the interior geography in the documents sent to London from either York Factory or Fort Churchill. Henry Kelsey, who was chief factor at York Factory from 1718 to 1722, might have been expected to record his knowledge of the interior, but he never shows any familiarity with either the various groups of trading Indians or their home areas. Although the inroads later made by the French were of concern to the HBC, references in the surviving documents from the 1730s and 1740s do not put their advances into a geographical framework. This vagueness about inland geography is reflected in all the HBC documents which predate 1754.

James Isham's (1949) lengthy Observations on Hudson's Bay, was written in 1743 and based on 10 years' experience at Fort Churchill and York Factory. His only attempt to describe the interior is in his suggestion for building an inland settlement

at the head of port Nelson River ... being a branch almost all Indians separates Either to go to York fort, or Churchill ... [and thus] be able to roat the French out of that small Settlement they have at the great Lake, (or Little sea so call'd by the natives wch. is near the fork).... (1949:68-9)

After stating that the Nakawawuck [Ojibwa], who "Borders with the french at the Little sea so Call'd" spoke "the most pleasantist and truest Language," Isham (1949:112-14) briefly outlined the various groups of inland Indians:

There is severall Different Nations... the Nakawawuck [Ojibwa], - Moquo [Loon], - Muskekowuck [Swampy], - Keiskachewon [Saskatchewan], - poetuck [Assiniboin], - Cawcawquek [Crow or Raven], - Nemaui' [Sturgeon], - Earchethinues [Archithinue], Missinnepee [Big Water], - Gristeen [Christian], - pennebewagewan [Hayes River], - Quashe'o [=Washeo/Severn River?], - Pechepoethinue [=Powithinigow/ Nelson River?], - wunnusku [Woodchuck =Winisk River], - unnahathewunnutitto [Nahathaway= Cree?], - and Uchepowuck [Chipewyan] - Indians being 18 in Number, and of all these Languages there is but 4 that Differ's ...Sinepots, - nakawawuck, - Uchepowuck, - and Earchethinues, the Last I never see, at the fort, Excep't a Slave, which was Brought Downe by the Southwd. Indians, - their Country Lyes on the back of this Land. and to the westward of Churchill River, where the Spaniards frequents those seas ... with a fine Navigable River.... the Sinnepots and other Indians Going to warr with them, is a hinderance to their Coming ... to trade.... this Country Lyes to the Westwd. of Churchill River, and on the So. side of the west seas, by as near a Discription as I cou'd gett of itt.... there is great plenty of Indn. corn in the said country.

Two other contemporaneous accounts, those of T.S. Drage, writing as Charles Swaine (1748-49), and Henry Ellis (1748), both of whom wintered at York Factory in 1746, do not give any information on the interior. This might have been because Governor Isham, who was hostile to and



somewhat uncooperative with the northwest passage expeditions they accompanied (Rich 1974:303), kept such information from them. More likely it was a disinterest in the geography of the inland, a characteristic reflected throughout the reports and papers of the Parliamentary Inquiry of 1749 (Great Britain 1749a, 1749b). Although the Inquiry was not able to draw upon authoritative witnesses such as the factors of the posts, various persons who had lived at the Bay were questioned. Little attention was paid to the inland geography apart from those close questions regarding the location of the copper used by the Chipewyan. The possibility was pursued of establishing inland posts to better compete with the French. Apart from vague statements of building up the Hayes or Nelson rivers and occasional references to large inland lakes, the inland geography was ignored. In fact one witness was unchallenged when he said the French, in 1739, had built 100-120 miles from Churchill (Great Britain 1749:38).

The confusion regarding the interior is most apparent in the geography of the Bay written by William Coats (1852). As a supply ship's captain, he had made numerous voyages to the posts on the Bay between 1727 and 1751 where his position as a member of the local post Council when he was ashore gave him access to information on the interior. He wrote that no one had "collected so many notes" nor had such experience and opportunity to write such a description.

However, he was severely limited in his descriptions of the interior groups since it is probable that he never saw the large flotillas when they came to trade. The supply ships did not reach western Hudson Bay until the end of August or even later. The trading Indians arrived at the Bay in early summer and had returned inland by mid-July. Thus there was no chance for him to correct his misconceptions through simple observations.

Coats's description of the inland geography and various Indian groups is most difficult to decipher in large part because of his confusion over the referent for the Cree term Missinipi (big water). As discussed earlier, this was used by different Cree groups to refer to various large lakes including Lake Winnipeg, South Indian Lake and Lake Athabasca as well as the central portion of the Churchill River. Coats is the only HBC employee to try to describe the inland and indicate the positions of the various Indian groups. Presumably, his views were similar to those accepted at the coast. Thus his account gives us an idea of the misconceptions that were held:

[The Churchill River] runs upwards of two hundred miles, where, with a small carriage, they arrive on the shore of the great lake, Winnipegon.

[The latter] extends it self nearly N.W. to an indetermined distance, from the north western shores of which I judge our Miscota [Plains] Indians come to Churchill...but whether they come thro the northern Indian [Athapaskan] country, or the Nadowissis [Iroquois or Dakota but here confused with Nahathaway or Cree] country (... situated on

the western banks of Winipeggon), who trade at York fort once in two year, our interpreters are not clear in (Coats 1852:36-37).

We can see how Coats and the interpreters on the coast became confused as to the route the Plains Indians took to the Bay. The Muscotay or Plains Indians came down the Saskatchewan River where they avoided the dangers of canoeing on Lake Winnipeg by detouring north by way of Cumberland Lake or Minago River. Coats conflated Lake Winnipeg with the Churchill River system far to the north, near the territory of the Athapaskans.

Coats use of the term Nadowiss can only be explained through a series of confusions. He was seemingly aware that the term was used for enemies in the southeast. At James Bay, with which he was familiar, the "Nadowiss" were the feared Iroquois groups known to the James Bay Cree (Francis and Morantz 1983:21). The expression was also used to refer to the Dakota, enemies of the trading Indians at both James Bay and York Factory. Thus Coats applies it to the hostile "Archithinue" in the west. These, however, never traded at the Bay (see section 12.2 below) and Coats seems to have also have been confused with the "Nahathaways" the term used by the northern Cree to refer to themselves. Coats uses the term for two very different western groups.

Coats describes the inhabitants of Lake Winnipeg as follows:

The western borders of this Lake  
Winipeggon is inhabited by the Nadouissis;

more to the southward is the Sinipoets; to southward of them is the Poets and Stone Indians; farther south is the Cristians; and to southward of them is the Sturgoon Indians.

The northern borders of that great lake is occupied by the Miscota and northern Indians,...

But those tribes to westward of the lake extend to an indetermined distance. Whither Mr. Kelsey was amongst those western Indians when he traveled to cultivate the company trade, or the more southerly Indians, I am not well informed; but this is certain, that the Poots, Senepoots, and Stone Indians, have frequented York Fort many years; the Nadouissis, Christians, and Sturgeon Indians, is of a later date; the Miscota are a nation we have had a much shorter acquaintance with; and their unequal war with the Nadowissis, a powerful and warlike people, inspired them with motives to seek out fire-arms, which the northern Indians, their kindred and frinds, first brought them to Churchill River (1852:40-41).

Besides the lack of any details of the geography west of Lake Winnipeg, it is curious that there are no generic terms for the Cree who, as discussed later, made up by far the greater portion of the trading Indians at the Bay. It was suggested above that the Nahathaway were confused, in part, with the Nadowissis. It is likely that the Miscota and Sturgoon were Cree groups. Although the Assiniboin were trading at the Bay almost as soon as posts were established, they were never the most numerous group as Coats suggests (see Chapter 11).

It is not clear if this vagueness concerning the inland arose from the indifference of which Robson had accused the HBC or whether it reflects a prior knowledge on the part of

the London Committee which had opportunity to question the various Governors when they returned to London on occasional furloughs. Certainly Isham, as shown above in his comments on an inland settlement, seems to assume such prior knowledge on the part of the London Committee although even he suggested that men be sent inland "to give such a Description of the Country that a Settlement might be made their" (Isham 1949:114).

Isham (ibid:114-15) elaborated on this plan of 1743 and suggested sending one or two Englishmen with the Cree to go to the borders of the Archithinue country with gifts both to arrange a peace between the warring factions and to persuade the Archithinue to trade at the Bay. As we shall see, this scheme was realized 10 years later when Anthony Henday, in 1754, was the first of many HBC employees who were sent inland annually until Cumberland House was established in 1774. The reports of these inland travellers are crucial in tracing the distribution of Indian groups in the parklands from the Manitoba Escarpment to eastern Alberta.

## 6.2 SAUKAMAPPEE: AN ACCOUNT OF THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY INTERIOR

Until 1754 there are no first-hand data concerning the location of the various Indian groups apart from Kelsey's brief account of his trip from The Pas to southeast Saskatchewan, La Vérendrye's incidental references to groups

in southern Manitoba, and La France's and Saint Pierre's vague comments regarding the lower Saskatchewan River.

There is one unique account, however, which demands attention. This is the biographical sketch of Saukamappee recorded by David Thompson which traces the movement of the Peigan from the North Saskatchewan River into southern Alberta. Saukamappee's story clearly indicates that rather than being trespassers into the west, the Cree and Assiniboin were considered to be valued allies by the Blackfoot Confederacy, a relationship reflected in later accounts.

In 1787, Thompson, then 17 years old with one year's inland experience at South Branch House, was sent from Manchester House to winter with the Peigan Indians in southern Alberta. Here he lived with an elderly Cree named Saukamappee who, as a young man, had been adopted by the Peigan. Saukamappee's home was originally on the Pasquia River which enters the Saskatchewan River at The Pas, Manitoba: "my native country and of my fathers (sic) for many winters" (1962:48-9). When he was, apparently, about 16 years old, the Peigan sent messengers to his father's camp for aid against the Snakes. Although they had a few guns, the twenty warriors who set out left these behind for their families to use because of the scarcity of ammunition. Saukamappee's account indicates that European goods played only a small part in the warfare of this period:

Our weapons was a Lance, mostly pointed with iron, some few of stone, A Bow and quiver of ... about fifty arrows, of which ten had iron points, the others were headed with stone. [My father] carried his knife on his breast and his axe in his belt .... and those with him had much the same weapons. I had a Bow and Arrows and a knife, of which I was very proud (Thompson 1968:328-29).

Saukamappee and his group met the Peigan and their allies on a plain on the north side "of the River," the North Saskatchewan. Scouts spotted the Snakes in a large camp on "the Plains of Eagle Hill." After the Peigan and their allies crossed in canoes and rafts, each group lined up behind their shields but neither had the advantage and the battle ended that day.

Saukamappee's story then jumps forward to when he had been married for a winter. Messengers reappeared from the Peigan. This time the situation had changed. Because of fearsome stories of an unknown animal -horses- which the Snakes possessed, only three Cree went up river. The Cree joined seven Assiniboin but now each had a gun, 30 musket balls, as well as more iron-headed arrows than before. The location of the battle is not mentioned: "after a few days march our scouts brought us word that the enemy was near in a large war party" but they did not have any horses as they were still scarce (1968:330). Again, the lines of warriors faced each other from behind their shields but the guns, whose use was apparently novel, enabled the Peigan to defeat their enemy, resulting in the permanent abandonment of the

use of such set battles.

The allies with their women and children then camped "on the frontier of the Snake Indian country" (1968:334) hunting bison and red deer until the autumn when they finally saw their first horse, killed in an attack on a Snake.

Saukamappee and his companions then turned back and after four days reached an Assiniboin camp, relations of some of his companions, where they heard of a Cree camp a day's travel away. Here Saukamappee found friends who told him that his wife had deserted him. Angered, he returned to the Piegan where he was adopted because of his role in the battle.

Saukamappee then briefly outlined the ensuing history of the Piegan as they progressed to the southwest:

[Armed with] Guns, arrow shods [sic] of iron, long knives, flat bayonets and axes from the Traders ... [the Peigan] continued to advance to the Stag [Red Deer] River when death came ... and swept away more than half of us by the Small pox (1968:335), (1968:336).

The source of this epidemic of 1781-82 was, ironically, the Snake.

This information, from the early 1700s, is the earliest historic account from the far west. It presents several difficulties. Forbes (1963) has questioned, in light of numerous geographic features with similar names, the identification of Saukamappee's sites with modern Eagle



Hills and thus the location of the Blackfoot along the North Saskatchewan in the early historic period. Yet Thompson was very familiar with the North Saskatchewan River and there is no reason to doubt that this is the locality he meant. However, it is not clear if the "Plains of Eagle Hill" lay east of Eagle Creek or in the Battle River area.

A more crucial problem is the reliance which can be placed on the many details of the account both as it was told to Thompson and as it was later transcribed by him. Thompson, in writing his account of the west, had access to 77 note books and nine field books which were in his possession and still exist. However, these date only to 1790 and their descriptive catalogue (Dodge 1969) does not indicate any material for his wintering of 1787. Thus it seems he had to rely on his memory for his account of Saukamappee. Yet Thompson's unfinished Narrative was written about 1850 when he was 80 years old, in poor health, growing blind and in great poverty (Nicks 1985:883; Thompson 1968:lv-lvi). Furthermore, Saukamappee himself was an elderly man, either in his late 70s (Thompson 1968:328) or his late 80s (Thompson 1962:49) when Thompson wintered with him. Although he was "somewhat active, and in full possession of his faculties (ibid)," it is not possible to determine how well he remembered the fine details of past events.

Further it is not clear how well the two were able to

communicate in Cree, their common language. Thompson (1962:48) told Saukamappee that "I speak the tongue sufficiently for common purposes" while Saukamappee said he would "have forgotten his mother's tongue were it not that some of my father's people come amongst us to buy horses and aid us in war" (1962:49). In both men's memory there was room for confusion and conflation of events which, to begin with, may have been poorly understood by Thompson.

An even greater problem with Saukamappee's account lies in the dating which Thompson assigns to it. By comparing details which Saukamappee related "with the accounts of the french writers on the furr trade of Canada," Thompson thought the account went back "to near the year" 1700, making Saukamappee "near ninety years of age, or more" (1968:49). Unfortunately, Thompson does not describe the events which must have referred to the French occupation of York Factory between 1697 and 1714. Later, however, Thompson described Saukamappee as being "at least 75 to 80 years of age ...[whose] account of former times went back to about 1730" when, apparently, he was about sixteen years old (1968:328).

There is independent evidence that Saukamappee at least existed, but it does not resolve the question of his age. Saukamappee was adopted by the Peigan because of his prowess as a warrior. Further, the "great Chief" of the Peigan gave him his eldest daughter as wife, she being also the sister

of the current chief in Thompson's time. Thus Saukamappee held an important position in the tribe. Lastly, Thompson wrote that Saukamappee had died three or four years after he had met him in 1787-8.

This description is so close to a man described several years later by Peter Fidler that they must have been the same person. On December 29, 1792, while travelling from Buckingham House to southern Alberta, Fidler (HBCA E.3/2 29 December 1792) met an elderly Cree, a noted warrior, who was "the 2nd man of rank" amongst the Peigan and who later died in June, 1793.

Yet Fidler says that this man had "been living with these Indians about 25 years [i.e.circa 1767]." This would place the events described by Saukamappee as occurring long after Henday's trip to southern Alberta in 1754-55, nearly 40 years earlier. Yet by Henday's time the Blackfoot Confederacy were firmly established on the Red Deer River in southern Alberta and had fully adopted the use of horses. Thompson's account clearly predates this time and Fidler, who seems to have met Saukamappee for only a day, is in error.

The importance of Saukamappee's account is not only in the location of the Piegan and their relations with the Cree and Assiniboin but also in the details of the introduction of both guns and horses in the west. The crucial problem of dating Saukamappee's account does not

seem resolvable since it cannot be correlated with historic events. Yet the fifteen year difference in Thompson's chronologies spans an important change in the fur trade.

The fur trade at York Factory did not get onto a stable footing until the late 1710s. When York Factory was under French control between 1697 and 1714, there were many years when there was little or no stock of trade goods (Jérémie 1926) and it was said that many Indians ceased bothering to make the journey (HBCA B.239/a/1 31 July 1715; B.239/a/2 15,16 June 1716). The disruption caused by the return of possession of the Bay to the HBC, was exacerbated by the failure of the English supply ship in 1715. Thus if Saukamappee was born about 1700, the scarcity of European goods amongst the Cree in their first battle when he was about 16 years old is explainable. As well, the events of the French trade used by Thompson to date Saukamappee's account could refer either to the murder of eight Frenchmen at the Bay in 1712 (Jérémie 1926), or to the French surrender of the post in 1714. The stabilization of the trade after 1715 would explain why Saukamappee's group had access to guns and ammunition in time for the second battle several years later. However, such a chronology pushes the introduction of horses into western Canada much earlier than the accepted date of about 1740 (Ray 1973:59-60).

If we accept Thompson's second version, that Saukamappee was 16 years old in about 1730 and went on the

second battle some years later, then, apart from the more acceptable date for the introduction of horses, the account becomes puzzling. By 1730, the Cree from the lower Saskatchewan River, Saukamappee's homeland, would have had ample trade goods, especially guns. The neighbouring Sturgeon Cree, south of The Pas, were trading regularly at York Factory after 1715. The Basquia group were the closest to the Bay of all the groups west of the Canadian Shield and, in particular, had access to one of the richest fur-bearing areas in the west- the Saskatchewan River delta. Further, there was no apparent change in the York Factory trade after 1720 which would have increased the availability of goods. As well, it would seem that at this relatively late date in the fur trade, the Snakes would have known of guns, although, 15 years earlier when the trade was still erratic, this might not be so.

### 6.3. THE INLAND TRAVELLERS: 1754-1775

In 1754, the HBC renewed the policy which had lapsed since Knight's time almost 40 years earlier: establishing direct contact with the interior Indians. Because of French posts on the Saskatchewan River above The Pas, the Indians were being intercepted before they could reach the Bay. Consequently, it was decided to send men inland both to gain a more precise idea of the inland geography, to learn the extent of the French trade, and, most important, to persuade

the Indians to come to the Bay to trade.

Fifty-six trips were made inland but only a few employees were capable of writing even semi-literate journals. The extant journals written by Anthony Henday in 1754; Joseph Smith in 1756, 1757 and 1763; Joseph Pink in 1766, 1767, 1768, and 1769; William Tomison in 1767 and 1769; Matthew Cocking in 1772 and 1774; and Joseph Hansom in 1773. These journals are crucial to our understanding of the west for several reasons. First, they are the only surviving accounts by Europeans who travelled with western Indian groups throughout most of their yearly round. The only exceptions are the winterings of Peter Fidler with the Peigan of southern Alberta in 1792-93 and with the Chipewyan in the Athabasca in 1790-92. Secondly, these journeys were all made in the company of Cree and it is from these journals we learn of the distribution and movements of the western Cree before the changes resulting from the competition of the inland trade after 1774 and before the smallpox epidemic of 1781-82.

Although the journals of the inland HBC employees are invaluable for even the brief hints they give of the daily life of the western Cree, there are several biases in the journals which must be kept in mind. First, none of the journals cover the entire year. Although the HBC men were sent inland on an annual basis they accompanied the groups of trading Indians who had arrived at York Factory in late

June or early July and it was usually late summer before the groups reached their families in the interior. In the following spring, they again accompanied the trading Indians to the Bay as soon as the rivers were free of ice. Thus there are no direct observations of the non-trading Indians during the summer months.

Secondly, the way of life reflected in the journals was not necessarily applicable to all inland Cree. The HBC men were sent inland with Indian leaders who were involved with the fur trade and who were committed to either trapping furs themselves or obtaining them from other groups. Further, in late winter they had to move to sources of birch bark on the edge of the forest in order to build the canoes necessary to return to the Bay. Yet, as discussed below, it is clear that only a small part of the inland Indians were involved, in any one year, with the trade. The way of life of these non-trading groups is not necessarily reflected in the journals.

Thirdly, the journals describe specific groups. The 12 accounts were made over a period of 20 years and describe groups in the parklands from southern Manitoba to central Alberta. Yet each journal records only the movements of part of a specific band, in a specific area, in a specific year. Care must be taken not to over-generalize these data to other groups.

Only two of these journals have been published (Henday

1908; Cocking 1909) and unpublished variant forms exist for each of these. The other journals are most often of poor quality or, in some cases, are simply a summary of the year. As a result, the routes described by these HBC men are sometimes difficult to trace and authorities differ in their locations. Because of the importance of the data in the journals, however, it is important to reconstruct the routes as accurately as possible and to outline the distribution of Indian groups which they present. Almost all the observations of the western Cree concern those groups living in the parkland/plains areas of Saskatchewan and eastern Alberta. No journals were written by HBC employees living with forest groups in the Canadian Shield. As discussed later, there was little need to encourage these latter groups as competing traders had not yet entered the forest, the population density was very low, and they needed little further encouragement to trade at the Bay.

All the inland journals reflect a common yearly cycle for those Indians trading at the Bay (Russell 1982b). On their return inland after leaving York Factory, the trading Indians often underwent near-starvation until they met their "families" near the parkland/forest border. The canoes were abandoned at these rendezvous and travel continued on foot, apparently to better obtain food. Daily camp moves continued for some weeks until the edge of the plains was reached where the group stayed until mid-winter. Then the



severity of the weather forced the movement into the parklands and towards sources of birch bark for their canoes which were used to go to the Bay as soon as river ice broke up. The non-trading members of the group either accompanied the flotilla for a short distance or else rendezvous were established where they would be met later in the summer.

#### 6.4. THE INLAND TRAVELLERS ON THE SASKATCHEWAN RIVER: 1754 - 1776

##### 6.4.1 ANTHONY HENDAY: 1754-60

The journal of Anthony Henday, the first detailed account of the western interior, is an almost perfect example of the "ineluctable problems of reliability and even authenticity" found in so many of the early western accounts such as Radisson, Kelsey, La France, and Pond (Williams 1978:41).

It is only recently (Williams 1978) that attention has been drawn to the fact that there are four versions of Henday's journal, rather than the three or fewer versions referred to by earlier historians (Henday 1907; MacGregor 1954; Morton 1973; Wilson 1954). Although it was realized that there were serious discrepancies between two of these, in fact there are variations between all four versions which at times amount to "downright contradictions" (Williams 1978:41). Although Williams has addressed some of these problems, others remain. Only one (HBCA E.2/12) of any of

these four versions has been published (Henday 1907) and a detailed comparison of the ethnographic details has not yet been made.

One of these (HBCA B.239/a/40) was the official version sent to London which included the daily log kept by Henday as well as annotations by James Isham, chief factor at York Factory, which changed the tenor of the journal. In this version Henday is a rather heroic figure who was able to persuade the interior Indians to travel to the Bay- although they later decline to do so. The other three versions, found in the several manuscript copies of Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay written between 1767 and 1791 present an opposite picture. The Indians refused to go to the Bay because they were either well-served by nearby French posts or they did not consider the effort worth the hardships. In these versions Henday is a more human figure faced with fears and frustrations. Yet even in these three versions, there are still data in each which differ from the others.

Williams concludes that the contradictions are such that either the version sent to London or the three more similar versions found in Graham are "not to put too fine a point on it, a forgery" (Williams 1978:48). He suggests that Henday brought back a rough draught of his journal which he doctored self-servingly. Graham, who was the copyist for this "official" version, was later able to

obtain Henday's original draft, now lost, and through later conversations with Henday, as well as from knowledge brought back by later inland travellers, was able to amend the journal in the various manuscripts of his Observations. As a result of these problems of authorship and reliability, the data in the Henday journals, crucial to our understanding of the time, must be used with care.

On June 26, 1754, James Isham instructed Anthony Henday to travel inland from York Factory

to the Keischachewon, Missinneepie, Earchithinue, Esinepoet, or any other Country Indians, that we have not as yet any traffick with; and that you may converse with them, making them presents, perswading them to be at peace, and not to Warr ... but to hunt and gett goods, and bring them to the Fort (Wilson 1954:30; HBCA A.11/114 Sept. 8, 1754).

Henday's guide was the Cree leader, Attickasish or The Little Deer, a middleman trader "who has Lived Long with the Earchithinues" (HBCA B.239/a/37 June 26, 1754).

Accompanying Henday was Connawapa, a local Cree from York Factory.

Henday went inland with a group of, apparently, Pegogama Cree whose area was between the branches of the Saskatchewan River. Several days earlier, on June 22, a flotilla of 26 canoes of "Keschachewan and pegsgoma [sic]" had arrived and on June 26, Henday left "with the Keschachewan Indians" (ibid), a term often used to refer to the western Cree in general (see below section 9.5).

Elsewhere, however, he was said to have been "amongst the Pedogamy and Earchethinew" (HBCA B.239/b/11 6 August 1754) and the next spring he returned to York Factory at the head of 46 canoes "of pegigoma Indians" (HBCA B.239/a/39 23 June 1755).

Although Henday was to "Exhort and Encourage the Indians to trade at the Bay," his main goal was to "bring the Earchethinues to a Trade." This anglicized Cree term, often written as Archithinue, was applied to all groups of western Indians who were neither Cree nor Assiniboin. It was often translated as "Slave," hence our Great and Lesser Slave lakes. On the prairies, it could refer to any or all of the Blackfoot proper, Piegan, Blood, Sarcee or Gros Ventre. Since neither Henday nor his employers ever used the term in a more specific sense, it is not possible to identify the various groups which he met although it is commonly assumed they were members of the Blackfoot Nation (e.g. Henday 1907:316; Morton 1973:247; Wilson 1954:30).

Henday's group, like most of the trading Indians from the Saskatchewan River area, avoided the hazards of Lake Winnipeg and circled north by way of Cross Lake, the Minago River and Moose Lake to the Saskatchewan River. Here he found several Frenchmen who had been left to summer at their post at the mouth of the Basquia River, modern The Pas. Henday's group travelled up the Carrot River tributary where they abandoned their canoes, probably near modern Arborfield

(David Meyer: personal communication) where they met their families and began to walk west on the edge of the plains.

The group crossed the South Saskatchewan on open prairie north of Saskatoon and crossed to the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan and on to the Battlefords area. Here they struck southwest along the Battle River until, on 14 October, they finally reached the Archithinue camp near Red Deer, Alberta (Wilson 1974:286). Attickoshish and Connawapa, who left Henday in order to join an Archithinue raid to the southwest, did not meet up with him until the spring, leaving him with several tents to pass the winter hunting to the north.

Burpee, Henday's (1907) editor, considered that after wintering in the Red Deer area, the group canoed back to The Pas by way of the Red Deer River and the South Saskatchewan. Morton, who had access to the HBCA, thought instead that Henday had moved north to the Edmonton area and the North Saskatchewan, the position accepted today (Wilson 1974:286).

Henday's journal indicates that the Cree, for some time, had been coming to the Red Deer area to trade with the Archithinue. Further, they were continuing the tradition described by Saukamappee of aiding the Blackfoot Nation in their raids on enemies to the west. However, there are references which might suggest that the Cree were interlopers in what was Blackfoot country from their own lands to the northeast (e.g. Ray 1974:89-90). Henday (HBCA

B.239/a/40 23 December 1754) wrote of his group being fearful of attacks by the Archithinue. A few days later, although furs were available, his tentmates told him (1907:344) that they would be killed if they trapped in Archithinue country. However, these statements are contradicted by other data and his comments must be placed in context.

The statements expressing fears of the neighbouring Archithinue were made after the group had broken up for the winter and Henday was left with one tent consisting of himself, two men- one of whom was elderly- five women and four children (Henday 1907:343). It is not surprising that his tent mates were apprehensive of danger, whether real or not. They were on the edge of Cree territory and open to attacks not from their Archithinue allies, the Blackfoot Confederacy, but rather their common enemies who were also called Archithinue.

That hunting furs was forbidden because they were in Archithinue territory is contradicted by all the other evidence in Henday's account. Just prior to reaching the Archithinue camp, and while they were under observation of its warriors, a group of 16 tents left to hunt beaver (HBCA B.239/a/40 9 October 1754) and Henday's group themselves killed 16 beaver (Henday 1907:336). Yet the fears alluded to above were expressed two months after this beaver-hunting episode, long after the group had left the Archithinue camp.

Further, a month later Henday's group began to trap sporadically with no fear. Clearly, Henday's group was simply reluctant to hunt in mid-winter as were the groups described by all later observers.

What is apparent from Henday's journal is that both the Cree and Assiniboin were living in and south of the Edmonton area in sizeable numbers. When he returned to York Factory, Henday was accompanied by either 58 or 68 canoes (HBCA B.239/a/40; B.239/a/39 23 June 1755). These canoes represented only a portion of the several groups Henday saw in the spring since not all Cree traded and the two person canoes often included women (section 7.6 below). Further, upon leaving for the Bay, Henday said, in regard to the Assiniboin, that "a great many Aseenepoets that go to no settlements whatever pitched towards the muscuty country [plains] after buffalo" (HBCA E.2/4 24-27/4/1755).

Although there are no further journals concerning the Edmonton area until posts were established on the upper North Saskatchewan in the 1790s (e.g. M'Gillivray 1929; Johnson 1967), there is indirect evidence that the Cree and Assiniboin continued in the area. Henday's immediate attempt to return inland in 1755 failed when his young English companion became "too jaded" immediately after leaving and Henday was forced to go back to the Bay. His attempt to reconnoiter a location for an inland post in 1756 failed because of his own ill-health. He finally returned

"into the Earchithinue Country" in 1759 with Joseph Smith (HBCA B.239/a/46 28 June 1759).

Strangely, no journal has survived from this trip nor is there any mention that one was even written. This is puzzling in view of the pressure by the HBC for such journals, especially in light of the inadequate attempts by both Smith and Pink. However, if Williams is right in thinking that Isham suspected Henday of doctoring his 1754 journal, it may well be that Henday was not asked to keep one. Regardless, all that is known of the trip is that Henday and Smith returned the next summer at the head of 61 canoes later identified as "pegogama and Keskatchewan" (HBCA B.239/a/47 22 June 1760).

It seems likely, however, that he returned to central Alberta. In 1760, Moses Norton, chief factor at Fort Churchill, brought to London a map "Laid Down on Ind'n Inform'n" (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:88-89). On the map is the legend "ye track to Henday's tent" leading to "Beaver Mount" on what is labelled Beaver River but from other evidence is the North Saskatchewan. Beaver Mount would refer to the Beaver Hills immediately east of Edmonton where Henday built his canoes in 1755. The map was apparently obtained by a Cree leader who had given Norton information on the French trade in the summer of 1760 (HBCA B.42/a/53 4 July 1760).

Henday's guide, Attickasish, continued to guide HBC men



inland although their destinations are unknown. In 1761, Henry Pressick was sent inland in the hopes of persuading the Archithinue to come to the Bay. His guide was "that trusty Leader Attikoshich Who Conducted Anthy Hendey in his Journey Inland to the Earchithinues Country" (HBCA B.239/a/48 25 July 1761). Although Pressick was ordered to keep a journal and make a map of the rivers he passed there is no mention of these when he returned with 39 canoes of "Kaskachewan & pegogama Indians" (HBCA B.239/a/49 18 June 1762). Attickasish took James Dearing inland in 1765-66 and may have continued to be his guide for the annual trips Dearing made until 1770. No details have survived from these journeys although Dearing was seen occasionally by Joseph Pink during his travels on the North Saskatchewan.

#### 6.4.2. JOSEPH SMITH: 1763-1764

Three journals survive from the five journeys inland that Joseph Smith made between 1756 and 1765. Smith, who was barely literate, tried hard to overcome this but even his final effort is difficult to decipher. The result is that his exact routes cannot be determined.

Following the apparent success of Henday's trip to Alberta, Smith was sent inland in 1756 and 1757 to the upper Assiniboine River in eastern Saskatchewan (see section 6.5.2, 6.5.3). In 1759-60 he accompanied Henday on that obscure journey inland, apparently to the Edmonton area.

Smith and Isaac Batt returned inland in 1763, apparently with the flotilla of 63 unidentified canoes which had arrived shortly before (HBCA B.239/a/50 3 July 1763). The two soon separated, Smith taking a more northerly route to central Saskatchewan while Batt seems to have gone to the upper Assiniboine. Smith returned inland the following summer under the leadership of Miss'sin'kee'shick. He died of unknown causes on his return to York Factory and his furs were given "to the Woman who was his Cannoe Mate & Tent Mate ... for the Support of her Self & his Child" (HBCA B.239/a/53 9-12 June 1765).

Smith's journal of 1763 is sufficiently vague that Ray (1973:43) thought he had probably returned to the upper Assiniboine River where he had earlier wintered. However, Smith makes no mention of crossing Lake Winnipeg nor of the portage at Grand Rapids, both of which he mentioned in his earlier journals to the Assiniboine. Further, he paddled on a river for some nineteen days which would have been impossible for any rivers to the south, except the lower Assiniboine.

Smith and his group reached Cumberland Lake by way of the Grass River and the Sturgeon-weir. Then they travelled up the Saskatchewan River to the plains where they spent the winter trapping and hunting bison before returning to the Birch Hills area to build their canoes. This is the rather vague itinerary given by A.S.Morton (1973:273-4). Added

details are found in Smith's journal, but they do little to pinpoint his destination. Smith's trading Indians appear to have met their families far to the east, on the Grass River. After continuing to Cumberland Lake "whe partead from all the indens by four tentes whe want up Storgen rever and the want to Seockea [Basquia ?] whan whe want wast and the want south" (HBCA B.239/a/52 13 August 1763). Smith and his group then continued paddling for another 19 days before shoal water forced them to abandon their canoes on 7 September somewhere west of the Forks of the Saskatchewan.

Until the end of the month they travelled through burned woods, apparently skirting the edge of the plains, "as fine mader Ground as Can be if it was took car of." By November, the group had started to kill bison but "whe dosnot go in to the baren Ground for feer of the earsheadenys [Archithinue]" (B.239/a/52 13 November 1763). Several days later, hearing there were no Archithinue near, they started to move southward where they were windbound "in the baren Groun" on 5 December. They continued to move south and west on the plains, "fine Ground for corn," until 12 January when, after two days travel to the east, they reached "the Large rever as whe padel down untill the noth river" (ibid 14 January 1764), the South and North Saskatchewan rivers.

There, on the South Saskatchewan River, they met Cree

who had built a pound, but the group continued to move downstream until, on 21 March, they were at "the borsh hill." Here, while they were building their canoes in the company of several camps along the river, an Indian "bort noues that the has lorst too woman and two horsis the sort that the archeadienes had killead them" (ibid 5 May 1764). The group of 50 canoes embarked on 14 May and the next day "whe Cam to the rever as the deer [Attikosish] cam down" and the next day were at old Fort St. Louis "but the Indens had bornt it."

Although it appears that Smith's group had wintered in the Eagle Hills area, there is a major problem in interpreting the journal. This is the great length of time spent paddling on the river and then walking through the burned woods before they reaching the grasslands. It is unlikely that the group had paddled up the Shell River, near Prince Albert and then turned south as several Indians left on 19 January for goods laid up in the fall. This suggests they had abandoned the canoes relatively close by. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that members of the group had been very sick, even dying, until early winter and it is possible the distance travelled each day was inordinately short.

Smith does not mention meeting Assiniboin until after he started travelling down the South Saskatchewan in January. Twice individual Assiniboin came who could not be

understood, but finally, on 8 February, 20 tents came on their way to a pound. The two groups feasted and Smith tried, apparently unsuccessfully, to persuade the Assiniboin to go to the Bay. There are no further references to Assiniboin until 48 canoes joined the Cree flotilla near Cumberland Lake.

Despite the difficulties in Smith's journal of 1763, our first account of a wintering in Saskatchewan, it is clear that his Cree companions were wintering on the plains and only entering the edge of the forest to prepare for the trip to the Bay. There is no clear evidence of conflicts with neighbouring groups. The Archithinue he mentions were probably the Snake from the south who were feared enemies in this area until at least 1772.

#### 6.4.3 WILLIAM PINK: 1766-1770

In 1766 William Pink began the first of four trips which resulted in the only consecutive set of journals by the inland travellers; Smith's journals of 1756 and 1757 being so poor as to be of little use. Pink's first attempt at keeping records was only a little better than Smith's - there are very few entries and geographical features are seldom named - but in the later journals we find him at least attempting to give fuller details of his travels.

Pink's journals remain unpublished and they have been little used in studies of the west. In 1931, J.B. Tyrrell

(1934:5-12) briefly outlined Pink's travels in his introduction to his collection of later fur trade journals. A.S.Morton (1973:275-281) presented more details of Pink's journeys especially the routes which he followed but, following the general tenor of his work, was little interested in the Indian side of the history of the west. Surprisingly, given the light they shed on the Parkland Cree, Ray (1974:43-44) only discusses the first, and least useful, of the four journals.

Pink left York Factory on June 15, 1766 with Mousinnikissack, the same Cree leader who had taken Smith in his final trip of 1765. His journal entries are so sporadic and lacking in geographical details that it is difficult to determine his route. It is generally thought he travelled up the Saskatchewan to near Prince Albert to winter on the plains before moving to the canoe-building site near Birch Hills (Morton 1973:275-76; Ray 1974:43-44; Tyrrell 1934:5-6).

Pink met the families of his companions at Cumberland Lake (HBCA B.239/a/58 28 July 1767) and ten days later, on July 16, proceeded inland. Almost five weeks later, in his next journal entry, he says he "parted with 40 Canues of Indians...we went up a River [the South Saskatchewan ?] to the Southwarde of them" promising to meet in the spring (HBCA B.239/a/56 21 August 1766). Six weeks later, on 7 October, they abandoned their canoes and began to walk

"towardses the West and Sometimes S West through the Woods whare Thare ware now track ways" (ibid:Oct.7). They were still near the Forks, however, for they made a cache of dried meat, bladders of fat and furs for their return to the Bay. This cache was visited the next spring, ten days before they arrived at the canoe-building site near the Forks.

After making the cache, they moved northwest to a small river, apparently Eagle Creek, where there were reputed to be many beaver. After meeting with "a large Bodey of Indains" they moved, on November 13, to the southwest where he found "the Contrey quite open Very Little Wood Only heare and thare a Hammock Standing Bufflo very plenty" (HBCA B.239/a/56 8 December 1766). They continued southwest to "a Large Hammock" of birch, perhaps in the Bear Hills, where they made their sleds and snowshoes. From here they moved southeast and east until they reached the South Saskatchewan River on 8 February which they followed down to the canoe-building site near Birch Hills, two days paddling above Fort St. Louis.

Towards the end of January Pink had met a large group of Assiniboin who had many horses. Although the Cree called them the Pwasymawock, "I find that they are of the same that we call Syn,na,po,its (HBCA B.239/a/56 22 January 1767)."

These were the Southern Assiniboin (see section 11.5 below) who lived further inland towards the south and since they

did not use canoes, obtained goods through trade with the trading Indians.

The only two localities which can be identified in either Smith's or Pink's journals are the late winter journey along the lower South Saskatchewan River and the canoe-building sites near the Birch Hills. As in the case of Smith, Pink's travelling time does not correspond with his supposed route or with that of later travelers in the area. Yet, in broad outline, the two itineraries do not appear dissimilar and it seems probable that both men followed the same route. Certainly, they present similar pictures of the Cree.

Pink's remaining journeys, which refer to identifiable geographical features, have been reliably described by Morton (1973:277-81).

In 1767-68, he abandoned his canoes at Fort St. Louis and with 15 tents he travelled along the north shore of the North Saskatchewan to either the Shell or Sturgeon rivers which had been hunted out of beaver. Smaller camps joined the group and when they moved west past Jackfish River towards Turtle Lake, the group contained 36 tents. Pink's group continued to move northwest while smaller groups moved south towards the North Saskatchewan River. When they reached the Moose Lake area near modern St. Paul, Alberta, some 80 km west of the Saskatchewan border, he found out that the group of 22 tents had only gone so far northwest in



order to go on a raid still further to the westward, probably along the war trail to Lesser Slave Lake described by Alexander Mackenzie (1970:249,253). Here, where beaver were plentiful, they laid up a cache of tobacco and ammunition for the spring. Pink and his group then moved south, on 29 December, across the North Saskatchewan to trap wolves and foxes and hunt bison. By the end of February, they had moved back across the river to Moose Hill, near the future site of Fort George, three days south of their autumn cache, and began to move downriver to the canoe-building site which they reached on 18 April 1768. By then the camp consisted of 80 tents and they were joined by 100 tents of Archithinue who camped across the river. On 8 May they left for the Bay. Along the way, they met other HBC men who had wintered inland and also saw another group of 200 tents of Archithinue who were different from the ones seen earlier. This seems to have been near the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan River as Pink was then six days' paddling from old Fort St. Louis.

Pink's comments about the Archithinue (see section 12.5) give us our first information about these groups since Heday, thirteen years earlier. Unfortunately, it is not possible to identify them.

Pink does not mention trade with the Assiniboin nor even with the Archithinue who, as Pink mentions, did not hunt foxes since the Cree, who were at odds with them, did

not encourage it. However, the several references to rivers being hunted out of beaver that the Cree or Assiniboin were hunting north of the North Saskatchewan river. Further, there were many groups of Cree west of the Thickwood Hills.

In 1768, Pink returned inland to winter near the North Saskatchewan in eastern Alberta. Again the canoes were abandoned on the north shore of the Saskatchewan at Fort St. Louis and the group moved first to the Prince Albert area then moved west keeping south of their trail of the year before. By the end of September, they were crossing Red Deer River, now called the Manning River, Frog Lake River, and Moose Hill River where they were caught by a prairie fire. Despite their success at making a backfire, "the Tents were Sevrill Bournt and Four Wemen ware Bournt to Death and Sevrill others hands and Feate Deaspartey Bournde" (HBCA B.239/a/61 1 October 1768). Pink and six tents left the others and crossed the North Saskatchewan to the southwest in open but quite hilly country. Here, towards the end of October, the Indians broke up into groups of two or three tents and began to hunt wolves. They continued to move southwest despite his comment that

the Indaines heare Now Constantly Keep gard in the nigh time for fear of the other Indanes Caled Yeartche thyn newock [i.e. Archithinue] and Cenepick we e thynewock [Snake] for Feare they Should Come up on them all on a Suden in the night time (HBCA B.239/a/61 22 October 1768).

The fear seems based more on caution than the actual presence of these groups. After meeting another HBC man, James Batt, the groups split moving to the west and south, even deeper into what apparently would have been dangerous country. It would seem that Pink and the various groups of Cree were not afraid of the members of the Blackfoot nation but, rather, their common enemies further west. By December the snow was too deep to catch wolves and they began to move north to a hill of birch to make sleds and snowshoes having sent three women to pick up a cache made on 19 November. Now began the general movement eastward, parallel to, but south of, the North Saskatchewan. In mid-February they were trapping martin in wooded country. After continuing their movement east, they recrossed the North Saskatchewan. Several days later they were at the spot selected for building their canoes near the mouth of Moosehill Creek with its source of birch several days north.

Here there seem to have been a continuous scatter of both Cree and Assiniboin camps, all building canoes. One day's travel up river was a camp of 50 Assiniboin tents with two HBC men. Pink himself had been joined by another employee, and still another was with 16 tents, two day's canoe travel below at Pink's site of the previous spring.

Pink's group left for the Bay on 24 April. Several days later, apparently near the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan, he makes a most surprising observation:

Mooved None Eare I found Staying a pounding of Bouflou 31 Tents of Sinnapoits So heare the Indaines are Gowing up for provySions this is the First pound I have seen in this in Land Contrey it is Made in a Dale it is Railed Round with Lardge Woodn it is Consisting of to Hundred and Nointey Feat Round and 7 feet High the Down way or the way that the Beast Come in at is 40 Feet Broade and at the Side of the Hill that Slopes Down in to the pound the Lardge Stikes are Lef Slooping down hill and other ones Laide on the top of them for the Boffow to Ron down upon and Jump of in to the pound (HBCA B.239/a/61 2 May 1769).

Although this is the earliest and one of the most complete descriptions of a pound, it is very surprising that Pink had not seen one before since this was his third winter inland on the North Saskatchewan. Cocking (1908) makes numerous references to pounds only three years later when he wintered in the same area as Pink's wintering of 1763. Smith mentioned pounds both in southeastern Saskatchewan and in his trip to the area between the branches of the Saskatchewan River.

Pink makes no mention of taking the families down river by canoe to old Fort St. Louis where they were met later in the summer when Pink returned inland. Seemingly, the group travelled overland to Fort St. Louis from the canoe-building site 450 km to the west.

This trip differs from the others in not mentioning any trade with other Indian groups. There was an opportunity for trade when they met the Assiniboin at the pound, although here the emphasis was on obtaining food rather than

furs. However, the references to trapping wolves and martin clearly show that all the furs were not derived from the non-trading inland groups.

On his final trip of 1769-70, the families of the trading Indians were met on the south side of the Saskatchewan River at Fort St. Louis. On 3 August, the group moved inland south of the South Saskatchewan over much the same area Cocking was to travel three years later. After crossing a large plain with many bison, they reached an area with small poplar and willows, probably the Minichinas Hills where he sent a gift of tobacco to a camp of 150 Assiniboin "that Never see the Forte the Cannot paddle" (HBCA B.239/a/63 26 August 1769).

On 10 September they crossed the South Saskatchewan on rafts, letting their horses swim. Now they were in open country with plenty of buffalo, probably between Hague and Rosthern. To the south and southwest beaver and wolves were numerous but

being all wayes in Feare of the Indaines  
Called Ke, ne, pick, we, thyn, na, wock  
[Snake] is the Reason that the Indaines Dos Not  
Gow after them the Contrey Quite Open and  
those Indaines southwarde having all horses is  
the Reason the Indaines that I am With are in  
Feir of them (HBCA B.239/a/63 18 September  
1769).

A week later they had reached "Micke Cue wachee," Eagle Hills, covered with trees and a noted place for moose, elk and, to a lesser degree, bison. The group did not stop

here but continued west to open country and on to Manito Lake. Although it was a noted place for bison, they were then scarce and for the previous 14 days, the group had been forced to live on rabbits. However, after finding the bison were on the south side of the lake, the groups then split up for wolf and fox trapping, one group moving off to the south.

Pink's group apparently stayed trapping in the same area during November and December. Eight tents of Assiniboin were at a nearby bison pound to whom Pink sent a gift of tobacco. Then, in December, Pink makes the earliest specific identification of Blackfoot groups:

[13 December 1769] ... this Day I Sent Tobacoo a Bodey of ye archethynnawock Called Mithquothinnowock [Blood] for to Snare Wouolves for the Trap None.

[24 December 1769] ... this Day Came and put up By us a Bodey of Indaines Called Black footed [Blackfoot proper] (HBCA B.239/a/63).

The Blackfoot were on their way to a pound six days away and when they left, on 1 January, Pink's group joined them intending to trap wolves if the pound was a success. It is clear that pounding bison was not an easy matter, even for the Blackfoot. The first day they drove too many bison in and the pound broke down, the next day several of the group of 15 bison managed to jump out and the following day the smoke from the camp kept the bison from entering. Finally they were successful and over the next two weeks, they drove in groups of 21, 50, 21, and 25 bison.

Now that provisions were ample, the Cree began to trap wolves. The Blackfoot, however, had the very different, and probably more efficient, technique of snaring:

the fence in a pese of Land a Bout one  
 Hundred and fiftey Fathom Round on one Side  
 the Leave open a Bout a Fathem for the Wouolves  
 to Gow in at a Bofflow heare is Cot to passes  
 and Laide all a Bout in the in Side thare is  
 Ten holes left open Round in this fence and  
 thare the put up Snares Made of Leather  
 Thonges (HBCA B.239/a/63 17 January 1770).

It is not clear why the Blackfoot should have developed this technique when they were only occasionally trading with the Cree and Assiniboin, and why snaring had not been adopted early by the latter groups. It suggests that the Blackfoot groups had a long tradition of trading wolf skins to other neighbouring groups whereas the Cree and Assiniboin, in their trade with the Bay, had concentrated on beaver and other prime furs.

By February, the trading Indians began to move back towards the canoe-building sites along the North Saskatchewan River. Some were even further inland than Pink since he had sent tobacco to 11 tents of Assiniboin who passed by. His group left the pound on 11 February, finally reaching the site on 26 March. He does not give any hint where this was, saying only that they had crossed the Battle River on 19 February.

Along the way many other groups had been heard from and Pink sent them all tobacco to persuade them to go to the Bay

rather than trade with the Pedlars who were now on the Saskatchewan.

Near the canoe site he met another HBC employee with four tents and several days later they were joined by another with the Cree leader, Ca Botch. These HBC men had been mentioned by Pink in his earlier journals and, like him, were clearly returning yearly to the same general areas.

The canoe-building sites clearly served as spring aggregation camps even for Indians not going to trade. By the time Pink reached their site, his group consisted of about 70 tents and over the next week he tells of others joining them: the leader Wapinesiw with 20 tents who had been on a raid against the Snake; the Assiniboin leader Canepickopoet with a HBC man and 18 tents; and the Cree leader Wenastacy with six tents. This camp of some 114 tents would represent between 900 and 1100 people.

Pink also makes the first clear statement regarding the members of the group who did not go to the Bay. Even before they started to build their canoes, Pink wrote

Now the Old people and Children are Gone in Land with the Horses and Dogs and are a Going to the plase whare the are to Stay till those Canues up [sic] from the Forte (B.239/a/63 8 April 1770).

Here there is clear evidence that only a portion of the camp of some 800 - 1000 people were actually going to the Bay to trade. However, it cannot be determined how many canoes from these camps arrived at the Bay. The flotilla



separated at the Cumberland Lake fork where at least the Beaver Cree, previously unmentioned by Pink, took the Grass River route to York Factory, as they had the year before. Pink arrived at York Factory on 22 June with 22 canoes, 12 of whom were Assiniboin. Other HBC employees, who had been with Pink at the canoe site, had arrived on 14 June with 112 canoes. However, this latter flotilla had been joined along the way by groups from the upper Assiniboine River (HBCA B.239/a/62).

Pink gives crucial information regarding the Snake who somehow found access to guns, perhaps by way of the Mandan villages on the Missouri. Wapinesiw and several others had been on a raid against the Snakes who had

Came Down upon ours with thare horses and Likewise Sevrill Gones that the had But they Cannot Shote well yet this is the firs time that the See Gons with them Natives we now Not whare the Get them for the Catch No Fores our Indaines Say that the Cary Deare Sinnares to the Southward and Trad With Some people thare But the Dos not Now ho the has Killed one of our Indaines and Wounded Three But our Indaines Killed 80 of them (HBCA B.239/a/63 1 April 1770).

This is the last of Pink's journals. From them we learn of the wide spread of country he covered in his four journeys inland: from the mouth of the South Saskatchewan where he built his canoes in 1766 to the country between Vegreville and Edmonton where he wintered in 1769. Yet he seemed to always winter in the same general area- the open country either west or south of the Eagle Hills. He does

not, for example, winter in the neighbouring forests nor in the country south of the main Saskatchewan River or west of the Manitoba Escarpment. Although the Cree are highly mobile, they move within certain limits, a point discussed more fully in chapters 8 and 9 where each territorial group is examined individually.

It is also clear that the Cree involvement in the fur trade as middlemen was very erratic. No attempt seems to have been made to rendezvous with either the Southern Poets or the Archithinue; it seems these latter groups were only met by chance. Further, it is clear that the Cree themselves were not content to simply obtain furs from these groups. Instead, we find them, from time to time, trapping furs even when they were able to obtain them from these neighbouring groups. However, it is clear that their efforts and travels were not directed to trapping furs.

Finally, we see that their common and steady enemy were the Snakes. The scattered references to fears of the Archithinue appear to be addressed not to the members of the Blackfoot Confederacy but to this common enemy of both groups. Such fears were most often expressed in the autumn and when groups were in the Eagle Hills and lower South Saskatchewan River.

#### 6.4.4 MATTHEW COCKING: 1772-73

The HBC found it very difficult to understand the

increasing role the Montrealers played as they moved further up the Saskatchewan, although it was clear the trade was falling rapidly. There were also vague, if not contradictory, statements about the degree to which the trading Indians were actually middlemen who were obtaining their furs from other groups at a much higher profit than the HBC was able to earn.

By 1772, these frustrations peaked:

I have often reflected that the Accounts given us by Men sent Inland were incoherent & unintelligible. I thought ... a sensible Person might answer the Purpose much better (HBCA A.11/115 26 August 1772).

With these words, Andrew Graham wrote the London Committee that he had sent Matthew Cocking inland. Cocking, 29 years old, had come to York Factory in 1765 as writer and had advanced to second at the post in 1770 (Spry 1979:156-57). He was certainly aware of what information was needed and both his inland journals, the last to be discussed later, carry full descriptions of his life inland. Unfortunately, his guide did not take him further than the Bear Hills, west of Saskatoon and the greater part of his winter was spent travelling from there back to the canoe-building site on the lower South Saskatchewan, well within the area described by earlier travellers.

There are problems with Cocking's journal. In this case case, however, the problem is relatively simple: the wrong version of his journal was published. Instead of the

official journal sent to London, L.J. Burpee, his editor, published the abbreviated transcript found in a manuscript copy of Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay, the source for the several versions of Henday's journal. Graham often summed up one or two weeks of Cocking's journal entries in a general statement. As well, the detailed log account Cocking kept while travelling by canoe and his "Thoughts...." regarding an inland settlement have been omitted. Apart from A. S. Morton, historians have ignored the original journal: surprisingly, Ray does not refer to either version in his study of the Indians and the fur trade.

Cocking left York Factory on 27 June 1772. Neither the size of the group nor the name of its leader is mentioned either by Cocking or Graham. There is no doubt that it was a Cree group as Cocking later meets some Fall Indians whose leader "talks the Asinepoet language well, so that we shall understand each other, as my Leader understands it also" (Cocking 1908:110). Further, Cocking always uses Cree geographical terms and although he often refers to the arrival and departure of Assiniboin groups at his various camps, his only reference to the Nahathaway (i.e. Cree) is when he needs to differentiate them from the Assiniboin, e.g. "Asinepoet Natives lay still....The Neheathaway Natives intend to go to the pound but slowly...with these I intend to go" (Cocking 1908:115). The group was probably Pegogama

or Keskachewan Cree both of whom were found, as we shall see, living between the branches of the Saskatchewan. This is supported by Graham's comment written the day after Cocking had left York Factory, that "most part of the Pegogoma and Keskachewan Indians gone" (HBCA B.239/a/66 28 June 1772).

Cocking and his party abandoned their canoes near the ruins of the old French post of Fort St. Louis where they had met seven tents of their families. On 14 August 1772 they left on foot to winter further west. Morton (1973:284-5) traces their route southwest over the Birch Hills to cross the South Saskatchewan River "either at Gardepuys Crossing [20 km north of Batoche] or at St. Laurent le Grandin [10 km north of Batoche]...probably the former." They crossed north of Duck Lake to the North Saskatchewan which they followed to Eagle Creek where they turned south through the Eagle Hills to hunt bison and trap wolves near modern Asquith. Then they moved west of modern Biggar where, on 23 November they found an old Archithinue pound which they tried, unsuccessfully to repair. Fortunately, a band of 21 tents of Fall or Gros Ventre Indians arrived and helped Cocking's party, now reduced to three tents, to repair the pound. However their attempts were in vain "the Strangers say the season is past" (Cocking 1908:111). Word came from the south of a Fall Indian raid against the Snakes and of a general scarcity of bison so on 17 December Cocking left for

the parkland of the Thickwood Hills across the North Saskatchewan. By spring, according to Morton (1973:285), the Indians had gathered near modern Fort Carlton to build their canoes. On 16 May they embarked for York Factory where Cocking arrived on 18 June 1773 in company with 16 canoes (HBCA B.239/a/68).

At the mouth of Eagle Creek, on 4 September 1772, Cocking (HBCA B.239/a/69) met with "fifty tents of Indians...many of them Beaver Indians [Cree]." It is not known if Cocking had as company, in addition to his original seven tents, the various groups he met along the way: 18 tents at Fort St. Louis; the camp of either 14 or 20 tents he met at the crossing of the South Saskatchewan (Cocking 1908:103; HBCA B.239/a/69 22 August 1772); and the 4 tents he met on approaching the North Saskatchewan (HBCA B.239/a/69 28 August 1772). Yet the camp of Beaver Cree alone, at an average of 8 people per tent, would have consisted of well over 400 people.

Once they entered Eagle Hills, immediately to the west, the group began to split up, with parties leaving to Manito Lake and Assine-Wache (i.e.the Rocky Mountains), others to the northwest and to the east. Cocking's party was reduced to four tents by 10 October when he was in the Bear Hills apparently near Ruthhilda, 40 km southwest of Biggar, where the group planned to winter. It was here they tried, unsuccessfully, to pound bison and where they were joined by

21 tents of Fall Indians.

It was while Cocking was in the Bear Hills that he first described the clay pottery and bison pound of the Fall Indians, stone cairns and tent rings built by the Archithinue, an abandoned tobacco garden, and the protective hide war jackets of the Snake (Burpee 1908:109-111; HBCA B.239/a/69 23 October - 5 December 1772).

With the failure of the bison hunt they left on 17 December and crossed the North Saskatchewan River just west of Radisson, following the edge of the Thickwood Hills northeast until, on 20 February, they were in the area opposite future Fort Carlton. Along the way Cree and Assiniboin were constantly arriving and leaving, bringing news of the Montreal traders at Nipawin, the successes and failures of the bison hunts and the proposed locations of the spring canoe-building sites.

Because of the scarcity of bison, Cocking and six tents decided to join a mixed Cree and Assiniboin bison pound at Red Deer Hill, 40 km to the northeast. They crossed the river near Carlton and moved northeast, parallel to the South Saskatchewan, to Red Deer Hill which they reached on 27 March. The pound proved to be a failure so the group moved 10 miles southwest where they built their canoes and embarked on 16 May 1773.

Cocking's journal outlines the itinerary of a Cree group who first winter on the plains, then follow the edge

of the parkland to their spring canoe-building site, with no apparent ties to the forest.

Mandelbaum wrote that Cocking's evidence showed that

In 1772 the Cree were sufficiently acculturated to Plains life to build buffalo pounds.... Even though some of the Cree had become buffalo hunters in Cocking's time, they had not yet given up the use of canoes as they did later (1979:33).

The first journal of a wintering in Saskatchewan, that of Smith in 1763, refers to unspecified Indians, seemingly Cree, at pounds. Further, both the trading Cree and Assiniboin needed canoes until the inland posts were established on the North Saskatchewan in the late 1770s.

Ray (1972a, 1974) does not refer to Cocking's journal in his discussion of the seasonal round of the Cree and Assiniboin. However, Cocking's information, as do all these journals we have looked at, contradicts his statement that

The Cree also frequented the parklands in mid-winter at the time when the harshest weather conditions prevailed, but often spent the milder early and late winter months trapping furs in the bordering forests (1972a:113).

#### 6.4.5 PETER FIDLER: 1792-1793

After the establishment of inland posts on the North Saskatchewan River in the 1770s, both the Hudson's Bay Company and the various Montreal concerns sent men on brief forays with Indian groups. Unfortunately no journals have survived of these winterings, the sole exception being Peter



Fidler's journal of 1792-93 (HBCA E.3/2). Although David Thompson (1968) has described his wintering with the Peigan in 1787-88, no journals have been located giving the day by day events of his travels.

Fidler left Buckingham House on 9 November 1792 with a band of Peigan Indians and wintered in southern Alberta, on the Oldman River west of Lethbridge (Brink 1986:21). At this late date, and in an area well away from Cree and Assiniboin bands, Fidler's journal is not of direct relevance. However, he indicates Cree were still at peace with the Blackfoot Nation and his observations are reminiscent of those of Heday, some 40 years earlier.

On 11 November he met a Cree group "who accompanied us, as he is going to hunt Beaver near the Rocky Mountain" and on 16 November, he met a mixed group with 14 tents of Peigan and three of Cree near Red Deer River. A mixed group of five Cree tents and 12 Sarcee joined Fidler's group on 9 January, making a combined camp of 220 tents on the Oldman River.

These Indians particularly the Crees are far from their own country & very seldom ever bring their tents & families so far from home, but as they pretend to be great Doctors, and all the Slave [Archithinue] Indians believe it, they come here only to get what Skins they can from these Indians for leaves, roots &c. of their own gathering.... Probably before they leave us they will have 2 or 300 Skins, acquired in this manner.

The Cree were also are described on 28 January as being "esteemed much by all the Slave Indians as the most expert &

true prophetic foretellers or lookers into futurity of any nation known by them."

These statements raise questions regarding the presence of the Cree on the plains as middlemen because of their ability to purvey European goods. Here we see that the Cree had very desired goods of their own to exchange, independent of the fur trade. The Cree may have tried to intensify this trade in medicine after their role as middlemen was bypassed, when the Blackfoot Nation were able to obtain European goods directly from the North Saskatchewan River posts. However, the reputation of the Cree was such, after only some 10 years of such access, that this trade in medicines must have had a long history.

Such trade goes far to explain the generally amicable, rather than hostile, relations which existed between the Cree and Blackfoot Nation in the eighteenth century. Certainly it weakens the often unstated assumption that Cree and Assiniboin trade on the plains could only have developed in the historic period when

in the spring [the Cree and Assiniboin] discarded their used trade goods through barter with the Blackfoot for furs.... metal goods of European manufacture were the chief items the Plains groups demanded (Ray 1974:90).

## 6.5 THE INLAND TRAVELLERS ON THE UPPER ASSINIBOINE RIVER: 1756-1774

### 6.5.1. INTRODUCTION

This region consists of the area surrounding the Manitoba Escarpment, especially the upper Assiniboine River, but includes the Red Deer, Swan, and Valley rivers as well as Cedar Lake and the mouth of the Saskatchewan River. It was first visited by Henry Kelsey in 1691 and was used intensively by fur traders as early as the La Vérendryes who established posts at modern Portage la Prairie on the lower Assiniboine River in 1738, in the Dauphin area in 1741, the Red Deer Lake area in 1753, and the mouth of the Saskatchewan in 1741 (Smythe 1968; Champagne 1971). The area continued to be popular. In the 1790s, six posts, albeit short-lived, were founded within 60 km on the upper Assiniboine alone.

Despite this intensive European presence, the area is little known from the eighteenth century records. Kelsey's journal covers only 9 weeks of his two year sojourn inland. No post journals have survived from the La Vérendryes and their reports only incidentally mention French activities in the area. Post records do not start until the arrival of the HBC in the 1790s. Although the HBC had sent employees to winter with various Cree groups beginning in 1756, their few journals are of limited value: we have seen Joseph Smith's limitations; William Tomison made two journeys west of Lake

Manitoba, but his first journal was lost when his canoe overturned and is known only from a brief summary; Matthew Cocking wintered west of the upper Assiniboine River but remained stationary instead of following Cree groups.

Nevertheless, it is from these HBC employees who travelled inland that we have the clearest data on the locations and movements of the Cree and Assiniboin in this area. Their observations indicate that both groups were long term residents rather than being recent migrants in the west.

#### 6.5.2. JOSEPH SMITH AND JOSEPH WAGGONER 1756-1757: THE UPPER ASSINIBOINE

On 23 August 1756 Joseph Smith and Joseph Waggoner were sent inland from York Factory with Washcabitt, who had come "on an Errand from the Sturgeon Inds to Invite an English Man into their Country, then they will come to trade, Very few of these Inds has Come these some Years" (HBCA B.239/a/42 17 August 1756). Washcabitt had arrived two months later than the regular trading Indians, and Smith's journal of his travels, especially in the fall, does not reflect typical Cree activities (cf Ray 1974:42). Although Smith's journal gives few details of his route and of his wintering, Morton's (1973:250-51) reconstruction of the route is substantially correct. Smith walked inland from the mouth of the Saskatchewan River on 8 October and

remained at the deserted Fort Bourbon on Cedar Lake for eight days. They left on 9 November overland to Swan River and through the Manitoba Escarpment crossing the upper Assiniboine on November 30 where they killed their first bison. On 12 February, they began to move back northeastward and reached their canoe-building site at "Soon Sibi" (Swan River) on 3 March. From here they embarked on 5 May for York Factory by way of Mossy Portage where they visited the then occupied Fort Bourbon.

Although it is difficult to trace Smith's route, it is improbable that they "drifted south, passing the Porcupine Hills and Duck Mountain and crossing the Assiniboine River into...southwestern Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan" (Thorman 1974:595). Neither had they "penetrated well south of Lake Winnipeg" (Rich 1958 vol.1:643), or travelled "southward passing west of Lake Manitoba until they reached the Assiniboine River" (Ray 1972a:113). Smith's (HBCA B.239/a/43) journal indicates that his furthest southwest point was only about 13 days' travel southwest from the spring canoe-building site on Swan River. Since Cree groups travelled an average of 10 km a day, based on Cocking's journal of 1772 (Russell 1988:151), he was near or still north of modern Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

Smith did not make daily journal entries between 19 December and 6 February, when they were at their furthest point south, but simply said that they lay by to hunt bison.

Thus there are very few references to other Indian groups. These are never further identified except, in the spring, when "an Indn brought the news of the death of two french Men by the Sineypoets" (HBCA B.239/a/43 28 February 1757). Otherwise, he refers only to "Indians" which were very likely Cree.

Smith seems to have wintered on the plains. On his return to the Bay, his group of 23 canoes brought nothing but wolves to trade and reported that "they did not eat one beaver all the winter" (HBCA B.239/a/42 23 June 1757). In his journal Smith reported mid-way through the winter that "no Beaver gott yet no houses to be seen as for wolves they will not take trap" (HBCA B.239/a/43 9 January 1757). Although it is possible they had traded most of their furs with the French at Fort Bourbon in the spring, there was a real shortage of furs: "Six tents Sett out on purpose to go to Warr having no Goods to trade that is to Come to ye factory with" (HBCA B.239/a/43 10,11 February 1757).

Ray (1974:41,46; 1972a:114) utilized Smith's journal to support his view that all the western Cree wintered in the forest and only moved into the parkland to hunt bison for a brief period in mid-winter. Thus Ray writes that Smith and the Sturgeon Cree, between 31 October and 11 November, travelled slowly south of Cedar Lake, often stopping for prolonged periods: "Significantly until early December the group was in the forest area subsisting on fish and moose"

(1972a:113).

Smith was actually on the Red Deer River on 31 October, within the Manitoba Escarpment and some 100 km southwest of Cedar Lake. Smith's group was so far east of the plains this late in the season because, in part, they had left York Factory two months later than usual. Further, they remained in the forest so late because they were daily expecting the arrival of French traders at a nearby post on the Red Deer. Smith only mentions fish once: "in this place we Catcht the Largest Jack ever I seed yet" (HBCA B.239/a/43 12 November 1756). However, this was caught when they were forced to wait the arrival of the French. When the latter arrived, Smith's party immediately moved south to reach the bison although they were initially delayed because of illness.

Although this 1756-57 journal of Smith does not clarify the geographical location of the inland Indian groups, it cannot be used to support the established view that the Cree of the area were still tied to the forest and only making brief forays into the parkland.

### 6.5.3 JOSEPH SMITH AND JOSEPH WAGGONER 1757-1758: THE TOUCHWOOD HILLS

Seven days after their return to the Bay, Smith and Waggoner returned inland with the same group of Sturgeon Cree. Smith was apparently reprimanded for his poor journal-keeping, for his new journal has entries for each

day. Unfortunately, they most often consist of a simple note of the direction they travelled or the comment that they lay by. There are, however, more references to Indian groups, especially the Assiniboin.

All commentators on the journal are mistaken in the route Smith followed after his group entered Lake Winnipegosis from Mossy Portage and until they reached their spring canoe-building site near but not, as Smith himself states, at Swan River. Rich (1967:127-128) follows Morton (1973:252) who has them moving through the bush country west of Lake Dauphin to the Assiniboine River. Ray (1974:41-42) says they moved southwest from Lake Winnipegosis where "they drifted rather aimlessly in the parklands" of southwestern Manitoba. Thorman (1974:595) says only that they wintered again in the vicinity of the Assiniboine River, apparently south of Duck Mountain where he had previously placed them.

In fact, not surprisingly, Smith followed the same route as the year before. On 25 July, the group met their families on Mossy Portage where they paddled to "waskis" (waskisew) or Red Deer River. They abandoned their canoes shortly after crossing Red Deer Lake, perhaps on 7 August and travelled southwest until early October when

there came to hus four teans of indens and we  
lea at the side of a grat Lak as the call  
manto Lak it is in the Baren ground (HBCA  
B.239/a/45 3 October 1757).



"Manto" or Manito Lake was modern Good Spirit Lake which Cocking twenty years later was to visit under the name Witch Lake. Instead of stopping on the edge of the plains, Smith travelled another 16 days southwest until the 1 December which would place him well into either the Beaver or Touchwood Hills. After this date he continued to mention his daily movements but "I did not keep aney cose [course or direction] for we moved back and foured" (HBCA B.239/a/45 6 December 1757). As a result it is not possible to trace his movements.

On 7 March "we laft the baren growend" and on 5 April they reached the canoe building site on the Sickteacor River one day's travel from "Soon" or Swan Lake. Saketagaw or modern Woody River is a tributary of Swan River.

Smith makes no mention of Assiniboin until he was nine day's travel southwest of Good Spirit Lake where he met four tents and, two days later, 14 tents. Four days later still, they came to 20 tents of Assiniboin

and ther was a pound as the maed to kill boffles in and that day wandey [wednesday] ther was 67 cam in at onese... the kileaded tham with ther boes and arears (HBCA B.239/a/45 2,20 November 1757).

As Ray (1974:42) points out, this is one of the earliest references to bison pounds. Here they stayed until November 24 when the Cree left to go trapping wolves "for ther ws no beaves ther a boutes for it ws nothing but barean ground" (HBCA B.239/a/45 24 November 1757). The Assiniboin,

who "do not no how to padeal," did not trade at the Bay. Nevertheless they were persuaded to try to trap wolves, presumably to trade later with the Cree.

The Cree split into small groups for the winter. Smith's group consisted of three tents only because "for a maney teanes to gaer [together] is not good for treapang" (25 November 1757). More likely, the Cree were breaking up into small groups because they had not yet adopted the use of the pound and were still hunting in small groups. It is important to note that instead of heading towards the forest to trap, Smith's group continued westerly for at least the next two days when he stopped recording his courses.

It is clear that these Cree, like the later groups on the Saskatchewan, were heading far into the prairies, probably to isolated patches of parkland, to hunt bison. Neither were they spending the autumn hunting and fishing in the forest. Instead, those groups who had travelled to the Bay made directly for the open prairie, in search of bison. Even those Cree trading at the Bay were not directing their movements in order to trap beaver and other fur animals of the forest and parkland.

#### 6.5.4 WILLIAM TOMISON: 1767-1768; 1769-1770

William Tomison was sent inland from Fort Severn, southeast of York Factory, because of the declining trade resulting from the arrival of Montreal traders in southern

Manitoba the year before (Morton 1973:276). Unfortunately the journal of his first year inland was lost or badly damaged when his canoe overturned while he was spearing sturgeon and only a brief summary of the year's events exists. Most of the data concern the Montreal traders and it is not clear where Tomison wintered. Since he described his wintering as "pitching to and again killing moose deer and a few beaver" it seems he was east of the Escarpment where bison were absent.

On 15 July 1769 Tomison was again sent inland from Fort Severn with, apparently, 20 canoes of Keskachewan and Pegogamaw Indians "to the Muscuty [prairie] or Asinepoet Country" to promote the trade (B.198/a/11 15 July 1769; letter 20 July 1769 from Graham to Hopkins at Fort Albany).

Again, his route has been misinterpreted. Morton (1973:281) states that he travelled south from the west shore of Lake Manitoba to the Assiniboine River then up river to the Birdtail River and over Riding Mountain to Dauphin Lake by way, apparently, of the Ochre River, south of Dauphin. Rich (1960 vol 2:31; 1967:143) considers that, for both trips, he went west to the Saskatchewan River by way of Lake Winnipeg. Warkentin and Ruggles (1970 94-95), basing their interpretation on a map of the interior which shows Tomison's route, have him wintering "in the Riding Mountains, in the upper Assiniboine valley, and in the Dauphin Lake region" (ibid:68). However, their

identification of "Nouchepan Mountains," to the north of Tomison's wintering, as Moose Mountain, in extreme southeastern Saskatchewan, is in error. This is Duck Mountain, in Cree "nochepan," north of Riding Mountain exactly as illustrated in the map.

From Tomison's journal and map, we learn that the group reached Dauphin Lake on 13 October. Here they stayed awaiting the arrival of the Pedlars until, the lake starting to freeze, the group left for the inland on 8 November. The group travelled west past the north end of Riding Mountain and killed their first bison on 26 December. Tomison only describes the landscape the first few days after leaving Dauphin Lake: "grassey plains and Lages of small poplar" (8 October) and "mostly barren ground" (9 October).

The group continued to travel first southwest and then northwest until the end of January when they turned to the northeast, killing their last bison on 31 March. They arrived at the canoe-building site on 9 April, perhaps at the mouth of Valley River.

Despite the difficulties in tracing his exact route, Tomison presents details of Indian life, especially of his Cree companions. Most importantly, he suggests, as did Smith earlier, that it was the Assiniboin rather than the Cree who were using the bison pound. When a group of 40 Cree came starving because they had previously sold their guns to the Assiniboin, Tomison wrote "they are now

endeavouring to pound the buffloe but have not yet succeeded nor will without the help of the asinepoites Indians" (HBCA B.239/a/64 31 December 1769).

Again, there is no hint that the Cree were spending the fall and early winter hunting and fishing in the lakes and forest. Although the group had reached Lake Manitoba on 26 August and did not leave Dauphin Lake for inland until 8 November, the reason for the delay was because they were awaiting the arrival of the Montreal traders who were expected to arrive at Fort Dauphin:

... the Indians a cungring Druming and dancing for the padlers to Come soon as they depend on them for their suply for the Winter (4 October 1769)

... froze hard last night the Indians a Cungring and dancing for the traders to come (17 October 1769).

Finally when the lakes were fully frozen and there was no hope of the traders arriving, the group left for bison-hunting, travelling westerly almost every day until mid-January.

Tomison's journal reveals the mixture of Indian groups in west-central Manitoba and adjoining Saskatchewan. On northern Lake Manitoba, he met a tent of "Susanewa" (Cree) Indians (HBCA B.239/a/64 10 August 1769). Several other Susuhana were apparently part of the group of over 100 tents awaiting the arrival of the Pedlars at the foot of Lake Dauphin. Shortly after he left for inland, three tents joined his party giving a total of 32 tents. This group

also wintered far out in the buffalo country as presents of tobacco were sent by them to Tomison's group in mid-January as an invitation to go to war.

The group travelling inland from Dauphin Lake consisted of both Saulteaux and Cree. Here we hear of a captive European living with the Indians long before the renowned John Tanner lived in the area:

... in the afternoon one man came to our tent he told me in Indian that he was a Englishman born but was taken by the french when a boy and is now entirely forgot his owne Language and talks the Indian (25 October 1769).

Earlier, near the outlet of Dauphin Lake he had met six tents of Mantawapowa (Saulteaux/ Ojibwa) and later, just before he left for inland from Lake Dauphin, 10 tents arrived from gathering wild rice. He was to meet seven tents of these people in early January when he was almost his furthest west and, apparently, seven tents at the end of the month. Clearly their presence in the west greatly precedes their accepted arrival with the Montreal traders in the 1790s (e.g. Hickerson 1956; Ray 1974:101-102).

Tomison had travelled inland from the Bay with a mixed group of Assiniboin and Cree, but he does not mention meeting other Assiniboin until he is well out in the buffalo grounds. Then a group of 24 tents came and traded furs for second-hand goods from the Cree, then left for the south to pound bison. Several weeks later "several" tents of Assiniboin visited Tomison's camp but no further details are

given.

There are several references to the Archithinue. While at the north end of Lake Manitoba, the Susuhana told of several of their countrymen being killed by them ((HBCA B.239/a/64 10 August 1769). In the spring, on the Mossy River, Tomison heard of an Englishman, apparently one of the traders on the lower Assiniboin, being killed in the winter by the Archithinue. In the west, the term, Archithinue, was applied to groups living beyond the Cree and Assiniboin: the members of the Blackfoot Confederacy, Snakes and other groups further west. It is extremely doubtful that any of these groups would have been as far east as the Assiniboine River. It is unlikely that the term referred to the Sioux, since the HBC men were familiar with them, at least by repute. More likely they were referring to Indians from the Missouri River area immediately south of the Assiniboine River.

#### 6.5.5 MATTHEW COCKING: 1774-1775

The last observer to live with the Cree was Cocking who wintered at Witch Lake in 1774-75. This is modern Good Spirit Lake (Morton 1973:304), immediately west of Canora, Saskatchewan and the largest lake east of the Quill Lakes.

Cocking, with several other HBC employees, had been sent inland with various groups of Cree to help Samuel Hearne establish what was to become Cumberland House,

adjacent to the Saskatchewan River. These Cree wanted the post in their own lands along and west of the Manitoba Escarpment well south of the proposed site. As a result Cocking and several others were forced to winter in the upper Assiniboine River with the goods which they had been carrying to Hearne.

Cocking's lengthy journal of his experience differs from the earlier HBC journals since he did not follow the Cree but rather set up a permanent camp for the winter. His journal entries are mainly concerned with the Montreal traders who were attracting Indians from the area north to the Saskatchewan River and east to the western shores of Lake Winnipegosis. Although he was careful to mention any Indians arriving at his camp, he seldom gives further information about them.

Cocking does not identify the Cree he was with. Apparently they were the Red Deer band who, with the adjacent Swan River Cree, were known at the Bay as the Sturgeon Cree. To the south and east of Cocking were the Susuhana Cree living west of Lake Manitoba. On the lower Saskatchewan River were the Basquia Cree and further up river, between the Branches, were the Pegogamaw Cree. Several Pegogamaw, as well as at least one Beaver Cree from even further west, had fled south to Cocking's area through fear of an epidemic. West of Cocking, probably in the Beaver and Touchwood Hills, were various unidentified



Assiniboin and Cree camps hunting and pounding bison.

It is difficult to determine how much the activities and movements of the Cree and Assiniboin which Cocking observed were influenced by the several Pedlar's posts in the area, if not by his own presence at Witch Lake. As we have seen, the presence of Cree groups in the lowland forests below the Manitoba Escarpment was a direct result of the anticipated arrival of the Pedlars in the fall. While at the mouth of the Red Deer River, Cocking heard there were rumours that the Pedlar who had wintered on the river that year had told others to the south that he was not returning because of ill-treatment:

This information I am further informed is the Reason of the Indians being most of them pitched away. Whereas they had intended to remain hereabouts to beg Liquor and get goods upon Trust as usual. But as they are uncertain will go away & remain a small Distance off so as they may conveniently come to Him if he arrives, and if he does not will be in more readiness for pitching away to their Winter Quarters (HBCA B.239/a/72 25 August 1774) .

The Cree were clearly spending the winter as far out on the prairies as it was necessary to go to find bison, which moved into the parkland only when conditions were sufficiently severe out in the open. Cocking's journal makes clear that some Sturgeon Cree were moving to the forests east of the Escarpment areas in the warmer months. However, other Cree were spending the summer further west. Cocking (HBCA B.239/a/72 11 May 1775) wrote that nine tents

of the Pegogamaw left the canoe-building site for their own country to the northwest, only three tents staying to build canoes to go to the Bay. A week later he wrote that "Part of the Families of the Indians who are going down to [York Factory] unpitched and proceeded inland." After building their 54 canoes, only a few proposed to go to the Bay, the rest "intend some of them to hunt in the Lakes & some to return to Basquio" (HBCA B.239/a/72 18 May 1775).

This same pattern of dispersal was reported in regard to the Indians at the Pedlars' post at Steeprock River who went their different ways: "some inland, some to Basquio & some to their own Parts intending to go from thence to the Companys Fort" (ibid:May 26 1775).

There seems to be little difference in broad outline of the territories used by the Cree and Assiniboin of east central Saskatchewan between Henry Kelsey's journal of 1691 and Cocking's journal of 1774. The groups were well established in the drainage system of the Assiniboine River and both the Cree and Assiniboin were wintering west of the Assiniboine River, probably in the Beaver/Touchwood Hills area. The lack of mention of Gros Ventre suggests that, contrary to Ray (1974:98), the Gros Ventre were not in control of the neighbouring upper Qu'Appelle Valley until the 1790s.

## 6.6 THE NORTHERN TIER

### 6.6.1 INTRODUCTION

The northern tier of Cree groups are those in the boreal forest lying north of the Saskatchewan and Nelson/Hayes rivers from the coast of Hudson Bay west to the Athabasca drainage. Surprisingly little is known of these groups despite their proximity to the Bay. Travellers in the region, in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, scarcely ever mention meeting local Indians. It is not clear if this was due to northern Cree avoidance of the major travel routes used by outsiders, or a very low population density.

### 6.6.2 Pre-1781 ACCOUNTS

No first-hand accounts have survived from the pre-1720 expeditions of Henry Kelsey, Stewart, Norton and Captain Swan. The earliest observations were made by HBC employees who, after 1754, passed through the area from York Factory on their way to the western interior to develop the western trade and, after 1774, to supply the inland posts. Almost no mention is made of even seeing the local inhabitants. Tomison (HBCA B.239/a/64 14 August 1769) travelled some 800 km from Fort Severn on Hudson Bay before reaching Lake Winnipeg, where he "found 3 tents of Indians being the first I have seen since I left Severn House." The same desolateness is reported along the 650 km main travel routes

between York Factory and the lower Saskatchewan River. Smith (HBCA B.239/a/45 13 July 1757) saw a camp of two tents five days east of Lake Winnipeg. No other local Indians were mentioned in any of the other journals describing the trip inland (Henday 1907; Smith HBCA B.239/a/43; Pink HBCA B.239/a/56, 58, 61, 63; Cocking 1908, HBCA B.239/a/72; Hearne 1968).

After the success of York Factory in sending men inland to advance the trade, similar attempts were made at Fort Churchill. These remained unsuccessful except for the journey of Joseph Hansom in 1773-74 (HBCA A.11/15 23 August 1774; Tyrrell 1968:239-241 n.2). Hansom was forced to winter at a Pedlars' post on Cumberland Lake when his guide was hired as hunter to the post. This Cree guide, supposedly one of the leaders of the Athabasca Cree (HBCA B.42/a/86 12,16 July 1773), proved to be not of

the proper Indians that resorts at Bus-que-oh [The Pas] or higher up, but ... a kind of Half home Gaurd Indians that goes down [to Fort Churchill] in the Fall of the Year with Deers flesh & c (Tyrrell 1968:240 n.2).

It is odd that Chief Factor Norton, who had been at Churchill for 21 years, knew so little of the inland groups and geography, that he had identified what was, in effect, a local Cree, with the Athabasca Cree from the far northwest.

Hansom did not keep a journal, but merely wrote a brief summary account outlining the activities of the Pedlars in the Sturgeon-weir River system. Consequently, we learn

little of the Cree in the area he travelled.

Alexander Henry the Elder (1969:263-336), a Montreal trader, described his trip west, his wintering at Beaver Lake in 1775-1776, his trip from there to Thomas Frobisher's post at Frog Portage, and his continuation up the Churchill River. Henry commented on a similar scarcity of Indians on the Churchill River above Frog Portage: "Nothing human had hitherto discovered itself" until they reached Isle a la Crosse where they met a large party of Chipewyan travelling downriver from Lake Athabasca.

#### 6.6.3 Post-1781 Accounts

All other first-hand accounts from the Churchill drainage post-date the great smallpox epidemic of 1781-83. Even in these, there are few references to local Indians. This was probably due to the smallpox epidemic but, nevertheless, it continues the pattern of observations made earlier.

In August 1786, Malcolm Ross (HBCA B.49/a/18) was taken by several Nelson River Cree (HBCA B.42/a/106 6 August 1786) from Churchill to Cumberland House by way of the Knife, Churchill, Kississing and Sturgeon-weir rivers (Tyrrell 1968:598; Morton 1973:441). He met only three groups of Cree along the more than 850 km route: a man with two wives who was returning from an aborted trading trip to Churchill; a canoe of four Indians waiting along the southern part of

the way for Pedlars; and a group of 20 canoes who visited his camp at the mouth of the Kississing, apparently the relatives of his guides, who had been at a nearby Pedlars' post at Pukatawagan. It was reported (HBCA B.49/a/17 21 September 1786) that Ross's guides did not bring him by the desired route, probably by way of Frog Portage and the Sturgeon-weir, because they did not know the way, suggesting that the upper Burntwood and Kississing rivers were the western limits of their area.

The earliest first-hand account of the far northwest is from Samuel Hearne's (1958) account of his travels from Fort Churchill to the mouth of the Coppermine River in 1770-1772. In January 1772, he was beside the lower Slave River where he had hoped to meet Athabasca Cree so as "to purchase a tent, and other ready-dressed skins from them" (1958:168). Other than meeting a Dogrib women who had escaped from some Athabasca Cree, all they saw were "several parts which we well knew to have been the former Winter-haunts of the Athapuscow Indians" (1958:168-174).

The first posts north of the Saskatchewan River were established by the Frobisher brothers who established posts at Cumberland Lake in 1773, at Amisk Lake in 1775 and were at Isle-à-la-Crosse by 1776.

Peter Pond was the first trader to reach the Athabasca River. In 1777-78, he travelled up the Churchill River and crossed Portage la Loche (Methy Portage). His post was built

on Athabasca River about 40 miles from the lake (Gough 1983:682-83). As a result of the Frobishers and Pond, two areas were opened to the Montreal traders: the Muskrat Country lying east of the Sturgeon-weir and the Athabasca Country lying beyond Portage la Loche.

Although the Indian population density was low, a number of posts were established throughout the north. However, the nature of the trade differed between the Muskrat Country and the Athabasca. Whereas in the Athabasca, just as in the south, posts tended to be long-term, in the Muskrat Country, the posts tended to be short-term, often seasonal in nature. As well, although the HBC quickly became established in the south, jealousy, rivalry, and personality conflicts between personnel at York Factory and Fort Churchill delayed their expansion into the north until the 1790s.

Because the Montreal Pedlars seldom kept journals and few have survived, and because the HBC were not present to even write journals, little is known of the area until relatively late. Further, because posts were moved so rapidly, it is difficult to obtain a coherent picture of group identities and locations. As a result little can be determined of the northern Cree or even of the shifts in population of the Cree and Chipewyan that seem to have resulted both from the smallpox epidemic and the influence of the various traders.

## 7. IDENTIFYING THE MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CREE GROUPS

The HBC records indicate the Cree were well established in the west in the eighteenth century. Various groups of Cree, each within a general territory with differing ecological adaptations, can be traced up to 1781 when the great mortality from the smallpox epidemic led to their disappearance. The identification of these groups and the locations of their home areas depends upon several lines of evidence: the daily entries in the post journals naming the various flotillas of trading Indians; several lists of the various "Nations" and their constituent "tribes" who traded at the Bay; and information recorded about or by the HBC employees sent to winter with Cree groups between 1754 and 1774.

### 7.1 THE SOUTHERN/KESKACHEWAN/CHRISTINAUX/CREE

Two major problems beset any discussion of the identification of Cree groups in the historic literature: the lack of an all-inclusive term differentiating Cree from non-Cree; and the lack of historical linguistic data which would serve to identify the various named local groups.

The modern term "Cree" is a derivation of the word "Christinaux," and its many variant forms, which the French and early Montreal traders applied to various Algonquian



speakers (e.g. La Vérendrye 1968; Henry the Elder 1969; Mackenzie 1970). The shortened form, "Cree," came into use in the west in the late 1700s among both the HBC and Montreal traders (e.g. Harmon 1957; Henry the Younger 1965; M'Gillivray 1929).

For the HBC at York Factory, however, the Christinaux or Gristen were an Ojibwa group from, apparently, Northwestern Ontario (Graham 1969:206; Greenberg and Morrison 1982). At the Bay, the Cree, and perhaps even the Ojibwa, were known as the Southern Indians in distinction to the Northern or Athapaskan Indians. Perhaps because of the need to differentiate the Southern Indians from the Bungee or Saulteaux, the Cree, in the later 1700s were often called the Keskachewan. Thus Graham lists the various "Nations" known at the Bay: Wechepowuck (Athapaskan), Keskachewan (Cree), Asinepoet (Assiniboin), and Nakawawuck (Saulteaux).

That the Keskachewan were Cree is clear from an exchange of letters regarding the linguistic abilities of a Frenchman who had arrived at the Bay seeking employment when the French withdrew from the west. The Factor at York Factory wrote that "he Knows or at Least Pretends to Know but Little of the Kaschachawan or at Least the Home [i.e.local Cree] Indian Language, tho he is Proficient in the Bungee." The factor at Churchill retorted that the Frenchman's not understanding "the Kissiskachewan or home Indian Language (as you Call it) which is Properly Called

the Nehethaway Language is [false] for I have several Inds who talked to him" (HBCA B.42/b/5 6,15 August 1759). The term Nahathaway 'he speaks our language, he speaks Cree' is the term used by Western Woods Cree to refer to themselves (Pentland 1981:267-268).

Indians were seldom identified as Southern or Cree in the eighteenth century HBC documents for several reasons: the great familiarity with them both at the Bay; the employees sent inland were sent with Cree groups; and most of the inland posts built in the eighteenth century were in Cree territory. As a result the Cree were most often simply designated as "Indian" and it was usually only when non-Cree appeared that specific ethnic identifications were made. This causes problems in identification, however, since it was not an invariable rule and without supportive evidence, it cannot be assumed that any specific reference to Indians involves Cree. Unfortunately, very few individual Indians are named in the HBC records and, in the Montreal traders' journals, where they are more often named, they are often given anglicized or frenchified names, thus concealing their ethnic identity.

## 7.2 ANDREW GRAHAM'S LISTS OF TRADING INDIANS

There are about 15 groups of trading Indians that are most often identified at York Factory. However, there is very little information about them in the daily journals. A

typical entry consists of such statements as: "this morning 39 cannoes of Sturgeon Sinipoets and Pegogoma Indians came to trade" (HBCA B.239/a/36 28 June 1753) or, more typically but of less value, "23 Canoes of Trading Indians Came here to Trade I Gave their leaders & their Followers the Usual Presents & Liquor to Wellcome them to the Factory" (HBCA B.239/a/51 19 July 1764).

Fortunately, Andrew Graham gave the linguistic affiliation of many of these groups, as well as several not found in the journals, in his various lists of "Nations and Tribes Trading at the Bay." These five lists are found in the various versions of his Observations on Hudson's Bay written between 1767 and 1791 which was first published, in a collated form, in 1968.

The first list (HBCA E.2/5), written about 1768, consists of 34 groups. A double asterisk marks four groups, all of whom "talks one language," which can be identified as Assiniboin. A single group, who are Athapaskan, is marked as a group who "talks another language and all others talk the same."

No linguistic affiliations were made for the 28 groups in his second version (HBCA E.2/8) written about 1771 but beside each is written the post where they usually traded: Fort Churchill, York Factory, Fort Severn, Albany House or Eastmain.

The other three lists group the various tribes under

the names of various "nations" and also indicate at which posts they trade. Two of the lists (HBCA E.2/9, 10) are identical except for some spelling variations and the inclusion of seven Eskimo groups in E.2/9. The latter document, E.2/10, seems to have been a copy made in London with a view to possible publication (Graham 1969:355-358). Ironically, it was this list of 38 Indian tribes and an accompanying description of the various nations which was the first of Graham's work to be published (Isham 1949:309-317). The list includes 15 groups of Cree, three Athapaskans, three Assiniboin, eight Ojibwa and two eastern Cree.

The final list (HBCA E.2/12) was written about 1791 and it too, with accompanying sketches of the various nations has been published (Graham 1969:191-207). The Inuit groups have been dropped, one Assiniboin and four minor Cree groups have been added as well the various Archithinue groups.

There is little doubt that Graham wrote his massive description of life at the Bay (E.2/12 is 601 pages long) under the influence of Isham's Observations written in 1743. Isham, who furnished a large Cree vocabulary and bilingual texts, also gave a short list of 18 various groups. Each of these groups can be found in Graham's lists. Isham wrote that of all these, there were but four languages "that Differ's in their pronounciation which is the, Sinepoets,- nakawawuck, -Uchepowuck, -and Earchethinues," although he

had never met the last. Of these, i.e. Assiniboin, Ojibwa, Athapaskan and Archithinue, he considered the Nakawawuck to be "the most pleasant and truest Language" (Isham 1949:112-113). Isham considered Cree and Ojibwa to be the same, just as Graham did not differentiate between them in E.2/6 although Graham later said they differed in some words and pronunciation "like the high and low dutch" (Isham 1949:314).

### 7.3 THE INLAND HBC JOURNALS

There are few references to specific Cree groups in the journals of the HBC employees sent inland between 1754 and 1774, since it was common knowledge at the Bay whom they were with and where they were going. The writers themselves never referred to the group they were with although there were occasional references to groups they met in their travels. That they travelled with Cree is known primarily because no one was sent with Assiniboin groups until 1766 when Edward Lutit was sent inland: "the first of your Servants that ever went with these Natives" (HBCA B.239/a/54 19 June 1766). Lutit did not keep any surviving journals but his wintering with the Assiniboin was a sufficient novelty that both he and they are regularly mentioned.

Occasionally, information on group identities was recorded in the York Factory journals in the few surviving lists of instructions given to the inland travellers (e.g.

HBCA A.11/114 8 September 1754; B.239/a/48 1760-1761). Less often, the group with whom the employee was sent was identified as they arrived at the Bay. As well, some groups were identified as they came to trade at Cumberland House after its establishment in 1774 and occasionally hints were given as to the direction they came from (e.g. Rich 1951, 1952). These data from the inland, although sparse, are valuable since they allow the groups to be located geographically.

These three sources of data, in combination, give us a view of the trading groups. The post journals give us the names of the various groups trading at the Bay. Graham's lists of trading nations help us identify the languages many of the groups spoke. Information from the inland travellers give us their approximate geographical location.

#### 7.4 GROUPS TRADING AT THE BAY

The trading Indians from inland arrived at York Factory about mid-June. Because both they and the HBC had minimal food resources and because they were anxious for their families' safety, they returned inland after only two or three days. Thus there was little opportunity for the chief factor to learn of inland life. Certainly, there was little pressure for him to record other than business details in the daily journals. Thus, there is, to modern eyes, surprisingly little information about the inland groups in

the HBC daily journals.

Various local groups collected in the spring at favoured locations, agreed upon earlier during the winter, to build their canoes in order to go to the Bay. Thus, members of any one group tended to travel together but often they were joined by other groups on the way. At times a mixed company of four or more groups would appear in flotillas of up to 80 canoes.

The journals of James Knight, governor at York Factory from 1714 to 1718, contain a great wealth of data on inland groups including the identification of some of the various trading groups. However, after his tenure the groups were simply referred to as so many canoes of Indians or of Uplanders, although the Assiniboin were always identified, as they were in Knight's time and as they continued to be until they ceased coming to the Bay in the 1770s.

It was not until 1729 when at least some groups were again identified. After James Isham took over in 1738, the practice became more frequent but was never consistent. In the late 1750s, the London office requested that specific identifications be made of all the trading Indians. The result was four memoranda written by Isham at York Factory identifying the number of canoes and composition of the various flotillas in 1757 and 1758 and after Isham's leave of 1759, in 1760 and 1761 (HBCA B.239/a/42,44,47,48). With the death of Isham in the spring of 1761 and after the

arrival of Humphrey Marten in 1762, not only were the memoranda abandoned but only very rarely were the various Indian groups ever again identified in the post journals.

The journals written at Fort Churchill, established in 1717, are of little use in identifying the trading inland groups. Although the summer flotillas were smaller than those going to York Factory, they often consisted of groups coming from the same areas and, supposedly, with the same names. However, the Cree groups were only very rarely identified. Although the Assiniboin were often differentiated from the Cree, as they were at York Factory, Cree groups were most often referred to only as unidentified "canoes of Indians" or as Uplanders or Western Indians. Further, the requested canoe memoranda were never submitted. As a result, discussions of Cree trading groups depends almost entirely on data from York Factory dating from the mid-1700s.

#### 7.5 GROUP SIZE

There are no contemporary HBC estimates of the population size of the inland groups whose members were trading at the Bay. There are some data from the French regime but they are of little use. We have seen the recently published manuscript in which La Vérendrye (1982) described the various groups he had found living west of Lake Superior (see section 4.2.3 above). He wrote that the



country at the northern end of Lake Winnipeg was occupied by "the true Cristinaux who claim to be about six hundred men, most of whom are neighbours to the English" (1982:93). Since the extent of the area which La Vérendrye had in mind cannot be determined, and since the French had not yet ascended the Saskatchewan, the population figure is of no value.

La Vérendrye also wrote that the country north of the lower Assiniboine River was occupied by the Strong Wood Cree, the Fisher Cree and the Rough Water or Troubled Water Cree who, together, numbered three hundred men. The only one of these groups which can be identified are the Troubled Water Cree who lived near or at Dauphin Lake whose outlet, Mossy River, was known by this name (Thompson 1968:lxix note 1). Again, the population figure is of no use.

A second population figure, equally vague, is found in a memorandum written by Bougainville, an army officer sent from France to participate in the Seven Year's War, in the late 1750s. After listing the seven posts in the west, he wrote that: "The savages who come to trade are the Cristinaux and the Assinibels; these two nations form each a dozen villages of two hundred and fifty men, each one supporting the other" (ibid:187). Since the district, called The Sea of the West, included all the posts from Rainy lake west to the Forks of the Saskatchewan, there were clearly more than a dozen villages.

There is a means of estimating, very roughly, the minimum number of males from the various groups trading at the Bay and thus obtaining an idea of the relative numbers of the groups. Despite the limitations of the conclusions, it is of value to at least have an idea, within an order of magnitude, of the group's size: e.g. did the Sturgeon Cree consist of 10, 100 or 1000 males?

Even these approximations are difficult to reach since individual groups were seldom enumerated, even in the "Memoranda" of the late 1750s. The various Cree groups most often arrived in mixed flotillas and as a result most canoe counts often refer to mixed groups. However, there are rare instances when a group arrived alone and the number of canoes in the group is given. Although it cannot be determined if other unspecified members of the group arrived during the same season, and since there is no means of determining how many members remained inland that year, the figures can only indicate a minimum number of trading canoes.

Given the minimum number of canoes of each group, the next problem concerns the question of the make-up of the crews of these trading canoes: how many people were in a canoe and who were these people? Ray (1974:13, n.27) suggests that each canoe represented, on average, 2.5 males. He reached this conclusion from a comment by Isham, in 1743, that at York Factory, seldom "more than 250 cannoes [came],

one Year with another, which Contains 550 Inds. bringing in some cannoes three Indians, besides their Goods...."

(1949:91).

Ray's figure of 2.5 men per canoe is too high and, furthermore, it does not take into account the presence of women. Graham (1969:191) states that "two adult people are the usual complement of the canoe, though sometimes three sit in it; which number I never saw exceeded." Swaine, at York Factory in June 1747 described a leader's canoe as large enough to hold two women in the middle while the captain sat in the stern and another man in the bow while "In each of the other canoes there were but two Indians." The average per canoe would seem to be closer to 2 persons rather than 2.5 which, in fact, is suggested by Isham's data which actually work out to 2.2 persons.

More questionable is Ray's assumption that all trading Indians were men. Isham himself wrote that if the Indians obtained more furs

...they wou'd ... not Load their cannoes with woman & children and but one man, as they do frequently for the want of Goods, for its a sure Observation when women & children appears in their cannoes, you Depend upon their having but few goods, but if all men Depend on a Good Cargo (1949:208).

It is probable that small children only rarely were brought on the long trip to the Bay which could take up to 12 weeks. The trips were dangerous because of the rapids in

the Canadian Shield. Further, the journals of the inland winterers show that almost all groups underwent near starvation during the trip. Instead, as a contemporary wrote, the group consisted of "young hearty People who seldom brings their Children along with them, so that on their Journeying, to and again, with their goods, they can carry Canoes and goods all at once" (PAC Falconer nd:51).

Graham described the trading procedures at the Bay. His several comments about women and children lead his editor to conclude that "he appears to take for granted that their families were with them" (Graham 1969:317 n.1). Immediately before their arrival at the post, the Indians put ashore for "the women to go into the woods to get pine-brush for the bottom of the tents;" on their arrival at the post, the men "help their wives in bringing canoes up the bank;" while afterwards, "the women set about pitching the tents" (ibid:316).

Women are mentioned during the trading ceremonies: after the entry of the leader and his lieutenants came "the wives of the captains... and afterwards all the other men and the women and their little ones... the women and children are placed behind" (ibid:319). It was the women who memorized the prescriptions for the various European medicines; who were harangued to bring castoreum; and were considered to own the small furs which they traded for "beads, vermilion, bracelets and other small items"

(ibid:276, 320-321, 324).

Women were often more skilled in steering canoes than men since the latter typically rode in the bow where they had an unimpeded aim at any game that was met (Graham ibid:172) . In lining up rapids on the return inland "the Whomen belonging to Each Canoe took ye Line and alled the Canoue a Long Shore and ye men keeps ye Canous from ye Stones" (HBCA A.11/114). Indeed, women accompanied only by children were quite capable of canoeing to the Bay from as far away as west central Manitoba (HBCA B.239/a/21 12 August 1739).

Given that the typical canoe carried two people and that women often, rather than never, accompanied the men, it is more appropriate to consider that the flotillas consisted of, at most, 1.5 rather than 2.5 males per canoe. Forty canoes, then, would represent about 60 men, rather than 100, a significant difference.

## 8. THE SOUTHERN TIER OF CREE

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The southern group of Cree are considered to be those living west and south of Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis. Little is known of the Cree groups from this area, especially those from the south. The presence of French traders on the Red and Assiniboine rivers by the mid-1730s, meant there was little need for them to go to the Bay on a regular basis or in sizeable numbers.

This trade with the French dated to at least the 1710s when the Mountain [Escarpment] Indians were threatening to trade with French "Wood Runners" at "ye Sea Lake [Superior] as they call it wch lyes abt South from their Country" (HBCA B.239/a/2 3 August 1716). By 1728, there was word of French posts "not above four days' paddling from the Great lake that feeds this river" (Davies 1965:136). After French posts were established on Rainy Lake in 1731 and on Lake of the Woods in 1732, word was sent to London in August 1732 of "the French settlement at the southernmost end of the great lake" and of French wood-runners who, the previous fall, had gone "into the Great Lake to the most noted places where the Indians resort and threatened war" if they traded at the Bay (p. 168). The La Vérendryes established posts on the Red River in 1734, the Assiniboine in 1738, and the Lake

Dauphin and Grand Rapids areas in 1741. The French traders remained in these areas and on the main Saskatchewan River until the late 1750s.

## 8.2 LA VERENDRYE'S OBSERVATIONS OF THE CREE

There is little information on the southern Cree groups in La Vérendrye's various reports and, apart from his journey to the Missouri River, he never describes the area west and south of Lake Winnipeg. Thus the distribution of the southern Cree is not clear. His undated memorandum (La Vérendrye 1982), written in the early 1740s, has been discussed earlier (see section 4.2.3 above). It is not possible to identify his groups because his Cree names seldom occur elsewhere in his reports, in other French documents, nor in the records of the HBC. Generally, his terms for the Cree groups seem to refer to broad geographic locations rather than being the names as such. Thus, he provides evidence for a widespread Cree occupation but not for specific band identifications.

La Vérendrye spoke of a group of 50 to 60 Northern Cristinaux men living on the lower Winnipeg River who speak "a corrupted Cristinaux" derived from the neighbouring Gens des Terres who, in turn, "speak bad Sauteux with a lot of accents" (La Vérendrye 1982:93). Greenberg and Morrison (1982:84-7) have suggested that these Northern Cristinaux are actually a Sauteaux group and the Gens des Terres are,

perhaps, the Saulteaux-speaking "Cristinaux" mentioned by Andrew Graham.

Northern Lake Winnipeg was inhabited by about 600 "true Cristinaux" men most of whom were neighbours of the English at the Bay. It is clear that La Vérendrye is speaking of the northern population in general terms. Since Fort Bourbon had just been established at Grand Rapids on the mouth of the Saskatchewan, La Vérendrye knew little of the groups up river, and his number must be only an approximation. His term, "True Cristinaux" is reminiscent of La Potherie's (1968:259) statement that "Lake Michinipi ... is the true country of the Cree."

La Vérendrye is equally vague in describing southern Manitoba. As we have seen, of the three groups he names, the Cree of the Strong Woods, of the Marten and of the Rough Water, only the latter, from the Lake Dauphin area, can be identified. In a later memorandum, the "Cristinos du Bois fort" were located at Fort Maurepas at the mouth of the Winnipeg River (La Vérendrye 1968: 484) where, as we have seen, the Cree of the North had been said to live. The Cree of the Fisher (i.e. French: pecan; Cree: wejack), have no other known equivalents unless the French pecan is related to the Cree Peigan and Pegogamaw, both of which relate to muddy or turbid waters.

In 1741 La Vérendrye (1968: 378-79) established Fort Dauphin "at the request of the Mountain Cree on the lake of



the Prairies." Elsewhere, however, this request was said to have come from "the Cree of the Prairies and the Canoe Assiniboin" (p.485), who are placed along the Valley River on a later map derived from the La Vérendrye expeditions (p.432).

On another La Vérendrye map dating to 1750, the Cree on the lower Saskatchewan River were called "Cree of the Lakes and Little Rivers" (ibid:486). The "Fork" of the Saskatchewan, marking either the Upper Track through Cumberland Lake or the Middle Track through Cedar and Moose lakes, was said to be "the rendezvous of the Cree of the Mountains, Prairies, and Rivers." Here they decided if they were to go to trade with the French or the English (ibid: 487). Again, these terms do not occur elsewhere and are too general to be of use in identifying specific groups.

### 8.3 THE SOUTHERN CREE IN THE 17TH CENTURY DOCUMENTS

We learn little of specific groups in the pre-1714 records. Henry Kelsey did not mention meeting any Cree groups in his brief journal of 1691 but there is indirect evidence that they were in the upper Assiniboine area. Kelsey (1929: 8,10) used Cree names for the Assiniboine and Red Deer rivers although he was supposedly with Assiniboin. His Assiniboin companions were relieved to see him return from The Pas because if anything had happened to him, "they should be greatly afraid yt ye Nayhaythaways Indians would

murder ym" (p.9). Cree were apparently to the south since Assiniboin from that direction had told him of several Cree having been killed by the Naywatamee Poets the previous spring (ibid:10). This was apparently in retaliation for the six tents of Cree which the Naywatamee Poets had killed earlier. The Cree gained revenge during the winter of 1691-92 (ibid: 18) by destroying two more tents of Naywatamee Poets (p.18).

Kelsey refers to few specific groups. His "Nayhaythaways" were the Nahathaway or Cree whom he also referred to as the Home Indians (1929:2,18), a term used at York Factory for the local Cree. He also mentioned the Mountain Poets, an Assiniboin group whom he dissuaded from going to war (pp.13-14). Kelsey met the "Eagle brich Indians" at Red Deer River after earlier arranging the rendezvous with men he called "Indian Strangers." Since the group was not described as being Poets, unlike the Indians met immediately before and after, the "Eagle's brich" may well have been Cree.

The documents from the French occupation of the Bay are vague about the distant inland but it is clear Cree and Assiniboin were in the Lake Winnipeg area (see section 5.4 above). Father Silvy wrote in 1685 that the village of the Cree and Assiniboin was 15 to 20 days' travel inland "beyond the great lake of the Assiniboines [Lake Winnipeg]" (1968: 68). Marest (1968: 123-124), in 1695, described the Cree

and Assiniboin as being the most distant of the groups coming to the Bay: whereas the Lake of the Crees (Lake Winnipeg) was 20 or 25 days from the Bay, the Assiniboin travelled 35 or 40 days but the groups were in sufficient contact that some were bilingual. La Potherie (1968:259, 263-264) listed various Indian groups but, as we have seen, their locations and identities are very vague. He, too, wrote that Lake Michinipi "is the true country of the Crees" and although they were in communication with the Assiniboin, the two groups were widely separated. However, La Potherie has perhaps conflated Lake Winnipeg with the Churchill River, both of which were called by the Cree, Missinipi or Big Water.

We have seen that although his Eagle-eyed Indians were often referred to in later documents, these were cases of plagiarism. Thus it cannot be determined whether this first-mentioned group were the Eagle Indians in northwest Ontario mentioned by La France (Dobbs 1967:35), the Eagle's brich Indians of the upper Assiniboin mentioned by Kelsey (1929:9), or even the Eagle Assiniboin of the Eagle Hills (see section 11.6 below).

Jérémie's term "Oskuisaquamais" is similar to the later HBC term Askee, from the Cree aski meaning earth or land in reference to the plains.

Despite Jérémie's confusion about the inland geography, he indicates that the Cree and Assiniboin were in the

Manitoba Lakes region. Although he wrote that the country of the Cree began on the east side of Split Lake while the west side, full of prairies and bison, belonged to the Assiniboin, he later said that Lake Ouenipigouchib (Lake Winnipegosis) was the home of the Cree, Assiniboin and Saulteaux. The Michinipi or Big Water (Lake Winnipeg) was the home of the People of the Big Water, apparently Cree, and of the Assiniboin.

#### 8.4 THE MUSCOTAY AND ASKEE CREE

We begin to learn of specific inland groups in the series of extant York Factory journals which begin with the reappearance of the HBC in 1714. Several groups of Indians who are mentioned in these early HBC records are difficult to identify simply because of the scarcity of data: the Muscotay, Askee, Mountain and Missinipi. As a result, their identification is open to differing interpretations. The available data must be examined very closely as they have been used to suggest not only the distribution of non-Cree groups in central Saskatchewan, but the regular presence at York Factory of Plains groups, not known for their canoeing skills, from as far away as the Missouri River.

The Askee and Muscotay were probably the same group. They can be considered to have been Cree rather than Assiniboin for several reasons. As Ray (1974:70) points out, the Assiniboin were usually specifically identified either

as Northern or Southern Poets or as Stone Indians. The Askee/Muscotay are never so identified. Further, the group is differentiated from the Assiniboin: in the same journal entry (HBCA B.239/a/3 26 June 1717) Knight mentioned "Southern Sinna Poets" and the "Northern Stone Indians, the Mountain Indians & the Askee or Land Indians." Certainly, if the group was an Assiniboin group Knight would have added the term Poet or Stone.

Ray (1974:55) identifies the Muscotay as being "in all probability, either Blood, Blackfoot, or perhaps Gros Ventre, although the latter seems unlikely in this instance since the term Askee Indians seems to have been applied to the Gros Ventre." Ray (p.55) considers Muscotay to be "a geographic term referring...to the grasslands between the forks of the Saskatchewan River," following Morton's (1973: 246) discussion of Henday's inland journey of 1754.

In fact, muskatao means simply a plain or prairie (Farries 1938: 345). Employees were sent from Cumberland House "to the Muscotee Indian Country" which lay up river.

However, the Muscotay was not simply the prairie on the upper Saskatchewan since Tomison, who travelled west of Dauphin, described his trip as being to "the muscotte Country" (HBCA B.239/a/64).

The Muscotay country was often later associated with the Assiniboin, no doubt the Southern Assiniboin (see section 11.5 below). Tomison, in 1769-70, was said to have

gone to the "muscuty or Asinepoet Country" (HBCA B.198/a/11 15 July 1769) and Graham (1969:263) mentions "the muscuty country, where the Archithinue and Aseenepoets inhabits." Knight had sent a group of Indians "to go amongst the Musketo or Plain Indians," and the man brought down, apparently from these people, seems to have communicated with Knight: "the Man they brought down here who was ready to cry to think he had nothing to show them what we had here" (HBCA B.239/a/3 30 January 1717).

Thus the term Muscotay was applied to groups on the plains. However, there is little doubt that the Muscotay Indians, who arrived to trade in the spring of 1715, were Cree. The Blackfoot Nation had no tradition of ever using canoes (Thompson 1968:348) and none of the Blackfoot Confederacy were ever known to come to the Bay on trading expeditions (Isham 1949: 113; Graham 1969: 202). Most important, Knight, who was obsessed by the hopes of finding minerals inland country, treated their appearance very casually. He simply reported that five Muscotay canoes appeared one day and left the next (HBCA B.239/a/1 13,14 July 1715).

Ray (1974:55,70 n.5) identifies the Askee Indians as Gros Ventre from the Touchwood Hills since their leader, Askee Ethinee was "said to live near the 'Mountain' near 'Redd Deer River'." However, it seems most likely that the Askee were simply another name for the Muscotay.

The Cree word uske means earth or land (Faries 1938: 491), by which the HBC meant the flat country around York Factory , locally called plains, e.g. "Kus'que= in the plains" (Isham 1949: 26, 58). Knight (HBCA B.239/a/3 January 30; June 26,28 1717) used the terms interchangeably and referred at different times to the "Askee or Plain Indians," to the "Askee or Land Indians" and to the "Musketo or Plain Indians."

Knight wrote only that he had word that 50 canoes of Mountain and Askee Indians were on their way to York Factory. He does not mention them further (HBCA B.239/a/2 1 June 1716), but that was a summer of great turmoil, both because the supply ship had failed to arrive and an epidemic was amongst the trading Indians. The next year, a gift was given to "ye Capt of ye Askee or Plain Indians yt suffered so much last fall in getting into his own country" (HBCA B.239/d/9) who was perhaps with the flotilla of "Mountain Inds & some others that borders on them" (HBCA B.239/a/3 10 June 1717).

Oddly, Knight never mentions obtaining information from the Muscotay or Askee about the inland, whereas he did have such discussions with the Mountain Indians. This would not be surprising if they were from the northeastern Saskatchewan prairies, a region in which he took little personal interest.

## 8.5 THE MOUNTAIN CREE

Ray (1974:55-56) identifies the Mountain Indians of 1715-17 and the Maitainaithinish of 1721 as being the Hidatsa or Mandan. However, the Mountain Indians were a Cree group from the Manitoba Escarpment area where even today features are referred to as mountains.

Knight (HBCA B.239/a/2 June 15, 18) wrote that the Mountain Indians "come the furthest and border upon the worst sort of Indians in this Country." He had sent them on a peace mission the year before to their enemies who lived 10 days' travel from them; in this venture they had made peace with three neighbouring groups. They initially described their country as "a Mountainous country with hills reaching to the skies almost" (HBCA B.239/a/2 12 July 1716). Although there weren't many beaver there were lots of moose and elk, wolves, wolverine, some lynx and foxes and many martin. As well, there were several rivers and many lakes. This is a very accurate description of the towering escarpment and its geography and faunal resources. However, under Knight's prodding six weeks later, the description becomes elaborate:

the Country is very Mountainious and of a Prodigious height ... they can not see the capp without it be Clear Weather ... their is abundance of Natives and ... Sev'll Nations of them and their grows a great deal of Indian Corn Plumbs Hazle Nutts and they have not much Beavor, but abundance of Moose, Buffolo, [elk], and Small Furr.... all them Mountain Indians Garnish themselves with a White Mettle.... they have a Yellow mettle Amongst



them ( B.239/a/2 28 August 1716 in Ray 1974:55).

Ray (1974:57) points out that the only area which fits this description is the "plains region stretching from the Upper Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains." The Mountain Indians may have been familiar with mountainous country since one had brought his wife to the Bay who was a Crow captive. However, the description is more likely to be simply an exaggeration of the Manitoba Escarpment area with a reference to the agricultural Mandan/Hidatsa.

Knight arranged for the two Mountain Indians and their Crow woman to make a truce with the Crow, an attempt which failed when they starved returning inland (B.239/a/2 1 September 1716; B/239/a/3 30 January 1717). That Knight had such hopes shows that the Mountain Indians could not have been Hidatsa or Mandan, because the Crow were a very recent splinter group from the former and relations seem to have always been cordial between the groups. This would, however, have been an appropriate action for Cree or Assiniboin who fought with these groups throughout the later 1700s. Further, Knight had no difficulty in communicating with the Mountain Indians in his contacts with them over several trading seasons, yet he pointed out that not one of the Northern Assiniboin could speak "this country's speech" (HBCA B.239/a/2 27 June 1716).

The Maitainaitthinishes were probably local Cree from York Factory. Ray (1974:57) considers them to be the Mandan whose name was distorted by Kelsey. Kelsey recorded the arrival of six canoes of Maitainaitthinishes at York Factory only five days after break-up when only local Indians were arriving (HBCA B.239/a/6 26 May 1721). No further mention is made of them, but when the inland Indians started to arrive several days later, none of whom were identified that summer, Kelsey began to give details of events inland. Thus, there is little reason to believe these are Mandan. Further, the southern Cree term for the Mandan was "Kouatheatte" or "Courtchouatte" according to La Vérendrye (1968: 298) and "Coworttaiuck" according to Henry the Younger (1965 II:537).

Ray identifies the Indian leader, Askee Ethinee, as being Gros Ventre and uses the few details about him to suggest the group occupied the Touchwood Hills (p.70 n.5) or Nut Mountain(p.21). Six canoes of Mountain Indians had brought a sample of minerals from Askee Ethinee to York Factory in 1717 (HBCA B.239/a/4 20 July 1717. Later, when 60 canoes of Stone Indians and Uplanders came from Red Deer River, Knight said that he had received "from Aske Ethinne a sample from the mountain" (HBCA B.239/a/5 13 June 1719). That same spring, gifts were given to five leaders including "Ashkee Ethinee about the Mountain near Red Deer River" (HBCA B.239/d/10). Of these five leaders, the ethnic

identity of only one is given and this is apparent from his name: "Maytuhkoohy e Poet, a Stone Indian at the head of Albany River." This suggests the others, from the heads of the Churchill, Severn and Nelson rivers, were Cree. This is true for the Churchill leader, Waupissoo, the famous Captain Swan.

The "mountain" was probably not a reference to the low, rolling Touchwood or Nut Hills. More likely the mineral samples came from the Red Deer River area where deep valleys have eroded into the Manitoba Escarpment, exposing rock outcrops.

The Strange Indians, referred to immediately after the HBC regained possession in 1715 and later, in 1719, were not the Sarcee, as Ray concludes (1974: 57). In Knight's usage, the Strange Indians were simply newcomers to the post with whom he was unfamiliar, probably the Indians who had stopped trading during the French occupation when goods failed to arrive.

The locations of these various early inland groups are not clear. The name Mountain Cree appears to have been used for Cree not only from the Escarpment area but to the south as well. They were familiar with the Mandan, carried out raids on the Crow and may have been familiar with the foothills of the Rockies. Some had traded with the HBC on James Bay during the French occupation of York Factory (HBCA B.239/a/2 16 June 1716). Further, the Mountain Cree had the

most access to the Great Lakes. They had threatened to go to the Sea Lake, or Lake Superior to trade with the "Sevll Settlements of the french Wood runners" since it was no further from their country than was York Factory (HBCA B.239/a/2 3 August 1716). Further, the French had invited the Mountain Indians to trade with them but the expedition had been ambushed by the Sioux (HBCA B.239/a/5 2,12,13 June 1719).

It is not clear where the Askee Cree came from. Knight (HBCA B.239/a/3 26,28 June 1717) listed the three groups who suffered the most because of the failure of the supply ship of 1715 and because they lived the most distant: the Northern Stone Indians from the head of the "Nelson" (Saskatchewan) River, the Mountain Indians and "the Askee or Land Indians." Seemingly, the Askee Cree were from the parklands west of the Escarpment and south of the Saskatchewan River, perhaps including the group identified as the Cristinaux des Prairies west of Fort Dauphin by La Vérendrye.

There is no evidence, in this early period, that Gros Ventre, Sarcee, Blackfoot or Mandan/Hidatsa groups were coming to the Bay to trade. The fact that Knight did not comment on language difficulties, unknown homelands or attempts to make peace indicates that these were familiar Cree and Assiniboin groups. Further, there was never any fear expressed for the safety of these various groups while

they were at the Bay, although even the local Cree avoided the post when the inland Cree and Assiniboin groups were present.

Further, there is no evidence that groups other than Cree and Assiniboin were occupying the area immediately west of the Escarpment into central Saskatchewan although, as we shall see (section 13.4), other evidence indicates the Hidatsa were in the area south of the Qu'Appelle.

#### 8.6 SUSUHANA CREE

Only two Cree groups from southwestern Manitoba are mentioned in the later HBC records: the Susuhana and the Sturgeon. Both of these utilized areas both east and west of the Manitoba Escarpment: the Susuhana west of Lake Manitoba and the Sturgeon west of Lake Winnipegosis.

Ray (1974:59-60) suggests that the Susuhana were the Sarcee since the latter were called the Sussou in later documents. Although the two terms, Susuhana and Sussou, may well be related, the Susuhana were clearly from southwestern Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan.

The Cree etymology of this name is obscure but it was perhaps derived from the Cree "Su ha naw hun = south" (Isham 1968:6). The group was known at York Factory as the Shusuanna, Shusuhannah, Susahannah, Sasahanawaw, and Sasahanew. Tomison, who wintered in their vicinity called them the Sasanewa while Cocking referred to them first as

the Sassanew Neheathaway, clearly indicating their Cree affiliation.

The Susuhana are frequently mentioned in the York Factory journals in the first half of the 1700s. The name first appears in 1730 when, on June 15, 56 canoes of "Sturgeon & Shusuanna Indians" came to trade followed on June 24 by 20 canoes of Shusuanna and Seni-Poets (HBCA B.239/a/12). Their name is recorded over 11 trading seasons until 1752 when they, and other groups, were seldom identified. The group remained in existence, however, for there is an entry in the York Factory journal on 2 July 1782 when 5 canoes arrived (HBCA B.239/a/80). The final reference to the Susuhana, and that an indirect one, is found in a letter by Tomison (HBCA A.11/116 24 August 1786) outlining the locations of Canadian traders: four canoes were at the Winnipeg River; 12 at Misquagemea or the lower Assiniboine River; four in the "Sasa hannaway Indian Country;" 23 up the Saskatchewan River and others north of Cumberland House.

It is difficult to determine a minimum size for the Susuhana since they almost always came to York Factory in company with Sturgeon Cree or with Assiniboin. However Susuhana groups of 15, 36 and 17 canoes arrived in the summers of 1737, 1743 and 1752 respectively; the summer of 1743 reflecting the temporary closure of Fort Dauphin in 1742 (La Vérendrye 1968: 396). A canoe count of 36 would

indicate a population of at least 54 males, and the canoe counts reflect Cocking's statement of 1774, discussed below, that usually 10 canoes came to the Bay annually.

Despite their frequent presence at the Bay, Isham (1968:112) does not mention the Susuhana and Graham names them only once in an early version of his list of trading Indians: the Sasahanawaw whom he identifies as trading at both York Factory and Fort Albany (E.2/8). This reference to Fort Albany suggests that their country lay to the south where they had access to the Winnipeg, English and Albany rivers leading to James Bay. This southern location is supported by Cocking (Rich 1951:140) then at Cumberland House, who wrote in April 1777, that the Susuhana "are further below," or south of, the Cowenitow Indians from Red Deer River.

There is further information on their location but it requires a knowledge of the position of William Bruce's wintering post of 1774-75. While Cocking was at Witch (Good Spirit) Lake, he was visited by his former guide's son: "His Country is in that part where the Pedlar Bruce with five Canoes is residing Sasanew Neheathaway Indian Country" (HBCA B.239/a/72 15 December 1774), a description which he repeated on June 1, 1775 when he found Bruce had left for Basquia. However, Cocking (HBCA B.239/a/72 22 October, 11 November 1774) does not clearly explain where Bruce was. According to Morton (1973: 305) Bruce's post was at or near

the mouth of Swan River while there were a further 12 canoes further south "at Fort Dauphin and on the Assiniboine." According to this, the Susuhana would be part of, or identical to, the Swan River group. Yet the two groups were differentiated: "the Swan River [,] Red Deer River or Cowonitow[,] and Sahsahnew Indians" bordered the Saulteaux Indians of the Interlake region (HBCA B.239/a/80 12 June, 2 July 1782); the Indians from Red Deer River "with the Swan River & Sassahnew Indians went off to War" (Rich 1951:58).

Bruce, however, was not at Swan River but was in the Dauphin area which had been occupied since the time of the La Vérendryes. Tomison reported a post there in 1770 (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970: 95) and Pond, who travelled there from Mossy Portage, wintered at Lake Dauphin in 1775-76 (Henry the Elder 1969: 263; Davidson 1918: 40; map facing p 42).

Cocking said that the Pedlar, Blondeau, had established a post at Steeprock River on Lake Winnipegosis while Bruce, with five canoes, had "gone to reside to the Southward in the same Lake" (HBCA B.239/a/72 22 October 1774). Swan River is only 16 km southwest of Steeprock River, yet Cocking referred only once to Swan River with no mention of Bruce (HBCA B.239/a/72 23 October 1774) although he often referred to the personnel at Steeprock River.

Cocking's guide inland in 1774 was a Susuhana leader (HBCA B.239/a/72 31 May; 7,9 June 1775) and the data



indicate he lived south of the Swan River area. He separated from Cocking at Mossy Portage in order to winter "in his own country" while Cocking went into Dawson Bay, into which the Swan River empties. Further, this leader's son came from the south to visit Cocking at Witch Lake during the winter.

The Susuhana, then, occupied the country south of not only Swan Lake but also south of modern Good Spirit Lake, the area which was visited by Tomison in 1769-70. Tomison does not identify the Indians with whom he wintered in 1769-70 but he frequently referred to the Susuhana (HBCA B.239/a/64 10 September; 13,17 October; 17 November; 1 December; 18 January). His journal indicates a variety of people in the area. He met camps of Mantawapowa or Saulteaux (25 September; 4 November; 10,31 January), Assinboin (8,23 January; 24,27 May) and one tent of Kewenethew or Cree from Red Deer River (4 February).

Cocking also reported a variety of people on the upper Assiniboine River. He met a group of 20 tents of Pegogamaw Cree (from the Branches of the Saskatchewan) on the upper Red Deer who later came to Witch Lake. One of their group, a Beaver Cree, stated that he, at least, had fled his country to escape an epidemic. The Pegogamaw told Cocking they had left their country because François le Blanc, the Pedlar then below the Forks, traded liquor but no "Ammunition Tobacco &c" so they had come intending to trade with

Blondeau at Steeprock (HBCA B.239/a/72 9 October 1774; 7 March 1775). The references to these groups from the west coming to the upper Assiniboine are similar to the earlier references to the Askee and Muscotay in the same area.

#### 8.7 STURGEON CREE

The Sturgeon Indians are one of the most frequently mentioned groups trading at York Factory. They are named in 25 of the 48 trading seasons between 1715 and 1762, despite the ten year gap from 1719-28 when few groups were identified. Despite a hiatus after 1762, similar to that for the Susuhana, the Sturgeon were suddenly mentioned again in 1777 and have a final mention in 1781.

The Sturgeon Indians are found in Graham's lists of trading Indians under the Keskachewan (Cree) Nation as the "Nemow," "Nemeou" and "Nemau" a term which he identifies elsewhere as "Nemew, the Sturgeon" (1969:118). Isham (1968:112) also lists the "Nemau" which he translates as "a Sturgeon Ne ma u" (ibid:22).

Others have confused this Cree group with an Ojibwa group from N.W.Ontario. Coats (1852:40, despite his many visits to the Bay as captain of supply ships, was confused about both the inland geography and the people. He described the Sturgeon as being the most southern of the trading groups who lived beyond the Assiniboin and Ojibwa. This was apparently the same group as La France (Dobbs

1967:40) saw with a group of Monsoni on the north shore of Lake of the Woods. Ray (1974: 49 f.n.31) confused this Ojibwa group with the Sturgeon group west of Lake Winnipegosis, then suggested that the data indicated the group had moved west at a rate of "about ten miles a year" and had within sixteen years rapidly altered their economy from one based on fish to large game.

The Sturgeon occupied the area north of the Susuhana Cree, extending from Grand Rapids and Cedar Lake southwest to the Red Deer and Swan River drainages. From here they extended an undetermined distance west of the upper Assiniboine River and were found as far south as Good Spirit Lake. There is nothing to indicate that the group referred to as the Sturgeon were other than Cree, or that they lived elsewhere than western Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan. The Sturgeon often appeared at the Bay in company with other groups; none of these are recognizably Ojibwa. Most often they accompanied the Susuhana and Assiniboin. In later years, they often came to the Bay with a group of Pegogamaw from the Branches of the Saskatchewan. However, we have seen from Cocking's evidence that this latter group, at least occasionally, travelled to the upper Assiniboine drainage system and even left from there to go to the Bay.

The Sturgeon were unlike all the other Cree groups under discussion in their association with fishing on the lower Saskatchewan, especially the fishery at Grand Rapids

at the mouth of the Saskatchewan River. Here, a sturgeon fishery has been carried out since prehistoric times (Mayer-Oakes 1970) and when other groups later moved into the Red Deer and Swan River areas in the nineteenth century, they too summered in this area to fish sturgeon (e.g. King 1836 vol.1:50; Rich 1939:122 n.3). The role of this fishery for the eighteenth century Sturgeon is not clear, and it was perhaps important only for those trading Indians who left their families there while they went to the Bay. Yet, it was apparently the few references to this fishery of the Sturgeon Cree which led Ray to conclude the western Cree as a whole were spending their summers fishing in the forests (1972a; 1974:46). We learn details of the Sturgeon Cree from the 1756 and 1757 journals of Joseph Smith (see above sections 6.5.2 and 6.5.3). In late summer, 1756, four canoes of Sturgeon Cree including Washcabbit, one of the most important of the trading Indians, came to York Factory saying that if an Englishman was sent into their country, they would come down to trade. Isham, chief factor at York, was eager to comply since Washcabbit's former fleet of 75 canoes, probably composed of various groups, had dwindled to 13 by then. No doubt the decline was a result of the arrival of French traders on the Red Deer River in 1753 and the request a result of their difficulties in obtaining goods as a result of the war between France and England.

Although some Sturgeon Indians were still on the lower

Saskatchewan river as late as mid- October 1757, this was because Washcabbit was so late in returning inland. The next year the same families had left Grand Rapids by 19 July for Mossy Portage and, with the arrival of Smith on 25 July, the entire group immediately began moving to the plains a week later. They travelled directly, making camp moves almost daily until they reached Manito (Good Spirit) Lake by 3 October 1757. Although the Sturgeon Cree were utilizing the fishery, there is little evidence they were summering in the forest of the adjacent lowlands.

## 9. THE MIDDLE TIER OF CREE: CENTRAL SASKATCHEWAN

### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

The middle tier of Cree was composed of groups utilizing the various ecological zones of the Saskatchewan River. Furthest east was the area of heavy muskeg and dense forest of the Delta area downriver from the modern E.B. Campbell (formerly Squaw Rapids) Dam to Cedar Lake (e.g. Meyer 1985:2,7). Next was the area known as the Branches, the parkland and plain belts west of the Forks of the Saskatchewan. Still further west, beyond the Eagle Hills were the parklands of the upper North Saskatchewan stretching to modern Edmonton and south to Red Deer, Alberta.

Three main groups were located in this area in the mid-1700s: the Basquia Cree of the Basquia Hills/ Saskatchewan River Delta; the Pegogamaw of the Branches area; and the Beaver Cree west of the Eagle Hills. Both the identification and location of the Keskatchewan group are problematic. Their possible identification with the Beaver Cree is discussed below.

Here, attention will be focused on the Pegogamaw and Beaver. The Basquia Cree, who were based primarily in the forest, have been discussed elsewhere (Meyer 1985:7-16, 34-65; Thistle 1986). They were located well within the

forest, so a further discussion of them contributes little towards our understanding of the migration of the Cree. The Basquia had lived long in the area: Saukamappee had told Thompson that he was "a Nahathaway of the Pasquiau River ... that is my native country and of my fathers for many winters" (Thompson 1962:48-9).

It will be noticed that no group is identified as inhabiting the main Saskatchewan River from the Forks downriver to the Delta area. Few, if any, people occupied this area. Except for the rendezvous at old Fort la Corne, none of the early inland travellers ever mention seeing camps along the river, either on their way to the Bay in spring or on their return in later summer. This perhaps explains Knight's comments that the furthest groups of Indians were the Northern Assiniboin from the "head" of the Saskatchewan River, the Mountain Cree of the Manitoba Escarpment and the Askee. The lack of reference to the main Saskatchewan would have been because the Askee were living in the parklands/plains south of the Saskatchewan and west of the upper Assiniboine.

The Pegogamaw and Beaver differed in their choice of routes between their wintering grounds and the Bay, both while travelling by canoe and on foot. The two different canoe routes used were the Upper and Middle Tracks (Morse 1979:36-47). The Beaver Cree used the Upper Track which left the Saskatchewan River at Cumberland Lake for the east

and arrived at either York Factory by way of the Nelson or Hayes rivers or at Fort Churchill by the Kississing and lower Churchill River. The Pegogamaw followed the Middle Track which left the Saskatchewan at Cedar and Moose Lakes and followed the Minago River to York Factory by way of the Hayes River.

The two groups also differed in their approach to their wintering grounds on their return to the Bay. The Pegogamaw consistently travelled by foot to the Eagle Hills from the Forks by way of the South Saskatchewan where they crossed, near modern Batoche, to the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan. No doubt some Beaver Cree followed this Pegogamaw route but most often they followed along the North Saskatchewan from the Forks, then travelled inland by way of the lower Sturgeon/Shell rivers and Thickwood Hills, going as far northwest as the Beaver River.

The Middle Tier Cree are crucial to discussions of Mandelbaum's Cree history since they occupied the western parkland. Accordingly, their arrival, which he dates to the 1740s, should be reflected in historical documents and, as well, there should be marked references to their displacing the groups to the immediate west, the Gros Ventre and the Blackfoot Confederacy.

The earliest details for the area are found in Saukamappee's account recorded by David Thompson, dating, perhaps, to the 1730s (see section 6.2 above). From the



French Regime, there is only the rather garbled second-hand account of the establishment of Fort Jonquière in 1751 (see section 4.2.3 above). The first details are in Henday's journal of 1754-55 when he travelled overland from the Carrot River to central Alberta. After Henday, there are the journals of Smith, Pink and Cocking who all wintered near or immediately west of the Eagle Hills between 1763-1772. Alexander Henry the Elder also wrote a short account of a visit to an Assiniboin camp in the Touchwood Hills area in 1775. These observations of daily life with Indian groups cease after the establishment of posts in the Saskatchewan River area by the Montreal Pedlars in 1767 and then by the HBC in 1774. Most of the later information from these posts, however, describes the Cree after the smallpox epidemic of 1781-82. By then these earlier bands had become extinct.

## 9.2 THE PEGOGAMAW CREE

### 9.2.1 IDENTIFICATION

Tyrrell (1968:100 n.1) was informed that "the word Pe-ka-ke-mew means Peigan (Indian ) river which was the name given to the upper waters of what is now called the South Saskatchewan river." He points out that David Thompson used the term Peekahkamew for the South Saskatchewan, as did Philip Turner in a source Tyrrell does not identify. Others have assumed that the term referred to the Peigan Indians

(e.g. Row 1974:107) but contemporary HBC documents, as discussed below, indicate clearly that they were Cree. Andrew Graham (1969:206; Isham 1949:310) includes the Pegogamow or Pegogemeou in his lists of Cree groups and indicates that they traded only at York Factory.

The terms Pegogamaw and Peigan are anglicized versions of the Cree pikan and pikakamiw meaning muddy or turbid water (Faries 1938:414,416). Pentland (1981:269-70), discussing the locations of early Cree groups, follows Richardson (1852:264) in identifying the Pegogamaw as living on Muddy or Moose Lake on the lower Saskatchewan. However, Richardson was writing long after the Pegogamaw had vanished and they were never associated with this area in contemporary documents. Instead, they were found in the area of the Forks of the Saskatchewan to which Pentland makes casual reference: "Another band with the same name-spelled Pigogomew, etc.- lived somewhere on the plains near the South Saskatchewan River during the same period" (p.269-70).

### 9.2.2 HISTORY OF CONTACT

The Pegogamaw are first mentioned in 1751 when a flotilla of 26 canoes of "Pego'ga'ma and Keischachewan" arrived to trade at York Factory (HBCA B.239/a/34 29 May 1751). They are then mentioned nearly every year until 1762. That they continued to trade, however, is supported

by the statement in the York Factory journal of 28 June 1772 where there is a passing comment that most of the Pegogamaw and Keskachewan had left for the inland (HBCA B.239/a/66). Cocking also said, in 1777, that goods could be sent from Cumberland House to posts up river by the Pegogamaw returning from the Bay. The Bigstone/Minago rivers system, the Middle Track, was known as the Pegogamaw Indian track in the 1770s since it was the route they followed to the Bay (Rich 1951:161; 1968:100 n.1).

In 1754, Anthony Henday was guided inland by Attickoshish or Little Deer who was termed a Leading Indian or Captain by the HBC. Attickoshish was apparently a Pegogamaw Cree since Henday had been sent inland among the "Pedogamy and Earchethinew Indians" and he returned in the spring at the head of "46 Canoues of pegigoma Indians" (HBCA B.239/b/11 6 August 1754; B.239/a/39 16 June 1755). It is assumed here that Henday went inland with the Pegogamaw although the identification is not simple (see below Section 9.3.1).

Attickoshish's biographical details show he lived west of the Forks and had amicable relations with the Blackfoot Confederacy. Even before Henday's journey, he had "Lived Long with the Earchithinnues" (HBCA B.239/a/37 26 June 1754). In 1761 he planned another trip to visit them and was asked to guide Henry Pressick inland to persuade the Archithinue to come to trade at the Bay. He returned the

following spring with 39 canoes of Keskachewan and Pegogamaw (HBCA B.239/a/48 25 June 1761; B.239/a/49 18 June 1762).

Attickoshish was then described as being "the trusty leader... Who Conducted Anthny Hendey in his Journey Inland to the Earchithinue Country" but it is not clear if this is a reference to Henday's trip of 1754 or, more likely, his little-known journey of 1759-60. The Deer (Attickasish) was reported near the Birch Hills in the spring of 1764 (HBCA B.239/a/52 27 April, 15 May 1764) and was probably the man called "jackasish," corrected to "Acasish" by the near-illiterate Smith. This man also took James Dearing inland in 1766-67 to the Eagle Hills area (HBCA B.239/a/56 28 January 1767). Dearing seems to have continued to accompany the same group, apparently under Attickoshish, and he was reported at canoe-building sites near and above the mouth of the Battle River in 1769 and 1770, suggesting he had wintered in or west of the Eagle Hills (HBCA B.239/a/61 9 April 1769; B.239/a/63 13 March 1770).

The Pegogamaw disappear from the historic record after the smallpox epidemic of 1781-82. Although they were frequently mentioned in the early Cumberland House journals, they are no longer mentioned after 1782 when Tomison, in charge of Cumberland and Hudson House on the North Saskatchewan, reported to York Factory: "of the several Tribes of Assinee Poet Pegogomew and others bordering on Saskachiwian River he realy believed not one in fifty have

survived" (Rich 1952:298). Although Cree survived in the area, they seem no longer to have formed a viable group.

### 9.2.3 DISTRIBUTION

The Pegogamaw were centered between the Branches of the Saskatchewan River, beyond the Forks. We have seen that both Tomison and Cocking suggested that they were in the lower North Saskatchewan River area. In 1772, Cocking, camped near modern Biggar in the area then included as the Eagle Hills, saw camp smoke to the eastward which his group "supposed to be Pegogamaw" as opposed to smoke to the southwest which was thought to be from the Archithinue (HBCA B.239/a/69 18 October 1772). Confirmation that the Pegogamaw were associated with this area is a later comment that ten canoes of Pegogamaw arrived at Cumberland House on 6 October 1775 "from the Eagle Hill above the Branch of Saskachiwan" (Rich 1951:14).

The Pegogamaw made forays far beyond this area. While travelling inland to eastern Saskatchewan in 1774, Cocking met a tent of Pegogamaw near modern Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan. A Beaver Cree from the Saskatchewan above the Forks who was with them told Cocking that he had fled with his family to escape a fatal contagion which had broken out among his people and the Pegogamaw (HBCA B.239/a/72 9 October 1774). Later, while Cocking was wintering at Good Spirit Lake, he heard of twenty tents of Pegogamaw pounding

bison two days away. At least some of the group planned on building canoes on the Red Deer River in order to go to the Bay (ibid: 20 January, 2 February 1775).

Here, in the eastern parklands of Saskatchewan, the Pegogamaw considered themselves outside their usual territory. They later told Cocking that they had come from the Saskatchewan River because François le Blanc, the Montreal trader in the Nipawin area, had no tobacco nor ammunition and they were hoping to get some from the Pedlar's post on Lake Winnipegosis (ibid: 7 March 1775). When they later joined Cocking's group at the spring canoe-building site, rather than going to the Bay, nine tents returned inland "to their own Country" (ibid: 11 May 1775).

Henday's journey to Alberta is of great interest since he documents the Cree as being well-established between Red Deer and the Edmonton area in 1754-55, the earliest first-hand account of the western plains and parkland. Henday's guide was, no doubt, a Pegogamaw but Henday never specifically identifies the various Indian groups he was involved with that winter except to differentiate the Archithinue and Assiniboin from the "Indians," i.e. Cree, he was with.

Attickoshish and others left Henday to join the Archithinue on a raiding expedition, while at the latter's camp in mid-October. Initially Henday's group continued to travel southwest from the Archithinue camp but by the first

of November, they began to swing to the north. The group fragmented until by the first of December Henday's tent of 12 people was left to find their way north to the spring canoe-building site: two men, five women, four children and himself (Henday 1907:343). As they approached the Edmonton area they were met or were joined by small groups. In January he mentions two camps of three and two tents; in February, three camps of two tents each and one of seven tents; in March his group was reduced to one tent but was soon joined by two groups of ten and two tents; after this the arrival of various unnumbered groups of both Cree and Assiniboin. That the Cree were scattered through central Alberta in such small camps shows that they had little fear of attacks at a time when they were supposedly in the process of invading the west. That Henday met such a number of scattered Cree groups indicates they were not simply briefly visiting the area as middlemen but were winter occupants.

Attickoshish and his group were travelling over large areas. When Henday accompanied him inland, he and his group met their families on the upper Carrot River, very close to the Red Deer River where Cocking was to later meet Pegogamaw Cree. It is not known if these families had canoed down the Saskatchewan with the flotillas going to the Bay or if they had walked. However, groups were summering on the plains. In the spring, while at the canoe-building site near

Edmonton, Henday left his horse with an old man who was obviously not travelling anywhere by canoe.

Yet some families were taken eastward by canoe, often as far as the Cumberland Lake area and beyond. In later years, a common rendezvous was at the deserted Fort a la Corne site below the Forks. It was these late summer rendezvous to the east which apparently led Ray (1972) to conclude that all the western Cree summered on the lakes and rivers of the forest and that it was the increasing dependence on horses which led to the rendezvous being moved to the westward closer to the plains.

In fact, it seems only to have been a portion of the families of some of the trading Indians who rendezvoused in the east. Surprisingly, in none of the inland journals is there any mention of families at other rendezvous, either on the way to the Bay or on the return. Yet, the numbers of families at the rendezvous were not large and did not represent all the trading Indians from the entire Saskatchewan River. Further, groups were arriving and departing from the Bay throughout late June and early July, so some families should have been sighted.

The Pegogamaw, then, occupied the area between the Branches, especially the Bear and Eagle Hills. However, they travelled freely over a much broader area from the upper Assiniboin/ Carrot rivers west as far as central Alberta. The western limits of their range are not clear,



however, since it is difficult to separate them from the neighbouring group, the Keskachewan Cree who are discussed below.

#### 9.2.4 SIZE OF GROUP

The Pegogamaw are recorded as visiting York Factory on at least twenty occasions between 1751 and 1762. Almost all these visits were made in the company of the Keskachewan Cree or, more rarely, the Sturgeon or Assiniboin. Since we know only the total number of canoes in these mixed flotillas, it is difficult to obtain minimum numbers for the trading Pegogamaw.

In 1755, Henday returned to York Factory with 46 canoes of Pegogamaw (HBCA B.239/a/39 23 June 1755) which suggests a minimum of about 70 young males, calculating 1.5 males per canoe. However, the identification of all these canoes as Pegogamaw is suspect. Henday reports leaving the canoe-building site with some Assiniboin (1907:350) and of being joined by another unidentified Cree group of 20 canoes on the way (HBCA E.2/4 30 April 1755). As Attickoshish was with them, they may well have all been Pegogamaw. In his journal, Henday wrote that after leaving the French post at The Pas he mustered a group of 70 canoes and it was "at the head of 70 canoes of different tribes of Indians" that he arrived at the Bay (1907:353; HBCA E.2/4 16-23 June 1755).

In the canoe memorandum for 1760, a single flotilla of

44 canoes of Pegogamaw arrived on June 25 (HBCA B.239/a/47) but this figure is untrustworthy since there are serious discrepancies between the daily journal and the memorandum. Several flotillas which arrived within a few days appear to have been confused with each other.

The inland journals are of little help in establishing population figures. The maximum number of Pegogamaw trading at Cumberland house in one season was 17 canoes (Rich 1952:111). Since the Montreal Pedlars were by then established on the Saskatchewan, this would only be a small portion of the home group.

#### 9.2.5 SUMMARY

The Pegogamaw were a very important trading group at the Bay in the third quarter of the 1700s. When they appear in the records in 1751, their importance as a group was already apparent. Attickoshish was said to have lived with the Archithinue for some years before he took Henday inland in 1754, and Henday recorded scattered Cree groups throughout central Alberta from Red Deer north to Edmonton that winter.

It is possible that they were already in the area of the Branches in the 1730s when Saukamappee met a Cree camp five days' walk from the borders of the Snake country (Thompson 1968:334). He told Thompson that although he had been adopted by the Peigan, he was able to keep his native

speech through talking to Cree who came to the Peigan to trade. Since these traders did not, apparently, give him news of his home or his people they seem not to have been knowledgeable of Basquia Cree of The Pas area (Thompson 1962:49). The Pegogamaw were not recent arrivals from the lower Saskatchewan but instead, long term inhabitants, further up-river and separate from the Basquia group.

### 9.3 THE KESKACHEWAN CREE

#### 9.3.1 IDENTIFICATION

There are problems in the specific identification and location of the Keskachewan Cree. This is largely because the term was used at three levels of generality. First, it was used to refer to the western Cree as a whole. It is in this sense that Graham spoke of the "Keisachewan Nation." Second, it was used in the specific sense to refer to a single group, here called the Keskachewan Cree. However, it appears to also have been used in a third manner to include both the Pegogamaw and Keskachewan groups, that is all the Cree living west of the Forks. As a result, it is difficult to determine at which level of generality the term was used in specific instances: if a flotilla of 57 canoes was referred to as being Keskachewan Indians did this mean it was composed of various Cree groups, of Keskachewan and Pegogamaw together, or did it consist of the Keskachewan group alone?

There is no doubt that by the mid-1700s, the term was used at times to refer to a specific group. When the members of large trading flotillas are identified, the Keskachewan are, at various times, differentiated from the Sturgeon, Susuhana, Pegogamaw, Missinipi and Assiniboin.

Earlier, the term seems to have been used to differentiate the Saskatchewan River Cree from other Cree to the north, the Missinipi and North River Cree; and from other Cree to the south, the Sturgeon and Susuhana Cree. The Keskachewan are first identified in 1735 when Thomas White succeeded Thomas MacLeish at York Factory: "this afternoon 86 Cannoes of Kis=ska=che=was & Sturgeon Indians Came downe this [Hayes] River" (HBCA B.239/a/17 31 May 1735). They are frequently mentioned in the journals after this date, but apparently in the general sense. Although James Isham was in charge of the post after 1737, it was not until 1751, when he returned after leave in England, that the two groups from the upper Saskatchewan River, the Keskachewan and Pegogamaw, were differentiated. This continued in most years until 1762, after which few specific identifications were made. Yet, as Graham's manuscripts show, "Keskachewan" continued to be used in a generic sense throughout the later 1700s.

This ambiguity leads to confusion in identifying the group with whom Henday wintered in 1754-55. According to the York Factory journal entries (HBCA B.239/a/37), it would

seem that Henday was with a specific group of Keskachewan Cree. On 22 June 1754, 28 canoes of "Keschachewan and pegsgoma" arrived and on 26 June, Henday was sent with the "Keschachewan Indians to ye Earchithinues in order to bring to a trade [sic] next summer." In the instructions given to him, Attickoshish was to "see you safe to his Country; that is to say- the Keischachewan, Missinneepie, Earchithinue, Esinepoet or any other Country Indians that we have not as Yet any traffick with" (HBCA A.11/114 8 September 1754).

Yet elsewhere, Henday was described as being inland "amongst the Pedogamy [Pegogamaw] and Earchethinew Indians" (HBCA B.239/b/11 6 August 1754). The following summer he arrived with "46 Canoeus of pegogamaw Indians" (HBCA B.239/a/39 16,23 June 1755).

There is ample evidence to show that the Pegogamaw and Keskachewan were considered to be separate groups. On his aborted trip to the Cedar Lake area in 1756, Henday was sent inland with "69 canoes of Keeschachawan and pegigoma Indians" (HBCA B.239/a/41 17-22 June 1756). They were similarly differentiated when they arrived in the same flotillas in 1754, 1757, 1758, 1760, 1761, 1762 and in 1772. This haziness of identification might possibly reflect an over-riding similarity between the groups which served to differentiate them from other Cree. Thus, it is possible these were "y" or Plains Cree dialect speakers distinguishable from those to the east and north. There is

no linguistic evidence to support this conclusion however, since the earliest evidence for the Plains dialect dates to the 1770s (Smith 1976:422; Hearne 1911:161 n.).

### 9.3.2 LOCATION

The Keskachewan were not named in any of the inland accounts so their location must be inferred. They were neighbours of the Pegogamaw since the terms were used interchangeably and the two groups were often in the same the same flotilla which suggests they had come from a common area. They would appear to have lived west of the Forks, since none of the inland travellers mention seeing canoe-building sites below this point. However, since the Pegogamaw were centered between the Forks and Eagle Hills, the Keskachewan would seem to have been the groups building further up-river, west of the Eagle Hills. This would explain their close association with the Archithinue since HBC men sent to the latter were invariably associated with either or both the Keskachewan and Pegogamaw (e.g. (HBCA B.239/a/46 28 June 1759, B.239/a/47 22 June 1760). It would also suggest that the Cree groups that Henday met in central Alberta were Keskachewan rather than Pegogamaw. This might explain why Attickoshish, a Pegogamaw, and his group of 20 canoes were not at Henday's spring canoe-building site but were three or four days' paddle further downriver, a distance which Henday gives variously as 84 miles (1907:350)

or 134 miles (HBCA B.239/a/40 27-30 April 1755).

### 9.3.3 SIZE OF GROUP

It is difficult to estimate the minimum number of males for the Keskachewan Cree since it is not possible to clearly determine if their largest flotillas did not also include the Pegogamaw. As well, the Keskachewan, like the Pegogamaw, almost always appeared in mixed flotillas. Before the Pegogamaw were identified in 1751, flotillas of Keskachewan Indians consisted of large numbers: 57 canoes in 1737, 68 canoes in 1738 and 80 canoes in both 1742 and 1743. The latter figure would suggest some 120 males. These figures are similar to the combined flotillas of Keskachewan and Pegogamaw described after 1751: 69 canoes in 1756; at least 61 canoes in 1760; and 96 canoes in 1762 when the French had abandoned the Saskatchewan valley. That year, the Keskachewan and Pegogamaw accounted for at least 35% of the trading Indians.

### 9.4 THE BEAVER CREE

The Beaver Cree were rarely identified in the York Factory records. In 1766, Louis Primeau, an ex-employee of the French traders, was sent inland with 11 canoes to "the famous river named Omisk Sibi or Beaver River no Englishman has been there" (HBCA B.239/a/54 6 July 1766). However, the Beaver Cree seem to have been included previously in the

groups simply called the North River Indians from their coming down the more dangerous North (Nelson) River rather than the commonly used Hayes River. Some 40 canoes "of these North River Indians" had been at the post the year before (ibid: 2 July 1766).

At Fort Churchill, where Cree groups were almost never named, the group was said to have gone to trade at York Factory, apparently for fear of reprimand, because "the Leader of the Beaver River Indians with some of his Tribe has killed a great many of our farthest Northern Indians," a reference to the Athapaskans (HBCA B.42/a/56 30 June 1762). Although the name occurs only rarely in the records written at the Bay, the group was mentioned more often by inland observers.

The Beaver River is the main southern tributary, actually the upper reach, of the Churchill River and approaches within 60 km of the North Saskatchewan River just west of the Alberta border. Many, if not most, of the Beaver Cree travelled to the Bay not by the Churchill River but by way of the Saskatchewan River. They travelled down the Saskatchewan then passed into the Sturgeon Weir-Grass River route by portaging into Cumberland Lake almost at the site later built on by Samuel Hearne in 1774: "this Day the Beaver Indians parted with me and Carred thare Canowes over in to the [Cumberland] Leake as the did Last yeare and So Gow Down the North River" (HBCA B.239/a/63 28 May 1770).



Cocking also wrote that many Indians were coming down the Saskatchewan with furs, "Assinee Poets, Beaver and others" who had all continued past the Pedlars' post at The Pas "except the Beaver Indians who intend to go the other way" through Cumberland Lake (HBCA B.239/a/69 10 June 1773).

#### 9.4.1 DISTRIBUTION

It is clear, from their use of the Saskatchewan to travel to the Bay, that the Beaver Cree were not located solely on the Beaver River. Instead, they were found each spring at canoe-building sites on the North Saskatchewan and were probably wintering in the area between the North Saskatchewan and upper Beaver River from the Thickwood Hills west to Moosehill Lake and probably the Beaver Hills in central Alberta.

Cocking passed south of the Thickwood Hills in 1772 and said that "There are large Hills beyond those where the Beaver Indians reside" (1908:218). Tomison, who was travelling up the North Saskatchewan in 1777 passed the Pedlars' post at the mouth of the Sturgeon River which "was Just Joining two Tracks: The Beaver Indians and the Snake Indians Track" (Rich 1951:354). The Sturgeon River was an inland route to the Beaver River (e.g. Tyrrell 1968:218 n.4).

It is clear that the Beaver Cree were not strictly associated with the Beaver River. The inland travellers

called them the Beaver Indians rather than Beaver River Indians as they were referred to at the Bay. Cocking met "fifty tents of Indians with several leaders many of them Beaver Indians" at the mouth of Eagle Creek on the North Saskatchewan (HBCA B.239/a/69 4 September 1772). Several days later, the group split and while Cocking and his group headed south to what are now called the Bear Hills, the Beaver Indians went west to Manito Lake and the Rocky Mountains (Cocking 1908:105). That the Beaver Cree were travelling to the Rocky Mountains, or at least to central Alberta where Henday had earlier travelled is supported by additional evidence. In May, 1776, 14 canoes of "Pegogamaw and Beaver Indians" were at Cumberland House who planned "on their return to their Families to go to the Stone Mountains to Trap Furrs where they are plentiful" (Rich 1951:45-46).

On a map drawn at Fort Churchill in 1760 by Moses Norton on the basis of Cree information, the North Saskatchewan, in error, is called the Beaver River. On its upper reaches is shown "Beaver Mount," the Beaver Hills at Edmonton, to which there is a route shown from the upper Churchill, or Beaver River. The trail is described as "ye track to Henday's tent" but it is not clear if this refers to his wintering of 1754-1755 or his unknown trip of 1759-60 for which no record exists. There is no doubt "ye track" is the trail described by Pink, who travelled between the Beaver River and the North Saskatchewan by way of Moosehill

Creek to winter east of the Beaver Hills in 1768-69. It seems that the Beaver Cree were as closely associated with the area south of the North Saskatchewan as with that north of it. The Beaver Cree are the only group whose name may have survived the smallpox epidemic of 1781; in 1819-1820, Richardson wrote that the Cree inhabiting the northermost plains "are divided into two distinct bands, the Ammisk-watchee-thinyoowuc or Beaver Hill Crees, who have about forty tents, and the Sackawee-thinyoowuc, or Thick Wood Crees, who have thirty-five. The tents average nearly ten inmates each..." (Franklin 1970:108).

#### 9.4.2 THE KESKACHEWAN AND THE BEAVER CREE

The Keskachewan Cree and the Beaver Cree are odd complements of each other. The Keskachewan Cree are one of the most frequently mentioned groups in documents written at the Bay before 1760 but they are not named by the inland HBC employees. The Beaver Cree are almost unmentioned at the Bay but are often mentioned in the inland journals. The two groups were found within the same general area: from the Thickwood Hills west to the Beaver Hills and from the upper Beaver River to south of the North Saskatchewan River. These coincidences are sufficiently strong as to suggest that the two groups were in fact one. It seems probable that the term "Keskachewan" was bestowed by English at the Bay on a group who were known locally as the Beaver Cree.

There is a problem in deciding which term to use for the group, apart from their possible identification with the Keskachewan. The term "Beaver River Cree" avoids possible confusion with the Athapaskan Beaver Indians to the north. However, it suggests a close relationship with the Beaver River when, in fact, they were more closely associated with the Saskatchewan. The name "Beaver Cree" has been used here since it reflects the inland usage.

#### 9.5 SUMMARY

Mandelbaum wrote that by 1740 the Western Cree had only been "brought to the fringes of the prairie country [although] as middlemen in the trade, they travelled into the plains to carry goods to distant tribes" (1979:31). He is definite both that the Cree had only gained the edges of the prairies and that trading trips into the plains took them beyond their own territory (pp. 45-46, 261-62). It was at this time, or shortly after, that "the wave of Cree conquest swept over the Gros Ventre and the Blackfoot in the west" (pp.31, 39, 262).

An examination of the published sources used by Mandelbaum reveals a different picture. In none of the accounts before the late 1700s is there mention of conflicts with groups to the west: Saukamappee told of helping the Peigan in their battles with the Snake in the 1730s; Heday described trading with various Archithinue groups both in

central Alberta and on the North Saskatchewan in 1754-1755; and in 1772-1773 Cocking wrote of Cree living with the Gros Ventre at their bison pound and listed the various allies of the Cree: Gros Ventre, Peigan, Blood, Blackfoot and Sarcee.

Similarly, all the evidence indicates that by 1740, or at least 1754, the Cree were far beyond the border of the plains and their trading expeditions were carried out from bases in the far west. Saukamappee casually spoke of Cree and Assiniboin camps only several days' walk from the borders of the Snake country, apparently in the Eagle Hills and lower Battle River area while Henday met small Cree groups scattered through central Alberta only twenty years later. The trading expedition Henday described, although actually simply a meeting with the Archithinue, was not made across the prairies but from a base in the Eagle Hills of western Saskatchewan.

The HBC archives, to which Mandelbaum did not have access, simply confirm these major sources of data and offer additional details. The Keskatchewan group of Cree from the North Saskatchewan area are named in the HBC records in the early 1730s, at the same time as the early events described by Saukamappee. Although Henday's journal is the only one to have survived from HBC personnel travelling into central Alberta, other known journeys were made to the North Saskatchewan River in the 1760s. These indicate scattered Cree camps, just as Henday had seen further west.

Furthermore, these Cree along the Saskatchewan were not shuttling between the forest and the prairies. Although our view of these Cree is biased, since descriptions exist only for those trading at the Bay, the evidence indicates that immediately on their return inland they travelled out onto the prairie to hunt bison and only returned to the parkland when adverse winter conditions drove the bison to shelter. Stands of birch were sought in the spring by those Cree travelling to the Bay, but it was only this need which forced them to the edge of the forest. Nothing is known of the groups who did not go to the Bay in any one year: certainly the numbers were highly variable. However, they appear to have summered out on the prairie, hunting bison or carrying out raids against distant groups. It was only some of the Sturgeon Cree who seem to have moved between a summer fishery and the bison-hunting grounds beyond the upper Assiniboin. Even here, however, we may be biased by knowing only of those Sturgeon Cree who were travelling to the Bay.

In summary, there are no data from the Saskatchewan River area which support Mandelbaum's interpretation of western Cree history. Instead, the earliest first-hand account shows scattered Cree groups along the Saskatchewan as far as the Edmonton area with no hint that this was a recent occupation.

## 10. THE NORTHERN TIER OF CREE AND THE CHIPEWYAN

### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

In the authoritative Handbook of North American Indians, the various Cree groups living in the boreal forest from James Bay west to central Alberta are all called the Western Woods Cree (Smith 1981:256-257). Here we are concerned only the groups west of the Hayes and Nelson rivers where four modern Cree dialect groups are represented, three of which are extant and one extinct (Smith 1981:256; 1987:439-440):

- /n/ dialect: Western Swampy Cree spoken from James Bay to the lower Saskatchewan River
- /th/ dialect: Rocky Cree spoken west of the Nelson River to central northern Saskatchewan
- /y/ dialect: Bush, Strongwood or Bois Fort Cree spoken in northwestern Saskatchewan and Northern Alberta but differing from the Plains Cree /y/ dialect
- /r/ dialect: an apparently extinct dialect formerly spoken south of Lake Athabasca

Eighteenth century fur traders distinguished four main Cree groups in the boreal forest west of the Hayes River before the smallpox epidemic of 1781. Since they did not record nor discuss dialect differences, the basis for the distinctions are not known. These groups consisted of:

1. The Home and Half-home Guards who lived immediately inland from the Bay and were employed in the semi-annual goose hunts at

both York Factory and Fort Churchill.

2. The Nelson or North River Cree, including the Grass River sub-group, who lived on the upper Nelson River west as far as the Sturgeon-weir River.

3. The Missinipi Cree who lived on the Churchill River up river from South Indian Lake.

4. The Athabasca Cree who lived on the lower Athabasca River and, perhaps, the upper Churchill drainage beyond Lac Ile-à-la-Crosse.

Of these, the Missinipi and Athabasca, who were on the northern and northwestern frontiers of Cree territory, are of special interest in discussing a historic westward migration of the Cree.

Mandelbaum introduces his study by saying that "the Cree were recent arrivals in the prairie country, coming as invaders from the north and east" (1979:3). He never discusses this movement from the north and there are only two instances when he alludes to it. Using information from David Thompson, Mandelbaum says that in the period 1784-1812 there was a group of Cree "somewhere above the North Saskatchewan River, who still preferred their ancient mode of life to living in the plains" (1979:34). It is not clear if Mandelbaum was thinking of these Cree or even of a movement onto the plains when he later wrote that "the withdrawal of the Cree from their northern range permitted the Chipewyan to press further southward" (1979:40).



Mandelbaum also mentions Henry the Younger, at a post near Edmonton in 1808-1810, who was trying "to keep the Cree out of the plains and in the forests where they could trap for furs...[but] the buffalo pounds exerted too great an attraction" (1979:38). Again, it is not clear if Mandelbaum would consider these to be the invaders from the north. As we have just seen, Heday met Cree wintering well south of Edmonton in 1754, much earlier than these dates.

As discussed earlier (see section 2.4 above), Mandelbaum's inadequate treatment of the northern Cree clearly shows in his acceptance that Cree were raiding north of Lake Athabasca "before the advent of the English" while insisting that there was no evidence for Cree west of Lake Superior before 1690.

## 10.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The distribution of the northern Cree groups before the smallpox epidemic of 1781 is not clear because of the lack of first-hand observations beyond the Upper and Middle canoe routes. The only exception is Samuel Hearne's (1958:172-174) brief visit to a segment of the lower Slave River in January 1772. Alexander Henry the Elder (1969:324-335; 1908) travelled to the upper Churchill River in the spring of 1775 and Joseph Hansom (Tyrrell 1934:240-41 n.2) travelled by way of the lower Churchill River to winter at Cumberland Lake in 1773-74. However, both wrote only

summary accounts of their journey with almost no details of local people. Similarly, HBC employees sent north on brief trading journeys to the Churchill River from Cumberland House before 1781 left only general accounts rather than daily journals (Rich 1951, 1952). The only information on the Athabasca to come to us is from Peter Pond, who, in 1778, was the first known European to reach the area, is found on his three maps and an accompanying memorandum, found only in a French translation, made about 1785 (Wagner 1955; Davidson 1967:259-266).

The first details of the Churchill River above Frog Portage are found in Alexander Mackenzie's account. Although he gives a geographical and historical description of the route, the description appears to be a synthesis of various journeys made about 1790 and no daily observations have survived regarding local inhabitants. The first daily journals are a result of the HBC expedition from Cumberland House to the Athabasca in 1790-1792 from which two journals have been published (Tyrrell 1934).

### 10.3 RECENT SCHOLARLY RESEARCH AND THE WESTERN WOODS CREE

The Cree of the upper Churchill River and the Athabasca area have attracted attention since Mackenzie's (1970) account of the area was published in 1801. With recent interest in the fur trade period as a result of both scholarly concerns and Indian land claim cases, there has

been much work, and some dispute, arising from historical research in the area. Three researchers who have all published after 1975 are of special interest: Beryl Gillespie, James G.E. Smith, and J. Colin Yerbury.

Gillespie, whose interest has been in Athapaskan groups, traced the changing boundaries between the Cree and Chipewyan in the Athabasca area. At the Northern Athapaskan Conference in 1971, she concluded from an examination of the historic data that "Cree groups were the original inhabitants of the Churchill drainage as far west as Lake Athabasca" but the data were insufficient to show whether the Cree wintered as far north as the Slave River before the introduction of the fur trade or whether they occupied the area afterwards, having driving out unidentified Athapaskan occupants (1975:352,372).

According to Gillespie, the Chipewyan originally occupied the area east of Lake Athabasca and expanded towards Hudson Bay after the establishment of Fort Churchill in 1717 (1975:359). Their movement from Lake Athabasca south to the upper Churchill in the 1790s (1975:377-382) was a process which had begun in the mid-1700s when the HBC sponsored peace emissaries to mediate between the Chipewyan and Athabasca Cree (1975:372-373) and was accelerated by the smallpox epidemic of 1781 (1975:374-375).

Gillespie was the first to raise questions regarding the scholarly interpretations given to Alexander Mackenzie's

comments on the history of the Cree in the area (1975:353). Later, for the Handbook of North American Indians, she detailed some of the ambiguities and misreadings of Mackenzie and their effects on later writers through, especially, the influential work of Gallatin in 1836 (1981:163). Again, she concludes that "all early historic materials associate Cree people with the Churchill River drainage" (1981:164), while the earliest first-hand reports from the Athabasca area "do not suggest that Cree groups were recent arrivals to this area" (1981:166).

James Smith (1975, 1976 1981, 1987) appears to have become interested in the history of the Western Woods Cree after carrying out ethnographic fieldwork in northern Manitoba in a mixed Chipewyan and Cree village on Reindeer Lake. More recently, he has been interested in supporting the land claims of the Lubicon Band of Cree in northern Alberta. He has expanded on Gillespie's work by utilizing other lines of evidence to focus on the distribution of the Western Woods Cree, especially in the west. Referring to archaeological collections from Southern Indian lake, Reindeer Lake and Lac la Ronge, he concluded that the "Churchill drainage was essentially the territory of the Cree, although the western and northern boundaries of Cree occupation have yet to be explored" (1975:410). Although the Swampy Cree were moving west from south of Hudson Bay in the late 1700s, "the Rocky and Strongwood Cree had long been

present in the west: it was apparently merely the name Cree that was at this time extended westward to apply to these divisions, previously known by generic terms such as Southern or Upland Indians" (Smith 1981:257; 1976). Most recently, he has concluded that the historic, linguistic, and archaeological evidence as well as oral traditions indicate that "the Cree were as far west as the Peace River long before the advent of European fur traders" (1987:435).

J. Colin Yerbury (1976, 1981), like Gillespie, has focused on Athapaskan groups, especially the location of the Chipewyan in the early fur trade period. While strongly objecting to the conclusion reached by Gillespie and Smith which "specifically supports their claim for historic continuity in Cree-Chipewyan culture," he accepts the traditional view that war, hunting and trade resulted in

Cree territorial expansion, at the expense of Northeastern Athapaskan populations...into the Peace River and Lake Athabasca region, resulting in a displacement of the Beaver, Sekani, Slavey, Dogrib and Hare populations from their precontact habitat in the area of present day Wood Buffalo National Park (1976:239).

According to Yerbury, the Cree "only shifted westward during the 1720s and later" (1976:247) from "the northern and northwestern frontiers between the upper Nelson River and as far as the head of the Churchill River" (1976:243). Yet, he also writes that "the principal expansion of Cree territory after 1715 seems to have been between Reindeer

lake and Lake Athabasca" (1976:248). Recently, in speaking specifically of the Athabasca area, he has clarified part of these statements: "Armed with guns and seeking furs, the Cree...drove the Athapaskan Chipewyan out of the headwaters of the Churchill River between 1694 and 1714 and began to penetrate into the Athapaskan-held territory near Lake Athabasca and [Athabasca] River in about 1714-15" (1981:31).

The publications of these three authors present two opposing views of the historic expansion of the Western Woods Cree, especially in regard to the upper Churchill River. For Gillespie and Smith, the Cree were aboriginal occupants of the area while for Yerbury, who accepts the traditional view derived from Mackenzie, the Cree invaded the area, albeit at an early date. Rather than discussing the various merits and faults of the arguments raised by these writers, it is more useful to outline the specific evidence concerning the Missinipi and Athabasca Cree. By this means we can at least set the limits of what can be determined about the early history of these groups. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to establish what early writers meant when they used the word Missinipi in regard to the interior since the term was closely associated with various Western Woods Cree groups.

#### 10.4 IDENTIFYING THE MISSINIPI: LAKE WINNIPEG, CHURCHILL RIVER AND LAKE ATHABASCA

The three main drainage systems of the western boreal forest all include large bodies of water: Lake Winnipeg on the Nelson River system; Reindeer Lake and Southern Indian Lake on the Churchill River system; and Lake Athabasca on the Athabasca River system. All of these have been associated with the Cree word "Missinipi" which means simply "big water." This has led, at times, to a very confusing account of the interior in the early records. The traders on the Bay were still unfamiliar with the inland geography, yet were describing the interior from information obtained from Cree groups from these various locales, each of which had its own Missinipi. The traders seem often to have considered the various Missinipi lakes to be the same. It was this confusion which led to the great surprise expressed by James Knight, probably the most knowledgeable person of his time in regard to the interior. Knight had gone to establish Fort Churchill in the summer of 1717 where he met Missinipi Indians from "the great Water Lake" who told him they could come to the post in less than half the time it took them to go to York Factory: "I never heard of it before as this River layd so Near that lake before" (Knight 1932:160-166). In retrospect, it is clear that Knight had confused Southern Indian Lake with Lake Winnipeg.

Initially, the traders associated the Missinipi with

Lake Winnipeg. In 1684, Silvy referred to Lake Winnipeg as "the great lake of the Assiniboines, of which Port Nelson is the outlet, according to what we hear" (1968:68). La Potherie stated that Hayes River "takes its rise in a great lake called Lake Michinipi" which was apparently the home of the "Michinipicpoets, i.e. 'men of stone of the great lake'" (1968:259). Similarly, Jérémie wrote that the Hayes River "has its source in a lake...which is called Michinipi or Big Water" and described its inhabitants as "the People of the Big Water and others are Assinibouels" (Jérémie 1926:31-32).

People travelling to the Bay from Lake Winnipeg used the Hayes rather than the more dangerous lower Nelson River. Since the Hayes was then thought to join the Nelson, the Hayes might well have been thought to have its source in Lake Winnipeg. There is another reason for this confusion. The main body of water on the upper Hayes River is Oxford Lake, also known as Bottomless or Holy (i.e. Holey) Lake from the "th" Cree "Pe'the'pa'we'ne'pee" (Tyrrell 1934:247 n.1; Rich 1952:61). Yet Joseph Smith, who travelled inland by way of the Hayes River, crossed "the Great Lake," apparently Oxford Lake, 12 days before reaching Wineapeck Sockahagan or Lake Winnipeg (HBCA B.239/a/43 7, 22 September 1756). Further, in 1776, Cocking wrote that he had heard of a Pedlars' post "at a place called Missi-Nippee to the south near Pathepow Nippee [Oxford Lake] in the Sea Lake Track" (Rich 1952:349).



The HBC traders referred to Lake Winnipeg as the "Great Lake" (e.g. Davies 1965:136,168; Graham 1969:258,269), but they also knew it as the Sea Lake, from the original Cree (e.g. Tyrrell 1934:37,223); the Frenchman's Lake (Graham 1969:5); and in a usage dating to 1694, as Christinaux Lake (Graham 1969:5,18).

However, it was the Churchill River which was most commonly called the Missinipi throughout the 1700s. Knight (HBCA B.239/a/1 26,27 June 1715) wrote of the "Churchill River head, or Missheenipih." Fort Churchill was established for the Northern Indian or Chipewyan trade. To prevent conflict, the Cree were initially discouraged from trading there, especially "the upland Indians that belong to the head of Churchill River" but later there was word that "all the upland Inds belonging to Misshenepih or great water" had insisted on going to Churchill (HBCA B.239/b/1 27 January 1719, 20 June 1720).

Mention has been made of James Knight's surprise at Fort Churchill caused by the Indians referring to the "Great Water Lake." In this case, the term applied not to Lake Winnipeg but to South Indian Lake which was known as "Ye Great Lake" (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:89) or the Missinipi (HBCA B.42/a/120b 4 July 1794).

This confusion of the two lakes was widespread at the Bay in the first half of the 1700s. Coats (1852:36-37) wrote that the Churchill River "winds to the westward and

runs upwards of two hundred miles, where, with a small carriage, they arrive on the shore of the great lake, Winnipegon." The short carriage is Missi Falls at the outlet of Southern Indian Lake, about 220 miles from Fort Churchill.

Although the Cree name for the Churchill River is Missinipi, this name seems to have been applied only to its upper parts. The lower Churchill was called Manoteou-sibi which meant Strangers' River according to Jérémie (1926:18), the Manitousibi or Danish River by La Potherie (1968:213), or the Mantua or The Strange River by Graham (1969:249). These are all references to Jens Munck's wintering in 1619-20 and explain Graham's group of Cree, the Mantau-Sepee, whom he lists as trading at Churchill (Graham 1969:206).

It is not clear if the Cree considered the Churchill above the outlet from Lac la Ronge to be the "Big Water." Peter Fidler, returning from the Athabasca, was travelling down the Churchill when he reached the mouth of the Rapid River: "Then we go down the Mis sin ne pee or Churchill River, here it only acquires that name & below, but it is the same water that comes from the Isle-à-la-Crosse" (E.3/1 20 June 1792). Although the Cree may have only called the combined flow of the Rapid and Churchill rivers the Missinipi, the early HBC on the Bay seem to have followed modern usage.

Early use of the term Missinipi suggests that the term

was used to include the Athabasca River/Lake Athabasca region as well as the upper Churchill. The earliest reference to Lake Athabasca was made during the first winter of the HBC re-occupation of York Factory. Knight learned from a North Indian female captive, who spoke Cree "indifferently," that in her country there was "a large River or Streight & that the tide Ebbs & flows at a great rate & yt it hardly freezes some Winters" (HBCA B.239/a/1 4 December 1714). The following summer, Knight spoke to some Missinipi Indians who gave him "a Large Description of a River yt runs down into ye other Sea beyond Churchill River head, or Missheenipih and ye Indian Show'd me some salt & brimstone he brought from thence" (HBCA B.239/a/1 26 June 1715). The next day he continued to learn more: "the Great River it runs into the Sea on the Back of this Country & they tell us there is a Certain Gum or pitch that runs down the river" (ibid:27 June 1715). Illness foiled Knight's attempt to hire some Missinipi Cree to make peace with the Athapaskans "that inhabits to the Westward of them abt the Great River" (ibid: 14 July 1715). Several years later, there is an entry in the Fort Churchill journal concerning 40 canoes of "Missinnepee Indians: or ye Great Water which Lieth at ye head of this River" (HBCA B.42/a/1 10 June 1721). In the spring of 1723, some Cree brought an Athapaskan stranger: "his country lying away to the westward of the Northern Indians' country beyond the great lake

called in Indian Me-Sha-Neppe, or in English the Great Water" (Davies 1965:85).

These references to a Great River and a Great Lake far to the west refer to the Athabasca area rather than the nearby Southern Indian Lake. However, their name in Cree would be Missinipi, the same term as was used for the upper Churchill.

#### 10.5 THE MISSINIPI CREE

Graham includes the Missinipi in his list of Cree groups trading at the Bay either at York Factory (Graham 1969:206) or at both York Factory and Fort Churchill (Isham 1949:316). Kenney (Knight 1932:57 n.136) considered the Missinipi Indians to be "Crees of the upper Churchill River country" while Pentland simply places them on the Churchill River (Smith 1981:269). Both Wright (1968:21) and Gillespie (1975:358) thought they were from the Southern Indian Lake area. However, as we have seen, the term was used not only for northern Cree but also for Cree, and perhaps Ojibwa, from the Lake Winnipeg area.

##### 10.5.1 LAKE WINNIPEG MISSINIPI

Both La Potherie and J r mie refer to Cree groups living at Lake Missinipi by which they meant Lake Winnipeg. La Potherie said that Lake Michinipi was the true country of the Cree (1968:259) and according to J r mie the country

around Lake Missinipi was occupied by "the people of the Big Water, and others are Assinibouels" (1926:32).

The Missinipi were the largest identified group during the first trading season after the HBC regained possession of York Factory in 1714. Of 197 canoes, there were 44 Missinipi, 18 Stone, 11 Mountain, 5 Muscotay, 5 Sturgeon, 22 Upland, 25 Strange and 67 unidentified canoes. None of the Missinipi were said to have come down the Nelson River and many of them were not identified as Missinipi Indians but, instead, were said to have "come from the Missinipi."

In later years, many of the Missinipi came to York factory by way of the Nelson rather than the Hayes since this was the most direct route from the upper Churchill River by way of the Burntwood River. In fact, they were often referred to as the North River Missinipi Indians. Other Missinipi, however, came down the Hayes, often with groups known to have lived to the south. These were seemingly from the Lake Winnipeg area. When Henday went inland, it was expected that he would pass through the country of the Missinipi: "Observe when you pass the misinipee Country and Down near the Earchithinue Country whether the great Lake is a Lake or not, or whether it is an open Sea" (HBCA A.11/114 8 September 1754). In the later 1700s, there is mention of the Lake Indians from the Lake Winnipeg area. These Lake Indians were Ojibwa (HBCA B.239/a/80 10 June 1782), probably the same group whom

Graham lists as being the Mistehay Sakahegan or Big Lake Indians. However, this latter term is never used in the journals and it is possible that these Lake Ojibwa were the Missinipi who travelled to York Factory by way of the Hayes River.

#### 10.5.2 SIZE OF GROUP

It is difficult to determine the number of Missinipi Indians trading at the Bay. Except for the Beaver Cree, they are the only group who Graham said traded at both Fort Churchill and York Factory. However, few groups were ever identified at Fort Churchill. Further, it is not clear if all the Missinipi Cree at York Factory were from the Churchill River area. In 1742, 44 canoes of Missinipi were identified at Fort Churchill and 17 canoes of North River Missinipi came to York Factory (HBCA B.42/a/23; B.239/a/23) giving a total of 61 canoes. In 1761, 58 canoes of North River Missinipi were recorded at York Factory (HBCA B.239/a/48) although no identifications are available from Fort Churchill. This minimum figure of some 60 canoes suggests at least 90 males. However, at this period, the number also includes Athabasca Cree, who were included with the Missinipi.

#### 10.6 THE ATHABASCA CREE

The Athabasca Indians were first identified in a letter

written to York Factory from Fort Churchill in 1755: "many of ye Athupuscaw Indians not Coming down to Trade Last Summer & those that did Come being Poorly Gooded is the Chief reason of the Decline of our Trade" (HBCA B.42/b/1b 6 February 1755, quoted in Smith 1976:423). It is clear that the group was already well known at Churchill and was familiar to the recipient of the letter who had been Factor at Churchill from 1749-1752.

The Athabasca Indians were Cree and not an Athapaskan group, since Graham lists them with his trading Cree (1969:206). As well, Samuel Hearne (1971:225,227) clearly considered the Athabasca Indians to be Southern or Cree. Confirming evidence is found in the descriptions of the smallpox epidemic of 1781 from Fort Churchill: "most of the prinsaple Northern Indians are all dead together with that valuable tribe of Southern [Cree] Indians called the Athapuscaw Indians" (HBCA B.42/a/103 30 April 1784).

However, after the smallpox epidemic, the term Athabasca came to be applied to the Chipewyan, at least in the immediate hinterland to the Bay, reflecting their movement into the boreal forest just as Gillespie (1975) documented as occurring in the west in the same period. Five canoes of Cree from west-central Manitoba came to York Factory bringing two canoes of "Northern [Chipewyan] or Athapiscow Indians- the latter are strange and speak a language unknown to any of us" (HBCA B.239/a/90 6 July

1790). It was perhaps this same group, "a tribe of Chipewyan or Athapascow Indians," who returned several years later (HBCA B.239/b/55 27 August 1794). A similar terminological change occurred at Fort Churchill. The Seal River route to Southern Indian Lake, which had fallen into disuse, was said to have been "formerly known to the S[outher]n Indians and Athapescau Indians" (HBCA B.42/a/119 18 July 1794). A group of "25 families of Athapiscow & Archipwayan Indians" asked for a post on the Seal River since it would attract "great Numbers of their Countrymen would come from the Athapiscow lake" (HBCA B.42/a/118 27,29 July 1793).

#### 10.7 THE "R" OR ATHABASCAN CREE DIALECT

It has been suggested that there was once an "r" dialect spoken by the Athabasca Cree (Pentland 1978:106-07; Smith 1981:256; 1987:439) but since the evidence is uncertain, the question has remained unresolved. The question is of importance since the existence of an "r" dialect in the northwest corner of Cree range would indicate that its speakers had been separated for some time from the neighbouring "th" speakers to the east and "y" speakers to the south.

The basis for an "r" dialect is found in Samuel Hearne's (1958) account of his attempts to reach the Arctic Ocean between 1769-1772, published in 1795. Here, he refers



often to the "Athapuscow" Indians and also to "Lake Athapuscow," the name he mistakenly gave to Great Slave Lake. His first use of the term is footnoted "By mistake in my former Journal and Draft called Arathapescow" (Hearne 1958:lxvii n.). This prior usage was well-known since his travels had been important in discussions regarding the existence of a Northwest Passage at the time of Cook's last voyage. His map had been published in 1784 and 1787 and an excerpt from his journal had been printed in 1784 in the introduction to Cook's third and last voyage (Hearne 1911:18-19).

Hearne's ambivalence over the term is reflected elsewhere: while at Cumberland House in 1774-75, he referred to the "Arathapeskaw or Athapus-cow Indians" and to "the Grand Arathapeskaw or Atha-Pus-cow River" (Tyrrell 1934:106,158). Thus, almost immediately after his journey, he had doubts about the term. No other HBC employees used the "r" form of Athabasca. Cocking, who succeeded Hearne at Cumberland referred to the "A'Thop uskow" or "Thopiskow" Indians (e.g. Rich 1951:12,66), the form used in turn by his successors (e.g. Rich 1952:105, 200). The Fort Churchill journals from 1761 to 1775 refer only to the form "Athapuscow" and this form was consistently used by Hearne when he was Factor in 1776-1783.

Neither Mackenzie nor his contemporaries use the "r" form and, apart from Hearne, only several instances of its

use occur. In the spring of 1776, Alexander Henry the Elder travelled from Beaver Lake to the upper Churchill to intercept trading Indians. After first using the term "Lake Arabuthcow," and then, later, "Athabasca" he explains in a footnote that "Arabuthcow" is "Called also Athapuscow and Athabasca" (Henry 1969:208,267,326 n.). Henry's account, published in 1809, is not in the form of a daily journal but was written from "details, from time to time committed to paper, [which] form the subject matter of the present volume" (p.xlv). In a 1781 memorandum, he uses the form "Orabuscow" (1908:578-587).

Peter Pond, the first recorded European to reach the Athabasca, in 1778, has left three maps and an accompanying memorandum made in 1785 and, perhaps, 1787 (Wagner 1955; Davidson 1967:259-266). Here, he consistently refers to the Athabasca as "Arabasca" or "Araubouska."

The use of the "r" form of Athabasca by Henry and Pond was apparently independent of Hearne's accounts, which were not published until 1784 and would support the existence of such a dialect. However, it is difficult to explain the absence of any other evidence, especially in the Fort Churchill records. It cannot simply be blamed on the extinction of the group after the smallpox epidemic.

There is a circumstance, and possible explanation, common to these three men: the use of Chipewyan informants. Samuel Hearne was guided to the Coppermine by Matonabbee, a

Chipewyan who could also speak Cree (Hearne 1958:223). Henry the Elder obtained his information about the Athabasca from a large group of "Chepewyans or Rocky Mountain Indians" with whom "we conversed...in the Cree or Cristinaux language" (Henry 1969:331-333). Pond obtained much of his information from the "Archipoints" or Chipewyan, and the "Gens de Couteau Rouge" or Yellowknife (Davidson 1967:262,265).

Henry and Pond both use the Cree word for "strange person," anglicized by the HBC as Archithinue. In "y" Cree the word is found as ayahtciyiniwak (Mandelbaum 1979:9). In "r" dialect, it should be found as ayahtciriniwak yet Henry, on the basis of his Chipewyan informants, uses Kiratchinini and Y-atch-inin. Pond on his map uses Iotchinine and Iotchyniny, neither of which reflect the "r" dialect. The terms used by both Henry and Pond are an admixture of dialects, since the "-inine" suffix reflects an eastern Algonquian dialect (Pentland 1978:106) which we have already seen reflected in the French documents which refer variously to the Christinaux, Clistino and Knistenaux.

Pentland (1978:107) states that despite the fact that in the 1800s "various grammars and dictionaries mention [the pronouns] nira 'I' and iriniw 'person' as examples of the r-dialect," no vocabularies exist. Joseph Howse (1844:316), a most competent Cree linguist and long-experienced HBC trader in the Saskatchewan District in the early 1800s, had

to refer to a 1666 Algonquian grammar for an example of an "r" dialect. H.E. Hives (1943), who was a missionary at Lac La Ronge, makes no mention of the "r" dialect in his Cree grammar. Only two linguists, Father Lacombe (1874:xv) from central Alberta and J.Horden (1881:2) from James Bay, briefly referred to the "r" dialect: the Cree of Athabasca use nira,-kira,-wira. However, neither man presented any further documentation.

However, on the basis of Henry, Pond and Hearne as well as a few "r" words in a "th" vocabulary written at the Bay by Isham in 1743, Pentland (1978:107) concludes that an "r" dialect did exist which was spoken by "a group of Cree living on Southern Indian Lake and also on the upper Churchill towards Lake Athabasca."

Neither Alexander Mackenzie's (1970:140-148) extensive Cree vocabulary collected while he was in the Athabasca area nor that of Graham (1969:207-209), collected at the Bay, show any "r" dialect words. David Thompson (1968:207-209) discussed Cree dialects saying that "the frequent th of the parent tongue is changed to the letter y ...[but] R, rough, cannot be pronounced by any Native." Isham's vocabulary shows several supposed "r" words but his lengthy transcriptions of Cree dialogues (1949:47-64) are replete with "r's" not found in Cree.

The presence of an "r" dialect among the Cree of the upper Churchill and Athabasca areas would support an

isolation from other Cree dialect groups and, perhaps, that they were long term occupants of the area. Nevertheless, in view of the few data supporting the existence of an "r" dialect, and the doubts raised regarding the three main sources, further evidence must be forthcoming before it can be accepted.

#### 10.8 THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MISSINIPI AND ATHABASCA CREE

The Athabasca and Missinipi are treated as one group, since the former were subsumed under the latter in the early HBC records. For example, the Athabasca Cree were never identified in the York Factory journals as being part of the trading flotillas yet, according to Graham (1969:206), they traded there as well as at Fort Churchill. This is supported by other data. The factor at Churchill accused his counterpart at York Factory of attracting Indians who should have traded at Churchill saying "there has been Several Cannoes of Athuppiscow Indians down to York Fort to trade" (HBCA B.42/b/3 7 August 1757). That year the York Factory journal simply mentions North River Missinipi Indians. Similarly, the factor at York Factory had "been Informed the A thup piss Caw Indians are gone to warr also that there will be a great many of them Down at Both York Fort & Churchill the next Year" (HBCA B.42/b/11 18 August 1764). One of the Cree guides for the York Factory inland winterers, the Bee, who was first mentioned at Fort

Churchill in 1765, was said to have been from Grass River but "Joyned the Athopascow Indians on their Journey either to York or Churchill Fort" (HBCA A.11/116 24 August 1786).

First-hand data from the Athabasca after the smallpox epidemic of 1781 indicate that the Cree were not inhabitants of Lake Athabasca but, instead, occupied the lower Athabasca River. This suggests that the Athabasca Cree camps on the Slave River reported by Hearne were probably only sporadic and did not reflect a permanent occupation.

On his map of April 1785, Pond shows the "Araubaska" Indians to the south of Lake Athabasca along the length of the Athabasca River. They are bordered on the south by the Beaver Cree and in the west by the Athapaskan Beaver Indians while the Chipewyan extend from the east end of Lake Athabasca almost to Hudson Bay (Wagner 1955). Although Pond does not describe the groups in the Athabasca area, he stated that there were two major different Indian groups in the northwest, Eastern and Western. These are the Algonquians and the Athapaskans with whom he included all non-Algonquians in the west. These Eastern and Western groups were separated by a line drawn "depuis la latitude 40' Long 95' Jusques a la Latitude 60' et Long. 130' Ouest" - that is from about modern Saint Paul- Minneapolis to the mouth of the Athabasca River. Again, there is the suggestion that the Cree did not extend beyond Lake Athabasca.

In outlining the area occupied by the Cree, Mackenzie said that its western border followed "the head of Beaver River to the Elk River [Athabasca], runs along its banks to its discharge in the Lake of the Hills [Lake Athabasca]; from which it may be carried back East, to Isle-à-la-Crosse, and so to Churchill by the Missinipi" (Mackenzie 1970:132).

In Mackenzie's day, the Cree were south of the lake. Mackenzie (1970:129) stated that the first Fort of the Forks, established in 1790 near the junction of the Clearwater and Athabasca rivers, was built for a group of Cree "who visit the adjacent country" while Fort Chipewyan, built on Lake Athabasca in 1788, was "intended for that nation" but Mackenzie had difficulties in attracting them there (p.382). In this regard it is of interest that the first post in the Athabasca area, established by Pond in 1778, was not on Lake Athabasca but was 40 miles up river and was not moved to the Lake until 1788.

There is little evidence that the Cree moved into the upper Churchill River and to the Athabasca as an immediate result of the introduction of the fur trade on the Bay in 1682. Most arguments are based on Mackenzie:

When this country was formerly invaded by the Knistenaux, they found the Beaver Indians inhabiting the land about Portage la Loche; and the adjoining tribes were those whom they called slaves (1970:238).

The Cree then drove the Beaver Indians to Peace River and the "slaves" to the Slave River. When the Cree made

peace with the Beaver, they selected Peace Point as the boundary, about 80 km by air from Lake Athabasca.

The culmination of this movement, the event at Peace Point, is variously dated, often in light of a historic migration of the Cree. Morton (1973:12) places it after the smallpox epidemic of 1781 but this, only 11 years before Mackenzie's observations, is too recent. Yerbury (1981:34) dates it in the spring of 1765, three years after Matonabbee had been sent from Churchill to establish peace between the Cree and "a different Tribe that Never see a European nor any off ths Companys settlements before."

However, Matonabbee's activities were carried out to the east of Peace Point. Matonabbee was the son of a Chipewyan but was raised by Cree (Hearne 1958:222). Hearne, who knew Matonabbee well and the Athapaskan groups, wrote that his mission involved "the Northern [i.e. Chipewyan] Indians and the Athapuscow Tribe, who until then had always been at war with each other." Matonabbee's efforts took several years. In his first attempt, he managed to free a captured Chipewyan. He proceeded further into Athabasca Cree territory to discuss a conciliation, but was nearly murdered by the same leaders he had sought out, so he returned to Churchill. The following year, he returned with a large band and was able to intimidate the small camps of Cree he met while he "traversed the whole country," thus re-establishing peace. However, his followers left for the



barrens in the summer and Matonabbee was again almost killed by the Cree. Despite these set-backs, Matonabbee

persevered with courage...to visit the Athapuscow Indians for several years successively; and at length...[brought about] a lasting peace, but also ... [established] a trade and reciprocal interest between the two nations (Hearne 1958:225-227).

The tenor of Hearne's account would suggest he was describing an incident different from the truce between the Beaver and Cree at Peace Point. Matonabbee was arranging a truce between the Athabasca and the Chipewyan and their close relatives, the Yellowknife. Hearne spoke of Matonabbee's cohorts as leaving for the Barrens for the summer, an activity well documented for the Chipewyan but never reported for the forest-living Beaver to the west.

Further, Mackenzie is very vague about the details of Peace Point, yet one of his guides to the Arctic Ocean, the English Chief, had been a follower of Matonabbee (Mackenzie 1970:163) and must have been quite familiar with all the events associated with Matonabbee and the Lake Athabasca area. Mackenzie (1970:516) knew the English Chief well and as late as 1806 wrote to his cousin, Roderic, to ask the English Chief for added details of Hearne's journey.

The Athabasca Cree were in the Lake Athabasca area by the early 1750s when they were so identified in the HBC records, so it is doubtful that the incident at Peace Point would occur as late as 1765. A map drawn in 1760 and based,

in part, on information from a Beaver Cree shows Lake Athabasca which is labelled "The Athapeeska Ind. Countrey" while Great Slave Lake is called "the Northern Indian Lake" (Gillespie 1981:166; Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:239). The Athabasca Cree were associated with Lake Athabasca, not the Athabasca River, which was called the Elk River by the Cree and only "commonly called by the white people, the Athabasca" (Mackenzie 1970:128). The Cree word Athabasca translates as "(where) there are plants one after the other, a reference to the Peace-Athabasca delta region" (Goddard 1981:168) and refers to the shallow southwest shore of the lake rather than the steep-banked river.

A much more likely candidate for the event at Peace Point is the Cree leader Swan who was sent on peace missions from York Factory between 1715 and 1721 (see section 5.8 above). It was Swan who told Knight of the tar deposits and the great lake beyond the upper Churchill. Most important, Swan was not sent to make peace with the Northern or Chipewyan Indians, which was Stewart's purpose, but rather with "the Northern Indians friends" (Knight 1932:163). He described the Athabasca country well with its wood buffalo, and "high Mountainous land & the River very Deep & broad" (HBCA B.239/a/3 5 June 1717).

James Smith (1987:435) states that "the weight of the evidence now indicates that the Cree were as far west as the Peace River long before the advent of European traders."

Seemingly, he means that before the arrival of the HBC at the Bay, the Cree occupied the entire lower Peace River downriver from junction with the Smoky, west of Lesser Slave Lake. However, there is little to support such a westward territory.

Pond's map of 1785 describes the area between the Peace and Athabasca thus: "These parts are the least frequented by the Natives it being a War road." Mackenzie wrote that Lesser Slave Lake

is well known to the Knistenaux, who are among the inhabitants of the plains on the banks of the [Saskatchewan] river; for formerly, when they used to come to make war in this country, they came in their canoes to that lake, and left them there; from thence there is a beaten path all the way to the Fork [of the Smoky and Peace rivers] which was their war road (1970:249).

This war road followed the head of Beaver River (Mackenzie 1970:253) and was the route that Pink's companions took when they separated from him in November of 1767 on the Beaver River to go on a raid to the west (see section 6.3.4). However, Mackenzie is clear that the Cree were not occupants of the area but only visited it on raids, an observation which Pink also made: "it is not Often that Maney of those indaines Comes in Land So far as this Way Except the are for Warr" (HBCA B.239/a/58 13 November 1767).

Smith (1981:443-444) places great reliance on modern oral traditions that the "the lands to the east of the Peace

River were always Cree, while those lands to the west were Beaver." It is not clear how much reliance can be placed on modern traditions given the wide dissemination of Euro-Canadian interpretations of Indian history by way of missionaries, teachers and traders and, more importantly, the great culling of Indian Elders through disease over at least the last 200 years. For example, in northwestern Saskatchewan, after the smallpox epidemic of 1781, there were only 40 Cree families left on the upper Churchill and lower Beaver rivers and a small "party" of Cree on the lower Athabasca (Mackenzie 1970:125,129).

Regardless of the precise time of the alliance formed at Peace Point, it is clear that Cree were familiar with the upper Churchill and the Athabasca River when the HBC regained York Factory in 1714. Mackenzie places their movement north into the Athabasca River and to Lake Athabasca as occurring within, at least, traditional memory, but whether this was before or after the introduction of the fur trade at the Bay is unknown. Certainly, the Cree occupation of the upper Churchill predated the immediate memory of 1790. In describing the history of Isle-à-la-Crosse, 150 km to the south of Methy Portage, Mackenzie could only write:

Who the original people were that were driven from it ... by the Knistenaux is not known, as not a single vestige remains of them. The latter, and the Chepewyans, are the only people that have been known here; and it is evident that the [latter] consider themselves

as strangers (1970:125).

#### 10.9 THE CREE OF THE LOWER CHURCHILL RIVER

The published literature on the upper Churchill River, above Frog Portage, during the early fur trade period is extensive and includes maps and travel descriptions as well as fur trade journals. However, there are almost no descriptions of the lower Churchill system, below Frog Portage, from even the twentieth century. Downes (1943) has written an account of his travels from Pelican Narrows to Nueltin Lake by way of Reindeer Lake. Several early geologists with the Geological Survey of Canada, or its predecessors, have given brief general descriptions dating to the late 1800s (e.g. Bell 1881; McInnes 1913). Much earlier is the terse journal of George Simpson's (1931) journey from York Factory by way of the Burntwood and Churchill River in 1824. David Thompson has left an account of his journey from Reindeer Lake to Lake Athabasca and his wintering at Reindeer Lake in 1796-1797 (Thompson 1916:133-167).

Yet the area is of interest, as even here the Cree were supposed to have expanded as a result of the fur trade (e.g. Hlady 1964:26-27; Jenness 1963:283-284; Ray 1974:19; Yerbury 1976:243,248). Crucial to the discussion is the location of the Chipewyan, or rather of their southern and eastern borders.

### 10.9.1 CREE AND CHIPEWYAN ON THE COAST

There are two opposing views of the location of the Chipewyan when the traders appeared at the Bay. One view is that they were originally forest dwellers in the Lake Athabasca and Peace River area, perhaps as far north as Great Slave Lake, who were drawn eastward in order to be able to trade at Fort Churchill. This view was advanced by Father Petitot in the 1880s, adopted in the early Handbook of North American Indians (Hodge 1971:95-6) and also accepted by Birket-Smith (1930), a member of the influential Fifth Thule Expedition of the early 1920s.

A contrary view was advanced in the early and mid-1900s. Here, the Chipewyan were seen as forest dwellers who occasionally used the transitional forest; their boundaries extended south to the Churchill River, east to Hudson Bay (Jenness 1963:385) even as far as the Nelson River (Hlady 1964:41). However, they were driven into the transitional forest and the barrens when the Cree obtained guns from the traders.

Recently, these views have been modified. Gillespie (1975) and Smith (1975) suggest that before contact, the Chipewyan were already adapted to the transitional and barren zones, occupying the "edge of the forest" from Seal River west to Lake Athabasca. Yerbury, as he has with the Cree, accepts the more traditional view and considers that

the Chipewyan occupied the barrens northeast of Great Slave Lake but, with the beginning of the fur trade, they expanded to the east and southeast.

It is clear that at least some Chipewyan groups lived in the transitional forest and barrens to the immediate north and west of Churchill at the beginning of the fur trade, where they are mentioned in the earliest accounts. However, their presence has gone unrecognized since they were not referred to by the familiar terms of Northern or Chipewyan Indians. Instead, they were known to the early traders as the "Louzy" Indians or by their anglicized Cree name, "Ekwa." The term first appears on one of the earliest maps, 1686, giving details of western Hudson Bay (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:53). Here, north of the Nelson River, a river drains a large lake named Lake Poux, i.e. Louse Lake which could be either the Churchill River and Southern Indian/Northern Indian (i.e. Cree/Chipewyan) Lake system or the Seal River and Tadoule Lake system.

In 1689, the HBC tried to establish a post north of Churchill at what was called Buffalo River. The ship's captain was told

... tho the Louzy Indians whoe live nearest the Sea have but little Beavor, they may have other Commodities.... But the Doggside Indians are a considerable nation and have great quantities of Beavor these you must endeavour to draw down to Deale with you (Rich 1957:66).

The purpose of the post was to create "a Trade with the Poet Indians" and with the Dogrib: "those two nations yearely Commercing together" (p.58). Although it might be surprising that the HBC would consider opening a trade with the Assiniboin from a post north of Churchill, it will be remembered that Marest, in 1694, had said that the Dogrib extended south almost to the Assiniboin and the two groups were "almost always at war" (1968:128).

In 1694-1695, Father Marest (1968:127-128) described the Indians at the Bay. Besides those trading at Fort Bourbon on the Hayes were

still others whose home is further north ... such as the Ikovirinioucks who are about a hundred leagues from here. But they are at war with the Indians of this country and do not trade with the fort. Further off, the Eskimo are to be found; and along side the Ikovirinioucks a great nation allied to them called the Alimouspigut.

La Potherie (1968:258) briefly mentions that the local Cree at York Factory were "at war with the Hakouhirmious" and goes on to discuss the "Attimospiquaies" or Dogrib. Jérémie (1926:20) does not refer to the Louzy Indians but seems to incorporate all the Athapaskans under the term Dogrib.

From these various accounts we learn that the Louzy Indians lived north of Churchill; they were not Eskimo but lived south of them; they lived in a beaver-poor country; they were at war with the local Cree; and they were separate



from, but allied to, the Dogrib. The only group fitting this description, and almost perfectly so, are the eastern Chipewyan. However, there is no evidence that they were recent arrivals from the far west, from either Great Slave Lake or Lake Athabasca where, instead, the "Dogrib" were found. Further they lacked beaver, as would a group from the transitional forest and barrens, but there is no evidence that they had been recently driven from the forest. Though they were said to be at war with the Cree, there is no evidence that this was a result of the fur trade. Indeed, the derogatory name used for them would indicate that the hostility was of long standing. Coincidentally, the Inuit of the lower Mackenzie River also referred to their Athapaskan neighbours, their traditional enemies, as "louse larva" (Petitot 1876:xix in Hodge 1971:51).

Here, in the lower Churchill River, the Cree were thought to have invaded new territory as a result of the fur trade and to have driven out the former inhabitants. Again, however, we see that there were very few changes in territory documented in the historic record and little to suggest that the Cree sought out new lands as a result of the fur trade.

#### 10.9.2 CREE AND CHIPEWYAN IN THE CENTRAL NORTHERN BOREAL FOREST

Very few published data exist for the country between,

roughly, Southern Indian Lake and Reindeer Lake. Fur trade posts were established in the area in the 1790s, but these have not been researched in detail by the writer. One published account exists however, a description of David Thompson's journey from Reindeer Lake to Lake Athabasca and a very general account of his wintering on the former lake. Although the Chipewyan were trading at posts on the lake in his day, and on posts on the adjacent Churchill River, they were recent arrivals in the area and the former inhabitants were Cree.

Unlike Mackenzie who wrote of a Cree invasion into the west and north, Thompson wrote of a Cree retreat to the south, similar to the expansion of the Chipewyan south to the upper Churchill River described by Gillespie (1975). Thompson (1968:131) thought that when the Blackfoot Confederacy "took possession of the Great Plains the [Cree] ... from the rigorous clime of sixty one degrees north, went southward to fifty six degrees north" allowing the Chipewyans to occupy the vacated area. Thus, according to Thompson, the northern border of the Cree shifted from a line through the south shore of Great Slave Lake to a line through Methy Portage and the south end of Reindeer Lake. Since he was never in the Great Slave Lake area, Thompson was probably basing this on Samuel Hearne's mention of Cree camps on the lower Slave River.

In 1796, Thompson, accompanied by two young Chipewyan

guides, was midway between Wollaston Lake and the east end of Lake Athabasca when he passed Manito Falls:

... while the Nahathaways [Cree] possessed the country, they made offerings to it... they have retired to warmer climates and the Chipewyan have taken this place who make no offerings to anything (1968:144).

That winter, Thompson stayed at a post on Reindeer Lake

... which has become the country of the Chipewyan .... Their lands, which they claim as their own country; and to which no other people have a right, are those eastward of the Rein Deer's and Manito [wollaston] Lakes to Churchill Factory and northward along the interior of the sea coast; all other lands they hunt on belong to the Nahathaways, who have returned to the Southwestward (p.161,162).

According to Thompson the Cree occupied the forest north of the Churchill River but not the transitional forest and Barrens east of Reindeer Lake. That the Cree were at least occasional inhabitants of the area is supported by the pictographs seen on the west shore of Reindeer Lake by Peter Fidler in 1807 (HBCA E.3/3 14 July 1807) and those at other sites between southern Reindeer lake and Grenville Lake to the east (Russell 1971).

Norton's map of 1760 (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:89), based on information from the Cree, shows "The Nearest Northern Inds Country" to be west of Tadoule Lake, well north of the Churchill River. It was bounded on the west by a river route from the Churchill River to Lake Athabasca, either the Reindeer Lake system or the Mudjatik River to the

west. It was perhaps the latter since no large lake is shown and the Mudjatik is said to have been a short cut to the Athabasca (Tyrrell 1934:428 n.1; 476 n.1). Regardless of the exact river system, the territory corresponds to Thompson's description of Chipewyan territory as being north of the Churchill and between Hudson Bay and Wollaston Lake at the east end of Lake Athabasca.

#### 10.10 SUMMARY

The Northern tier of Cree groups, like their relatives to the south, are usually considered to have expanded both to the north and west as a result of the fur trade. However, the evidence shows that there was little change in their borders until 1781. Although raids were carried out, these were against groups so distant that they seem unlikely to have resulted in much territorial gain. The camps reported on the lower Slave River were perhaps seasonal in nature and, although the Athabasca Cree were associated with Lake Athabasca at an early date, they appear to have been based on the lower Athabasca River to the south. There is little evidence that they occupied central northern Alberta, the Lesser Slave Lake area, until after the 1781 and the establishment of posts in the area.

There is also little evidence that the first 100 years of the fur trade resulted in changes of Chipewyan territory. Their core area seems to have been in the transitional

forest between Nueltin Lake and Lake Athabasca until their movement south along the length of the Churchill River after 1781.

## 11. THE ASSINIBOIN

### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

It is commonly accepted that the Assiniboin, who were allied with the Cree, accompanied them in their invasion of the west. However, there have been very few attempts to demonstrate the movement of the Assiniboin through historical data and the premise is usually accepted without further discussion. The most detailed treatment is by Arthur Ray (1974) who, to a great extent, followed a brief discussion by Walter Hlady (1964) which in turn was based only on readily available sources. Sharrock (1974) has used historic data to trace the changing societal relations between the Cree and Assiniboin as they both moved west while Anderson (1970) examined the origins of the Stoney Assiniboin of Alberta, focusing on the nineteenth century but offering tentative hypotheses of their origins based, again, on the more accessible published sources. Earlier studies (e.g. Lowie 1910, Hodge 1971, and Jenness 1963) were strong influences on later syntheses of the history of Plains Indian groups but, again, were based on published data.

Ironically, despite the crucial role played by Alexander Mackenzie in discussions of Western Cree history, he made only passing references to the Assiniboin (Mackenzie

1970:111, 116-117, 415). The same is true of Mandelbaum who speaks of the Assiniboin as being both the "cultural godfathers" of the Plains Cree (1979:8) and crucial allies in aiding the Cree advance (p.262), yet scarcely refers to them in his historical sketch of Cree history (1979:8,262). It is puzzling that the Assiniboin, despite being the most numerous group on the northeastern plains and parklands in the eighteenth century, have been so greatly ignored.

An examination of the historical background of the Assiniboin is important to discussions of Western Cree history. Given the view that the Assiniboin accompanied the Cree west, their history should support the accepted history of the Cree. However, a re-examination of the data indicates that Assiniboin groups were in the west before the introduction of the fur trade. Their history cannot be used to support a historic migration of the Cree.

## 11.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to Alexander Mackenzie, the Assiniboin were from the south and had progressed northwest to "the plains on and about the source and banks of the Saskatchiwine and Assiniboin rivers" (1970:415). They had separated from the Sioux "at a time beyond our knowledge" and "have been generally obliged, from various causes, to court their [Cree] alliance" (1970:111,117). It is from these brief statements that the accepted history of the Assiniboin has

been derived.

Galatin, in his influential synthesis of North American Indian groups of 1836, acknowledged that "the only detailed account we have of [the Assiniboin] was given by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and is confirmed by subsequent English writers" (1973:123). Galatin inferred from Mackenzie's statements that the Assiniboin

formed an intimate connexion with the Knistinaux and, jointly with them, drove away the ancient inhabitants of the main Saskachawin and of the north branch of the same river. They also continued to occupy the country bordering on the [Assiniboine] river. It is probable from its situation north of the Yantons, that this was their original seat (1973:123-124).

John Richardson, a member of the famous Franklin Arctic Expedition of 1819-1822 obtained a similar reading from Mackenzie but does not indicate that this was his source:

[The Assiniboin] originally entered this part of the country under the protection of the Crees, and in concert with them attacked and drove to the westward the former inhabitants [Gros Ventre, Blackfoot and Sarcee] of the Banks of the Saskatchewan (Franklin 1970:108-109).

The agreement of these authorities, derived from Mackenzie, influenced all later discussions of Assiniboin history. This history, with minor variations, presupposed an alliance between the Assiniboin and the Cree and their common invasion into the northern plains (e.g. Lowie 1910, Jenness 1963, Mandelbaum 1979 Hlady 1964, Ray 1974, Hodge 1971 Sharrock 1974). All these assume that the Cree led the



Assiniboin into the west although the question of primacy is most often vaguely treated or ignored. Mandelbaum (1979:19,21,31,38) makes only passing references to the Cree- Assiniboin alliance. His most detailed statement is very similar to the account found in Mackenzie, published almost 150 years earlier:

... the alliance with the Cree was cemented, presumably because of the prior acquisition of guns by the Cree. Their old enemies, the Dakota, were repulsed, and later, the wave of Cree conquest swept over the Gros Ventre and Blackfoot in the west (1979:31).

One point of disagreement among twentieth century writers has been the location of the Assiniboin homeland at the beginning of the fur trade period. Since it was always realized, even in the 1600s, that the Assiniboin had split off recently from the Sioux, it was generally considered that the Assiniboin were located in northwestern Ontario and the adjacent northern United States. Overly literal interpretations of what were impressionistic statements in the Jesuit Relations regarding the Assiniboin led to the conclusion that their eastern limits were immediately west of Lake Nipigon or that their homeland was in the Rainy Lake/Lake of the Woods area (Hodge 1971:45; Lowie 1910:7; Jenness 1963:308 Ray 1974:6,11). Others have extended their western range to southeastern Manitoba at an early date or at least by the late 1600s (Kehoe 1981:284; Hlady 1964:32).

Clinton J. Wheeler (1977) has rejected a homeland for the Assiniboin in northwestern Ontario and the Boundary Waters region. He points out the vagueness and contradictory nature of the Jesuit Relations data; the lack of concrete evidence from La Vérendrye for Assiniboin east of Lake Winnipeg; and the evidence from Henry Kelsey for an Assiniboin presence west of the Manitoba Escarpment in 1691. Wheeler (1977:120) concludes that by the late 1600s the "Parkland ecozone from Lake Winnipeg to the Touchwood Hills in Saskatchewan is the more probable territory." As we shall see, Wheeler is simply following Ray, but moving Ray's eastern limits of the Assiniboin further west.

The seventeenth century data from the Great Lakes area do not speak of the west. Only Hlady and Ray have addressed the problem of the western extension of the Assiniboin. Hlady did not have access to archival sources. Indeed, some years ago, he told the writer that much of his 1964 article was written while carrying out fieldwork in northern Manitoba. Although he illustrates the movement of the Assiniboin into the west (1964:33 fig 2) it is clear that he is simply reflecting the chronology of the exploration of the west.

Ray (1974:12) points out that the earliest data regarding the western range of the Assiniboin are from Henry Kelsey's 1691 journal. From these he concludes "that the Assiniboin occupied the land along the Carrot River and

southward as far as the Touchwood Hills. This probably marked the western limits of their territory since the Gros Ventre held the upper Qu'Appelle valley and the lower South Saskatchewan River" (1974:12). However, his map of the range of the Assiniboin to 1690 shows their western border as extending beyond the Forks of the Saskatchewan, off the limits of his map (1974:5 Figure 1). Between 1690 and 1720

the southern boundaries of the Assiniboine territory in Saskatchewan do not appear to have changed very much... The Touchwood Hills still marked the limits of their territory..., and they lived mostly to the north and east of that area.... After 1720, the Assiniboine expansion seems to have occurred primarily in a west-northwesterly direction, through the parkland corridor (1974:21).

Ray's discussion differs from all others in that he recognizes two major groups of Assiniboin: the Northern Senipoet or Woodland Assiniboin and the Southern Senipoet or Plains Assiniboin. In 1714, the Northern Senipoets, with the Cree,

jointly held land between the lower Saskatchewan and upper Nelson rivers and the middle Churchill River between Southern Indian Lake and Reindeer Lake... [By 1720] the territory of the Woodland Assiniboine and Cree reached as far as the head of the Churchill River (1974:19).

Through the rest of the eighteenth century, "the main course of movement of the Assiniboine had been to the northwest. Thereafter they began to drift increasingly to the south" (p.94). By 1809, according to information from

Alexander Henry the Younger, nearly two-thirds of the Assiniboin were between the Souris and Qu'Appelle valleys, one-third between the South Saskatchewan and Battle rivers and only a remnant remained in the forest north of the North Saskatchewan (1974:96). This, however, is almost identical to the range Ray illustrates for circa 1765 (1974:22 Fig 9).

Recently, there has been much discussion of the distribution of Assiniboin and Ojibwa of the early historic period in northwestern Ontario and southeastern Manitoba. Opinions differed as to whether the territory of the Assiniboin or of the Ojibwa best coincided with the distribution of archaeological sites.

Charles Bishop and M. Estelle Smith (1975) argued from the historical data that, at contact (circa 1620), "the Assiniboin occupied the entire International border region from Lake Superior to west of Lake of the Woods" (1975:56). Their western boundary, using archaeological data, was apparently southeastern Manitoba (p.58), while the reader was referred to Mandelbaum's work for a discussion of further Cree and Assiniboin movements (p.57).

Both Bishop and Smith (1975:57) and Ray (1974:6) place importance on the Jesuit Relation of 1658, mis-dated by the former to 1637, where a group of Indians "thirty-five leagues or thereabouts from Lake Alimibeg [Lake Nipigon] is called the Nation of Assinipoualak or 'Warriors of the Rock'" (Thwaites 1896-1901 vol 44:249). This was read to

mean that the Assiniboin were located one or two days' travel or about 100 miles (160 km) west of Lake Nipigon (Ray 1974:6). However, this is the Relation of Father Dreuilletes, based on hearsay evidence and written at Tadoussac (see section 4.2.1 above). Thus no weight can be placed on this reference, other than that the Assiniboin were beyond Lake Nipigon.

K.A.C. Dawson (1976), in a critical examination of both the scholarly literature and the historic record, rejects a historic occupation of the Assiniboin in northwestern Ontario. Dawson is an archaeologist whose interests lie in northwestern Ontario and so does not address the question of the western limits of the Assiniboin. He concludes that "a review of the historic record ... clearly places the Assiniboin around Lake Winnipeg with only transitory appearances in Ontario ... for the purposes of trade" (1976:169).

### 11.3 THE WESTERN LIMITS OF THE ASSINIBOIN

There are five bodies of information concerning the western territory of the Assiniboin before Henday's first-hand observations along the Saskatchewan made in 1754-1755: the 17th century French descriptions from Hudson Bay; Henry Kelsey's fragmentary journal kept in the summer of 1691 when he was in eastern Saskatchewan; Captain Swan's peace mission to the Athabasca in the late 1710s; Saukamappee's account

from the 1730s, recorded by David Thompson in 1787-1788; and scattered references in the HBC documents dating to 1714 at York Factory and to 1717 at Fort Churchill.

Arthur J. Ray (1974) is the only person to have used these data to discuss the distribution of the western Assiniboin. He (1974:21-22) suggests that there was an "earlier westward push of the Woodland Assiniboine in the bordering forests" and a post-1720 northwesterly expansion of Plains Assiniboin through the parkland corridor. The Northern Assiniboin, to be discussed later, with the Cree, occupied the western forest "between the lower Saskatchewan and upper Nelson rivers and the middle Churchill River between Southern Indian Lake and Reindeer Lake" (1974:19). By 1720, they had pushed west to the head of the Churchill River.

Ray's basis for this initial distribution is a series of maps drawn between 1724 and 1741 by an unknown French cartographer using Jérémie's account of his years at York Factory between 1694 and 1713. Although the information on the maps "became muddled in the process of being transmitted from Indian to trader and from trader's journal to cartographic form" (Ray 1972b:95), Ray willingly accepts the maps which, he says, "are the first to show the tribal groups in the middle and upper Churchill region with a reasonable degree of accuracy" (1972:97). Ray is correct in saying these are the earliest attempts to show the inland

groups, but their usefulness depends entirely on Jérémie's perceptions of western geography which, as we have seen, were very confused (see section 5.4.4 above).

Ray identifies Lake Michinipi, both as described by Jérémie and on the maps, as being Reindeer Lake and places the Dogrib between it and the upper Seal River while Assiniboin groups are to the west on the upper Churchill.

Jérémie confused "Missinipi" with both Lake Winnipeg and the Churchill River system. However, there is no evidence that Reindeer Lake was ever called Missinipi and on the oldest maps, those of Peter Pond and Alexander Henry the Elder, it is named Deer Lake. By placing the Assiniboin about the two different Missinipis, Jérémie may well be trying to account for both the Northern and the Southern Assiniboin but there is no evidence that the former lived on the Churchill River or Reindeer Lake.

Ray finds support for the Assiniboin on the upper Churchill from the York Factory records of 1729 which described a raid by which the Dakota

had driven the Assiniboine as far as the head of Churchill River, i.e., the Reindeer River-Reindeer Lake region. Thus in the early 18th century the Assiniboine were frequent travellers through the upper Churchill area, and they sought refuge in that area when the Sioux invaded southern Manitoba (Ray 1972:97).

This event, as described in the records, borders on the unbelievable. That the Assiniboin would flee some 900 km by direct line from southern Manitoba is itself remarkable;

that the Sioux, then south of the 49th Parallel, would pursue them so far into hostile territory is amazing. The original journal entry reads:

I understand by Severall of our home Indians that Last Summer the poetts went to warrs with our Senipoetts and drove our Senipoetts as farr as the Head of Churchill River and that the Said Senipoetts are gone to Churchill this summer to trade.... (HBCA B.239/a/11 12 June 1729).

However, some additional information is available in the annual letter sent to London at the end of the summer where the incident was said to involve the Dakota and "our upland Indians" (Davies 1965:141-42). First, the initial battle was "at the place appointed," suggesting a site to the south accessible to both groups. Second, the Assiniboin retreated from battle on finding out that eight French wood-runners "headed" the Dakota which again suggests a southern local. Third, the Assiniboin had "been obliged to forsake their country last November," which means, improbably, the 900 km trek was made in winter. Fourth, the Assiniboin "at present keeps at the head of Churchill River till such time they have a good understanding amongst them." Such a truce would be most difficult to arrange from the upper Churchill since there is no evidence that the Sioux ever lived north of the 49th Parallel.

What seems much more likely is that McCliesh, the factor at York Factory, who previously referred to Lake Winnipeg as the "Great Lake" (Davies 1965:136) has confused



Missinipi/Churchill River with Missinipi/Lake Winnipeg. The Assiniboin, instead of fleeing to the head of Churchill River fled only to the head of Lake Winnipeg. Perhaps this was the event described by Alexander Henry the Younger (1965 vol.i:41) on 17 August 1800 when he passed Rivière aux Morts (Nettley Creek), at the mouth of the Red River. Its name was the result of "a tragic event which happened many years ago." A group of Cree, who had gone to the Bay, left the children and old people there for the summer but the Sioux attacked and killed many of them.

There is no reason to believe that the Assiniboin lived on or north of the Churchill River. Jérémie's information is too confused to allow weight to be placed on specific geographical locations for groups, especially where the term "Missinipi" is involved. However, as we shall now see, there are data indicating that the Assiniboin were in the west along the Saskatchewan River at an early date.

### 11.3.1 EARLY ACCOUNTS FROM THE BAY

The first information from the Bay are Pierre Radisson's (1961) accounts of the establishing of the posts at Port Nelson in 1682-1683. His only reference to Assiniboin was to record a comment made by a disgruntled Indian in the spring of 1683 that rather than persuade the inland Indians to come to trade, "he would kill the Assempoits if they came down to us" whereupon Radisson

threatened to "march into his country and eat sagamite [meat broth] in the head of his grandmother" (Radisson 1961:198). However, the Assiniboin appeared the following year and Radisson's nephew, who had been left in charge of the French post, reported

several detachments of the nations who were our allies arrived to assist us [against the HBC]. The Asenepoets alone made more than 400 men. They were the descendants of the great Christinos of the old acquaintance of my uncle.... [Lack of provisions] obliged the chief of the Asenipoetes to send back to his country 40 canoes [with] 200 men of the most feeble (Radisson 1961:227).

The Assiniboin were accompanied by women since they planned on loading all their goods into the canoes with the women who, if the planned attack on the English failed, would dump the goods into the water (p.227-29).

The reference to Radisson's old acquaintance, seemingly an individual rather than the Ojibwa or Cree, could refer to Radisson's journey to Lake Superior in 1659 or, more likely, his various sojourns at the HBC posts on James Bay. It is surprising to find such large numbers of Assiniboin arriving so soon after the establishment of the post, even taking into account Radisson's tendency to exaggerate. No doubt word had already been sent inland from the Bottom of the Bay of the plans of the HBC to build at Fort Nelson.

Silvy's letter of 1685 mentions only that the Assiniboin and Cree had come from "their village ...beyond the great lake of the Assiniboines of which Port Nelson is

the outlet," clearly a reference to Lake Winnipeg (Silvy 1968:68). As we shall see, this coincides well with the Assiniboin described by La Vérendrye south and west of Lake Winnipeg.

In 1694-1695, Marest (1968:123-124) indicated that the Assiniboin lived beyond the Cree. Of the 300 or more canoes which traded at the Bay, these two groups were the most numerous and being allies, some were bilingual. It took the Assiniboin 35 or 40 days to reach the Bay whereas the Lake of the Cree (again, Lake Winnipeg) was 20 or 25 days away. This is, perhaps, the first hint that some Assiniboin might be coming from the Saskatchewan area.

That the Assiniboin were in the far west by 1695 is clear from Marest (1968:128) who said that the Dogrib or Athapaskan "have villages and extend down [s'étend jusques derriere] to the Assiniboines with whom they are almost always at war." Reference has already been made (above, section 10.9.1) to the widespread belief that the Assiniboin could be reached by an inland route north of Churchill.

La Potherie gives more details of the inland groups and though his stay at the Bay was brief, it was suggested earlier that he may have obtained his information from Kelsey (above section 5.6). Among the various Indians he describes are three groups of Siouan speakers (1968:264):

The Assiniboines live in the west and the north. They are considered to be one and the same nation on account of the similarity of their languages...[and] live two hundred and

fifty leagues away.

The Michinipicpoets, i.e. "men of stone of the great lake", live three hundred leagues distant, running north and south [Cette nation habite Nord & Sud].

The Netaouatscmipoets, i.e. "men of the dawn", live four hundred leagues distant.

From La Potherie's description of the Assiniboin, it appears he is speaking of two different groups, one in the north and one in the west who nevertheless speak the same language. This is in reference to the Northern and Southern Assiniboin who are described in later accounts as distinct groups but who spoke the same language (see section 11.5 below). It was perhaps his confusion of these groups, as well as the usual confusion of the term "Missinipi," which led La Potherie to say that the Missinipi Poets live in the North and South.

La Potherie's Netaouatscmipoets are Henry Kelsey's Naywatamee Poets whose name seems to be derived from the Cree wati or hole. Rather than being the "men of the dawn," the original French reads "hommes de pointe" which is close to the reading obtained by Morton (1973:113). Morton may have been reading after the fact: "a cape or point of the river, nayow, at the bottom of a hill, netamutin ." As discussed later (section 12.2), these were probably the Hidatsa, a Siouan-speaking group from the Missouri.

From La Potherie, despite his confusion, we find two groups of Assiniboin who live in different parts of the west and who seem to be different from each other. They were

considered to be some distance from the Bay since the Christinaux, apparently the Cree, who had an immense territory which extends as far as Lake Superior, were considered to be 160 leagues away while the Assiniboin were 250 leagues distant and the Missinipi Poets, 300.

Henry Kelsey's journal shows that the Assiniboin were well-established in the parkland west of the Manitoba Escarpment in 1691, only nine years after the establishment of posts on the Bay. Initially, Kelsey had been sent inland in 1690 to "the Country of the Assinae Poets, with the Captain of that Nation, to call, encourage, and invite, the remoter Indians to a Trade with us (Great Britain 1749b:55). At Deering's Point, considered to be at the mouth of the Carrot River at The Pas, Manitoba, he was "on ye borders of ye stone Indian country." How literally this should be taken is not clear; it is found in the lengthy rhymed introduction to his journal.

It was not until he had abandoned his canoes and walked to the upper Carrot River, that Kelsey finally reached an Assiniboin camp. Many years later Henday wrote that he had reached the country of the Assiniboin when he was near present Carrot River, Saskatchewan (HBCA E.2/4 31 July 1755). Kelsey may well have thought of the mouth of the Carrot River as leading to Assiniboin territory, rather than marking their precise border.

Kelsey names two groups he met while travelling inland:

26 tents of "Eagles brich Indians," either Assiniboin or Cree, between the upper Red Deer River and the upper Assiniboin; and a group of Mountain Poets he met on the "barren grounds" who, with others, totalled 80 tents or some 640-800 people.

The Assiniboin he was with were adept at using the "surround" method of hunting bison and were clearly not strangers to the area. However, they did consider that after crossing a wide plain and reaching a wooded area, either the Beaver or Touchwood Hills, that they were in enemy territory. It was here that they met the Naywatamee Poets. There are no other details to learn about western Indian groups from Kelsey, and he does not attempt any general descriptions of either the environment or of the Indians. Still, there is not the slightest hint from Kelsey that the Assiniboin were newcomers to the upper Assiniboine River area. Although he is silent about any Assiniboin further west, he is silent on all such things.

#### 11.4 THE POST-1715 HBC RECORDS

There are almost no data concerning the Assiniboin in the HBC records until Heday's journey of 1754-1755. Partly, this is a reflection of the absence of details about the inland Indians in general; mostly it is because of the difficulties in communicating with them. In later years, both Isham and Graham, despite their years of experience at

the Bay, make only passing reference to the Assiniboin and only Isham (1949:42-47) offers a vocabulary, which is short and mostly concerned with trade goods.

What few data there are indicate that at least some Assiniboin were on the Saskatchewan River. Ten canoes of Assiniboin had accompanied Swan on his peace-making journey to Lake Athabasca in 1721 (HBCA B.239/a/6 16 June 1721). The Northern Assiniboin were said to come the farthest of any of the trading Indians, taking 50 days to reach the Bay: "their Country lyes at the head of the North Side of Port Nelson River" (HBCA B.239/a/3 25 June 1717). The Cree considered the Nelson to be the continuation of the Saskatchewan River (e.g. Thompson 1962:38-9). Further, the head of modern Nelson River, at Lake Winnipeg, was only about two weeks travel from the Bay. However, it took Heday 50 days to reach the Bay from the Edmonton area, not including the delays at the French trading posts. Thus, it would seem that the Northern Assiniboin were well up the Saskatchewan River at this time.

According to the information that Saukamappee gave David Thompson (1968:334), at least one camp of Assiniboin, "the relations of our companions" were four day's walk from the borders of the Snake country. It is not clear where these borders were considered to be, but clearly some Assiniboin were well beyond the Forks of the Saskatchewan.

By Heday's time, the Assiniboin were well established

in central Alberta where they spent both winters and summers. Henday had met camps of Assiniboin between the Eagle Hills and the Archithinue camp near modern Red Deer, Alberta. In the spring, groups of Assiniboin joined him at the canoe-building site near Edmonton. Some travelled to the Bay with him but "a great many Aseenepoets that goes to no settlements whatever pitched away towards the muscuty [prairie] country after buffaloe" (HBCA E.2/4 24,27 May 1755).

With Henday's journal the discussion of the putative invasion of the Assiniboin into the west reaches an end since, in 1754-1755, they are living within sight of the Rockies. Rather than being invaders into the area, driving the Blackfoot before them, they are camping, both winter and summer, well within Archithinue country. There is no historical evidence as to when they arrived on the Saskatchewan: La Potherie's comment about Assiniboin in the "west and north" and the HBC's hope of trading with them by way of a route north of Churchill suggest that they were in the far west in the 1690s, long before any influences of the fur trade, introduced at the Bay in 1682, could have had any effect. There is, however, added evidence that the Assiniboin had a long history in the west. This involves the division of the Assiniboin into what the HBC termed the Northern and Southern Poets.



### 11.5 THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ASSINIPOETS

Two groups of Assiniboin were distinguished in the earliest fur trade journals from York Factory: the Northern and Southern Assinipoets. This was, no doubt, what La Potherie meant in his description of Assiniboin who lived in different parts of the west but who were to be considered the same on account of the similarity of the language. For such a difference to be apparent by the 1690s means either that the Assiniboin had broken from their parent Sioux at an early enough date that they themselves had become differentiated by that time, or that the Assiniboin broke away in two different episodes separated by sufficient time that the groups were dissimilar.

Published reference to two different groups of Assiniboin was available since 1744 in Dobbs's book on Hudson Bay. He included a map to illustrate Joseph La France's travels in the west. Here (Dobbs 1967), two groups of Assiniboin are shown: the "Assinibouels of the Woods" northwest of Lake Winnipegosis; and the "Assinibouels of the Meadows" to the west of the same lake.

Much later, in 1862, Hayden, using information from Denig, described the "Northern Assiniboin," apparently in opposition to the Assiniboin of the Missouri (Denig 1961:80 n.12). Both these sources were available to the author of the Assiniboin article in the Handbook of American Indians

who, however, mentions the groups only in passing (Hodge 1971:45-46). Diamond Jenness, however, apparently used these data when he wrote that after moving out of their homeland in northwestern Ontario, the Assiniboin, in the eighteenth century "divided into two branches, one of which lived on the edge of the forest northwest of lake Winnipeg, in close contact with the Cree, while the other centered about the valley of the Assiniboine river" (1963:308).

Arthur J. Ray was the next to mention the division, referring to the Woodland and Plains Assiniboin or the Northern and Southern Senipoet. However, he discusses neither the grounds for differentiating the groups nor the importance of the differentiation, except to say that two groups of Assiniboin in the forests north of Edmonton in the early 1820s

appear to be the last of the once-more-numerous Woodland Assiniboine, or Northern Sinepoets as they were formerly known. Presumably the ancestors of these two bands had been in the vanguard of the westward-moving Woodland Assiniboine in the early eighteenth century (1974:98).

Few Indian groups were identified in the early HBC records so the fact that the Assiniboin were differentiated suggests that there were readily recognized differences among them. In June 1717, gifts were presented to "the leading Indian of the Southern Sinnae Poets" and to "the Leading Indian of the Northern Sinnae Poets" (HBCA B.239/d/9 1 June to 1 July 1717). That summer, 8 canoes of Southern,

12 canoes of Northern and 8 canoes of unidentified "Poets" had come to trade (HBCA B.239/a/3 22,24,25 June 1717). After 1722, there are no longer references to either Northern or Southern Assinipoets but only to "Poets" or "Assinipoets." These terms may reflect the distinction between the Northern and Southern Assinipoets although the terms seem to be used interchangeably.

Despite the lack of specific identification of the groups, the Southern Assinipoets continued to trade at the Bay until 1733 (mistakenly given as 1753 in HBCA B.239/a/44/ 14 July 1758) but did not return until 1758 when they re-appeared as the Bloody Indians (HBCA B.239/b/16 17 July 1758, B.42/b/4 17 July 1758).

We learn details of the distinction between the Northern and Southern Assiniboin from Henday's journal. When he reached the Eagle Hills, Henday's group of over 400 people were joined by a group of 5 tents of what were called Mekesue or Eagle Indians in the published version of his journal:

I could perceive no difference between them and the Asinepoet natives with regard to the language; but one circumstance surprised me very much, and that is, the men do not cover their nakedness; which are the only natives that do not attend to decency. The women are clothed the same as the other Asinepoet Indians. The natives inform me they are a tribe of that brave Nation; and take their name from Eagles being plenty in the district they inhabit.... They never traded with any European or Canadian. My Guide & Companions seemed afraid of them (1907:331).

While travelling down the North Saskatchewan River the next spring, Henday met the group again:

Ten tents of Eagle Indians joined the Archithinue Indians. Five Canoes of them are going to the Fort with me. They are a tribe of the Asinepoet Nation; and like them use the Horses for carrying the baggage and not to ride on (1907:351).

In the official version of the journal, sent to London, Henday does not call these the Eagle Indians. Instead, his first reference describes "the Mirthco [Blood] Inds as the Call them but their is no odds in ye Esinepoits and them" (HBCA B.239/a/40 5 September 1754). In the spring entry, he refers to them only as the "Bloody" Indians (ibid June 16,17 1775). In the two other copies of these journals and in the journals at York Factory, these are again referred to as the "Bloody" Indians.

Henday was apparently unsuccessful in persuading them to come at once to the Bay, it was not until 1758 that five canoes arrived. Ten canoes came again in 1761 and Henry Pressick was sent inland "to visit the Mithcoe & Earchithinue" with Henday's old guide, Attickoshish. However, in 1763, after coming to the Bay, 11 canoes of Bloody Indians failed to return to their country, perhaps because they had starved to death (HBCA B.239/a/42/b/9 25 July 1763), although it was also said "their friends" didn't know what had happened to them (HBCA A.11/115 7 September 1763). Although the Bloody Indians are not mentioned

specifically after this, they apparently continued to come to the Bay. Andrew Graham (Henday 1907:331) mentioned that they continued to trade every year after 1755 (an apparent exaggeration) and they had traded when he was factor, either in 1765-1766 or 1771-1772.

At first sight, it is puzzling why the group is called the Eagle Indians in one place and the Bloody Indians in another. Although the term "Bloody" was used in the HBC documents, Graham continued to use the form "Mekesew" in his lists of trading Indians. The confusion may have been caused by the differences in the "th" and the "y" Cree dialects. In "th" dialect, blood is pronounced mithko but in "y" dialect it is mihko. In both dialects, eagle is mikisiw. Persons familiar with the "th" dialect, but not the "y" dialect to the west, may well have thought mihko was simply a variant of the word mikisew.

Because of the confusion of the Blood and Eagle Indians, Ray (1974:55,59) thought they were the Blood tribe of the Blackfoot Confederacy who were thus coming to trade at the Bay, while Morton (1973:247) thought it indicated that Henday's Archithinue were the Blood.

Henday's comment that the Bloody Indian men were naked gives important information on the distribution of these Assiniboin and identifies them as being the Southern Assinipoets. Henday's observation was supported by Andrew Graham's comment that when the Bloody Indians came to the

Fort, "I persuaded them to cover their nakedness, at least when at the factory" (Henday 1907:331 n.3). Many others commented on seeing Assiniboin men who were naked, in the sense of not wearing a breech-clout. When La Vérendrye went to the Missouri River in 1737, he was surprised to find that the Indians there "do not differ from the Assiniboin, being naked except for a garment of buffalo skin worn without any breech cloth" (1968:319). Fifty-four years later, A HBC employee making his first trip from Fort Albany to establish Brandon House was surprised to find that the local Assiniboin were different from all the Indians he had seen before: "they do not hide their nakedness" (HBCA B.63/a/1 7 October 1793). In 1775, Alexander Henry the Elder visited an Assiniboin camp south of the Forks of the Saskatchewan and was equally surprised to see that the men "dropped their garments, and left themselves entirely naked" (Henry the Elder 1969:293).

Thus, there were a group of Assiniboin stretching from the Branches of the Saskatchewan south to the lower Assiniboin who all had one element in common, and which was different from all groups east and north of them including other Assiniboin: their manner of dress. In this, however, they were similar to the Plains groups to the south. To the west, Alexander Henry the Younger said that the Blackfoot also did not wear breech-clouts and were "careless about that part of the body" (1965 II:517,525).

This manner of dress was seemingly the basis for the identification of the Southern and Northern Assinipoets in the 1710s and perhaps as early as the 1690s. In this respect, the Northern Assiniboin were similar to their Cree neighbours while the Southern Assiniboin resembled the Plains groups to the west and south, which suggests that each had a long familiarity with their respective neighbours.

#### 11.6 ASSINIBOIN GROUPS

Several detailed lists of Assiniboin groups were made shortly after 1800. Lewis and Clark (1987:429-432) listed three groups while Henry the Younger (II:1965:522-523) described 11. However, almost no groups were identified in the HBC records despite the many years the Assiniboin traded at the Bay. Graham (1969:206) lists only three groups: the Mekesew, Kanebickapoet and the Mokopoetuck.

It is possible there was a group of Assiniboin called the Eagle Assiniboin which would explain the confusion between the Eagle and Bloody Assiniboin. Kelsey, it will be remembered, met a group of Indians whom he called the Eagle's brich Indians west of the Manitoba Escarpment. La Potherie (1968:264), who was apparently familiar with Kelsey, also described a group of Indians whom he called "Migichihilinious" whom he said were the "Indians with eagle's eyes" although the term means simply Eagle People.

Dobbs, who had used La Potherie's material in his book, has La France say that a group of "Migechichilinous or Eagle-eyed Indians" lived between Lake Winnipeg and Lake of the Woods, but both his Indian term and translation show he is copying from La Potherie, so it is not possible to determine whom La France meant. However, Isham, in his criticism of Dobbs' book felt it necessary to say "there is the Eagl'd.Ey'd Indians which I never see, but are Sensible they are the same nation as the sinepoats, or stone Indians" (1949:115).

The group whom Graham lists as Kanobicapoet seem to have been named after their leader, Kanaputapoetuck. He guided Edward Lutit inland in 1766, the first HBC employee to winter with an Assiniboin group (HBCA B.239/a/54 19 June 1766). The name does not occur elsewhere. Graham's other group, the Mokopoetuck or Loon Assiniboin are also not named elsewhere. However, they are not to be confused with the Loon Indians, an Ojibwa group who were trading at York Factory in the late 1750s.

The inland winterers named several Assiniboin groups not identified at the Bay. In 1773, Cocking heard that the Pedlar at Nipawin had collected furs from "the Saskachiwana Poet and some other Indians who are not acquainted with paddling" (HBCA B.239/a/69 27 March 1773). In 1808, Henry the Younger met a band of Saskatchewan Assiniboines near the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan whom he later said "inhabit



the South Branch of that river, and Eagle Hills" (Henry 1965 II:492, 523). It is doubtful that these are the rather enigmatic Keskachewan Indians discussed in section 9.3.2. First, Cocking says that the group he saw did not use canoes whereas the Keskatchewan were trading at the Bay. Second, the Keskachewan were differentiated from the Assiniboin when they both appeared in the same flotillas. Third, the Keskachewan are never called Poets at the Bay, unlike other known Assiniboin groups.

There is one other group whose name may have been the Cree generic term for the Southern Assiniboin as a whole. These were the Pasykawock. When Joseph Pink was on his first inland journey a group of 16 tents came and pitched a quarter of a mile from him:

[The Cree] call them p,a,sym,a,wock But I find they are of the Same that we call the Syn na poits that come down to your Fortes But they Say the Chief of thare abode is farther in Land to the So warde than what those are that Come Down to your Settlements...they Say they never Saw any English Settlement Nor Cannot paddle in Canues I find the Chief of the Fors are Brote Down...are traded of these people (HBCA B.239/a/56 22 January 1767).

This group was known to Isham in 1743. In describing the trading Indians, Isham (1949:112) lists the "sinnipoet, (alias) Boskemo." However, the latter is a misprint for he titles his Assiniboin vocabulary list: "A Short Acc't of the Stone Indian language, (Alias) Esinnipeot, (Alias) Poshemo" (p.44). Isham's Poshemo is the

same as Pink's Pasyawock. No other use of the term can be located in any later records until Mandelbaum, casually and with no explanation, states that the Assiniboin were known to his informants as "asini.pwat, Stoney Sioux, or opwa.si.mu" (1979:8).

It should be pointed out that the Assiniboin played only a minor role in the fur trade at the bay. The maximum number of canoes appeared in 1742 when 68 out of 288, about one quarter, were Assiniboin. However, this was when the La Vérendrye was forced to close some posts because of lack of supplies. More often only some 30 canoes came. Of the years when their numbers can be identified, (in 1718, 1728, 1741, 1752 and 1762), they averaged about 12% of the trading canoes.

#### 11.7 SUMMARY

The Assiniboin have been considered to be allies of the Cree who accompanied them in their invasion of the west. However, it is clear that the Assiniboin presence in the west preceded, and was independent of the fur trade. There are some data to indicate that they preceded the Cree, at least in the Saskatchewan valley area. That the Assiniboin consisted of two recognizable groups by the early 1700s shows that each group had a lengthy involvement with their respective neighbours by that date.

The presence of the Assiniboin in the far west at such

an early date does not, in itself, offer proof against Mandelbaum's view of a historic migration of the Cree. However, their presence does lend support to the view that the presence of the Cree was not necessarily dependent on the fur trade.

## 12. RELATIONS WITH THE ARCHITHINUE: THE BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY

### 12.1 THE BLACKFOOT AND THEIR ALLIES IN THE EARLY HISTORIC PERIOD

Because of their close relationship, the Blood, Peigan and Blackfoot proper, all Algonquian-speakers, are usually referred to as one group, the Blackfoot Nation. Very closely allied to them were the Sarcee, an Athapaskan-speaking group who were related to the Beaver Indians to the north and had moved to the south by at least the 1770s. Less is known of their relations with another allied group, the Atsina Gros Ventre, another Algonquian-speaking group with close ties to the upper Missouri River. These latter groups, with the Blackfoot Nation are referred to as the Blackfoot Confederacy (Dempsey 1986:8). Except for Saukamappee's account which was not recorded until 1787, the groups composing the Blackfoot Confederacy were not specifically mentioned until 1769 nor fully identified until 1772. In order to avoid a closer identification than the records allow, the groups will be referred to collectively as the early HBC winterers called them, the Archithinue.

It is generally accepted, from Saukamappee's account, that the Blackfoot moved into southern Alberta from the North Saskatchewan River in the early 1700s. They are said

to have been driven there as a result of the invasion of the west by the Cree and Assiniboin (e.g. Dempsey 1986:6; Hyde 1959:127; Hlady 1964:46; Jenness 1963:308, 316-317). A differing opinion was that of Oscar Lewis (1942:14) who pointed out that the published data from the 1700s indicated the groups were allied:

Until 1800, there is no evidence of Cree hostility. But as the Cree were pushed west with the exhaustion of the woodland food and fur supply, they forged out into the Plains and encroached upon Blackfoot territory. The once peaceful western plains now became a scene of continued bloody warfare....

James S. Mooney (Hodge 1971:426-427), in his article on the Blackfoot in the Handbook of Indians North of Mexico, while mentioning that they were at constant war with all their neighbours including the Cree, and while referring to Mackenzie, considered that they were only "in slow migration towards the N.W." from the Red River country. Yet in his article on the Cree, he wrote that they and the Assiniboin united and "attacked and drove southwestward the Siksika [Blackfoot] and allied tribes who formerly dwelt along the Saskatchewan" (p.118).

Mackenzie never visited the parklands or plains and says little of the Blackfoot or their allies (1970:116-117):

At the Southern Headwaters of the North branch [of the Saskatchewan] dwells a tribe called Sarsees [about 35 tents or 120 men]. Opposite to those eastward, on the head-waters of the South Branch, are the Picaneaux, [1200-1500 men]. Next to them, on the same water, are the Blood-Indians, of the same nation as the last, [50 tents or 250 men].

From them downwards extend the Black-Foot Indians, of the same nation as the last two tribes [about 800 men]. Next to them, and who extend to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Big-bellied Indians [about 600 men].... The Fall, or Big-bellied Indians are from the South-Eastward also, and of a people [i.e. Hidatsa] who inhabit the plains from the North bend of the [Missouri River] to the South bend of the Assiniboin River.

[The Blackfoot] are a distinct people ... and, I have reason to think, are travelling North-Westward, as well as the others just mentioned....

The Sarsees ... appear from their language, to come on the contrary from the North-Westward ... [and] are a tribe of the Chepewyans; and as for the Knistenaux, there is no question of their having been, and continuing to be, invaders of this country from the Eastward. Formerly they struck terror into all the other tribes whom they met; but now...those whom they formerly considered as barbarians, are now their allies ... and have acquired the use of firearms.

Albert Galatin (1973:132-133) wrote that although the Blackfoot were at war with their neighbours "they appear to act on the defensive against the Knistinaux and the Assiniboins, who have in fact driven them away from the easterly portion of the Saskachawin country, and call them the Slave Nation."

Mandelbaum follows Mackenzie closely:

... the wave of Cree conquest swept over the Gros Ventre and the Blackfoot in the west.... (1979:31).

The Gros Ventre, at one time, lived about the forks of the Saskatchewan. The Cree ousted them and then dislodged the Blackfoot further to the west (p.39).

Armed with guns, they [the Cree] were able to force out the former inhabitants who, as yet, possessed no firearms (p.46).

They moved steadily farther into the

open country, driving before them Gros Ventre and Blackfoot (p.262).

However, Mackenzie does not directly say that Cree success was a result of owning firearms, nor does he give a date for the movement of the Cree. Mandelbaum is also ambiguous as to just when the displacement occurred but, seemingly, it took place at the end of the period 1690-1740 (p.31, 262). However, since he has the Cree only at the fringes of the prairie by then, it would seem more appropriate that it occurred during his period 1740-1820 when "expanding to their widest limits" (p.46), the Cree "burst into the plains" (p.262).

Mandelbaum does not support this expansion with examples of Cree hostility against Plains Indians to the west. Instead, he gives detailed descriptions of alliances: the 1730s Cree alliance with the Peigan against the Snake (1979:31-32); the aggregation at a bison pound of the "Cree, Assiniboin and Blackfoot" described by Cocking in 1772 (p.33); and the fact that "even their enemies, the Dakota, the Athapascow, and the Blackfoot, occasionally camped with and married into bands of Cree" (p.34). It is only when he refers to Alexander Mackenzie that he gives specific information of Cree raids, but these are beyond even the Athabasca area (p.41-42).

All Mandelbaum's specific information for Cree raids on the prairies post-date 1800: Henry the Younger's comments on

raids against the Blackfoot circa 1808-1810 (Mandelbaum 1979:38); Harmon's references to raids against the Gros Ventre in the early 1800s (p.39) and witnessed accounts of Cree-Blackfoot warfare between 1845 and 1860 (p.40-41). In fact, Mandelbaum does not provide any contemporaneous evidence for Cree-Blackfoot hostilities in the 1700s. Yet, as we have seen, all descriptions of Cree history write of such warfare; even Oscar Lewis only post-dates such hostilities and Cree expansion in general to after 1800. To see if there is a basis for this widespread belief, or whether it simply derived from Mackenzie, the original sources as well as archival documents must be examined.

## 12.2 THE ARCHITHINUE

The nations who were driven to the westward by the [Assiniboin] and Crees are termed, in general, by the latter, Yatchee-thin-yoowuc, which has been translated Slave Indians, but more properly signifies Strangers (Richardson in Franklin 1970:108).

The Cree referred to all the neighbouring tribes in the west, except the Assiniboin, as ayahtciyiniwak (plural, Plains Cree) which, as Richardson states, means stranger. After the outbreak of hostilities in 1800, the term was often translated as "slave," (a meaning which survives in the modern names, Lesser and Great Slave lakes and Slave River), or "enemy" (e.g. Mandelbaum 1979:9).

Sir John Richardson said the term included the Gros



Ventre, Peigan, Blood, Blackfoot and Sarcee (Franklin 1970:108-109). However, it was used for other western groups. Henry the Elder referred to the Slave River as Kiratchinini Sibi or Y-atch-inini Sipi (1969:332). The Indians on the Missouri river were known to the early French as the Hyactchejlini (Saint Pierre 1887:clxi) or as the Jatihilinine (Bougainville 1908:187).

The HBC employees of the 18th century anglicized the term as Archithinue or a variation of this. Matthew Cocking, in 1772, was the first to list the groups encompassed by the term. Since the version of his journal published in 1908 listed only the groups allied with the Cree, it was unclear which groups were meant by the term "Archithinue" until very recently.

In the official journal which was sent to London, Cocking described the Archithinue in detail:

These natives [I am with] are called Powestick Athinneewock or Water-fall Indians. The People I am with inform me there are four nations more which go under the name of Yeachithinnee Indians with whom they are in friendship Viz. Mithco Athinneewock or Blood Indians, Koskiketow Wathussituck or black foot Indians; Pigionew Athinneewock or muddy Water Indians and Sussewuck or woody Country Indians. Their enemies also go under the general Name of Yeachithinnee Indians, four nations. Kanapick Athinneewock or Snake Indians: Wahtee or vault Indians[;] Kuttunnayewuck[;] and Nah-puck Ushquanuck or flat Head Indians so called they tell me from their foreheads being very flat (HBCA B.239/a/69 1 December 1772).

The incomplete published version reads only:

Our Archithinue friends came to us...This tribe is named Powestic-Athinuwuck (i.e.) Water-fall Indians, Viz., Mithco-Athinuwuck or Bloody Indians, Koskitow-Wathesitock or Blackfooted Indians,-Pegonow or Muddy-water Indians & Sassewuck or Woody Country Indians (1980:110-111).

### 12.3 THE ARCHITHINUE AND THE HBC

The HBC records are unclear about the relations between the Archithinue and the Cree and Assiniboin before Henday's 1754 journey. However, there is little to support Ray's (1974:59) view that Archithinue groups initially traded at the Bay as a result of peace treaties arranged by Governor Knight after 1714, which quickly broke down when the Cree and Assiniboin used force to prevent further trade.

Most of the information about inland groups before 1754 come from Knight's journals written in the 1710s. However, his remarks must be treated cautiously. They were addressed to the London Committee and were both exaggerated and, to a degree, self-serving.

Knight said that he had tried "to make a peace in the whole Country Round from N to SWt for 1000 Miles" (HBCA B.239/a/2 8 May 1716). However, only three of these efforts are described: the two missions to the Athapaskans made by Stewart and Swan and the failed attempt made to the Crow Indians. Of his attempts on the northern prairies, he writes only that he "had Employe'd another pacell of Indians

to go amongst the Musketo or Plain Indians wch they promised to perform" (HBCA B.239/a/3 30 January 1717).

Knight's comments about the relations between the Cree and Assiniboin and the various inland groups are not clear since he neither identifies the groups nor gives their locations. He had sent the Mountain Indians to make peace with a group who lived 10 days' travel away, apparently the Crow (HBCA B.239/a/2 18 June 1716). They had also made a peace with "Three Nations that is very numerous" and there were "but 2 Nations more now that they are at warr with." These would all seem to have been south and west of the Manitoba Escarpment, the area with which the Mountain Indians were familiar from their mention of maize, mountains and the Crow Indians (see section 8.5 above). La Vérendrye's (1968: 98, 486) maps show a war trail from the lower Souris River to the upper Missouri as early as 1734 where various groups would have been met.

The leader of the Mountain Indians, while coming down to the Bay, had met Knight's peace emissaries sent out in the summer of 1716. This seems to have been the group, mentioned above, who were sent to the Muscotay or Plains Indians

to make a Peace at ye head of Port nellson River to ye Westward wch he sai[d] is the Worst sort of Enemys they have in ye Country thatt they are very Angry and kill more of them then all the Rest of their Enemys (HBCA B.239/a/2 18 June 1716).

In the spring of 1716, 5 canoes of Uplander Indians had come down the Nelson River who had

made a peace with 4 Nations that lyes between the S.W. and the W they are a people that as never has had any trade or Commerce with any Europeans nor could the Upland Indians ever before be brought to make a peace neither by the English or French (HBCA B.239/a/2 27 May 1716).

Who these various groups were is not clear. The enemies at the head of the Nelson (Saskatchewan) River, spoken of on 18 June, were probably the Snakes who were feared up to, at least, Cocking's time in 1772.

Ray (1974:21) suggests that the "4 Nations" of 27 May were members of the Blackfoot Confederacy. Further, between 1714 and 1720, the Cree expanded west in the forests between the Saskatchewan and Churchill rivers "with a great deal of bloodshed, especially [sic] along the northern and southwestern frontiers" (p.19). This is based on comments made by Knight. However, too literal an interpretation of Knight's statements should be avoided.

Knight wrote that "above 6000 Men besides Women and Children" had been killed along the Cree-Chipewyan boundary (HBCA B.239/a/2 7 May 1716). As well, "all those Indians as they Call em Sinnepoets Destroyed so that of about 60 Canos as us'd to Come Yearly there is not Above 6 familys left." Later, Knight revised the figure to say that of 200 tents, only 5 or 6 were left (HBCA B.239/a/3 7 March 1716). He said

that the deaths of the Assiniboin were a result both of the failure of the French supply ships and the Assiniboins' loss of the use of the bow so that the enemy "made warr Upon them & Destro'd above 100 Tents Men, Women and children" (HBCA B.239/a/2 22 April 1716). Earlier, however, Knight had said that the Assiniboin refused to come to the Bay because they had been disappointed so many times by the French and many Indians went instead to Fort Albany (HBCA B.239/a/1 5,30 June 1715).

Knight gives very little information about the northern plains. Certainly, there is a surprising lack of detail compared to his descriptions of the missions of Swan and Stewart to the northwest and of the Mountain Indians' country to the southwest. A common element in all these descriptions is Knight's avid interest in minerals. His mission to the Crow was partly motivated by their access to yellow metal (HBCA B.239/a/2 1 September 1716; B.239/a/3 30 January 1717). He discussed the copper mines of the northwest endlessly. As well as recording many details of the area including four now unidentifiable groups (HBCA B.239/a/3 5 February 1717), he even had a map drawn of the area between Churchill and the Coppermine (Warkentin and Ruggles 1970:87). Although he mentions Kelsey's brief journey north of Churchill of July 1689, he says nothing of Kelsey's two year inland journey of 1690-1692 (HBCA B.239/a/2 8 May 1716). The difficulties that Knight

describes are most often those frustrating his efforts to reach mineral wealth. His lack of interest in the northern plains was perhaps because of the absence of minerals in the area.

The first reference to the "Archithinue" was at Fort Churchill in 1738 (Davies 1965:249) and the next year they were said to consist of various groups: "as to the nations of Atch-thin-nies we have had no manner of acquaintance with them" (p.292). These first references from Churchill appear to refer to the Athabasca area. Sixty canoes of "western" Indians

was engaged all winter in a fierce war against the Achue-thinnies, a people bordering near the Western Ocean [who] did take the opportunity to attack and kill many of [their] families... while they were coming with their goods to the factory last summer (Davies 1965:249).

Conflict broke out again in the early winter of 1739-1740: "the Achue-thinnies killed several of our trading Indians as they were a beaver hunting" (p.318). Two hundred of their warriors were forced to guard the frontiers while the trading Indians got provisions so they could go to trade and they were resolved to either destroy the Archithinue or drive them from the frontier so they would no longer be a danger.

Although James Isham knew of the Archithinue, he wrote in 1743 that after 11 years' experience, he had never seen any except for a slave brought down by the Cree and his

information of them was scant.

Their Country Lyes on the back of this Land, and to the westward of Churchill River, where the Spaniards frequents those seas at the same time does not traffick with that nation... the Sinnepoets and other Indians Going to Warr with them, is a hinderance to their Coming to the English settlements to trade (1949:113).

Isham's reference to two locales for the Archithinue suggests he is conflating the Athapaskan groups with groups from the northern plains. Further, his reference to the Spanish indicate he is also speaking of the Snake and their allies who were obtaining goods, probably by trade, from the Spanish. However, the record is silent as to whether he was including the Blackfoot and their allies in these Archithinue groups.

Both Isham (1949:113-114) and Norton (Davies 1965:149) said that the Archithinue did not come to trade because of war with the Assiniboin and other Indians. Yet in his testimony to the Parliamentary Inquiry of 1749, Joseph Robson said that it was commonly believed at York Factory that some Indians not previously known to York tried to come down but upset their canoe (Great Britain 1749a:9). In 1751, Isham gave presents to the leaders of the Missinipi and Stone Indians to give to the Archithinue to persuade them to come to the Bay and was assured that great numbers would come (HBCA B.239/a/34 4 July 1751). We have seen that Henday's guide of 1754 had already been living with the Archithinue for some years. None of the inland winterers,

including Henday, were ever able to persuade any of the Archithinue to trade at the Bay. Further, the mention of the western sea and the Spanish lends weight, but does not confirm, that it was the westernmost Archithinue who were meant, rather than the Blackfoot and their allies.

#### 12.4 SAUKAMAPPEE'S ACCOUNT OF CREE-ARCHITHINUE RELATIONS

David Thompson, who stayed in Saukamappee's tent during his visit to the Peigan in 1787-88, recorded details of the life of this Cree both before and after he was adopted by the Peigan (see section 6.2 above). These include the first information about the west before Henday's journey of 1754. However, it is not clear when these events occurred, particularly the crucial early ones.

Saukamappee described his participation in two battles which took place between the Snake and the Peigan. His account gives us some insight into the relations between the Cree and neighbouring groups as well as the relative positions of the opponents, especially the Snake. It is often assumed that this is evidence that the Snake then occupied the Eagle Hills area. We also learn that in the early 1700s the Cree and Assiniboin were not quashing the neighbouring Blackfoot Nation but were allied with them. However, the locations of the events and the positions of the participants are difficult to determine.

Saukamappee was an adolescent, perhaps 16 years old,



when he first took part in a battle between the Snake and the Peigan and their allies including the Cree and Assiniboin. The Cree from the lower Saskatchewan rendezvoused with the Peigan and their allies on the north side of the North Saskatchewan River. Scouts spotted a war party of Snake on "the Plains of Eagle Hill" (Thompson 1968:328). This first battle ended at nightfall, in an impasse.

Later, when Saukamappee had been married for a year, messengers again arrived for aid against the Snake who now had horses. Only three Cree went, Saukamappee himself almost refusing, and they were accompanied by seven Assiniboin, all possessing guns. This time the location of the battle is not given. However, after the Snake were defeated, apparently experiencing gun fire for the first time, the victors "pitched away on the frontiers of the Snake Indian country" (1968:334). Their hopes of seeing horses were finally fulfilled in the autumn, and they returned home.

The location of the initial battle, "the Plains of Eagle Hill" and, thus, the boundary between the groups, is not clear. However, it involved two war parties neither of which were necessarily on their home grounds. It may have occurred either on the plains southeast of Eagle Creek or in the Battle River area. Fears of raiding Snake were frequently mentioned by the inland HBC travellers before

1774 while they were crossing between the lower Saskatchewan to the mouth of Eagle Creek. Further, Thompson places Eagle Hill east of the mouth of Eagle Creek on his map of the northwest (1968:endmaps) and the "Snake Indians Track" was immediately up river from Sturgeon River, near modern Prince Albert (Rich 1951:354).

However, the battle or battles may also have taken place near the Battle River and may be the source of its name since it was so known to Pink in 1770 (HBCA B.239/a/63 19 February 1770). Thompson describes the western border of the Eagle Hills as being at Manchester House (1962:46) about 15 km cross-country from the lower Battle River. Further, Fidler gives information similar to but possibly independent of that of Thompson; the two were reputed to have disliked each other (Morton 1973:447; Thompson 1962:55 n.4).

Fidler wrote that the Snake used to inhabit Eagle Hill "but since the Europeans have penetrated these parts & supplied the surrounding nations with fire arms, those Indians have gradually receded back to the SWards.... " and not a tent remained nearer than "500 miles" (Johnson 1967:274 n.1). However, Saukamappee did not say that the plain of Eagle Hill was where the Snake lived, only that they had met a Snake war party there.

Since the location of the second battle is not given, it would seem that it, too, took place in the Eagle Hill plain. However, here it is clear that the Snake did not

occupy the immediate area since the victors had to travel to their borders. Thus, there is actually little evidence that the Snake once lived as far north as the Eagle Hills and that they were displaced by invading Blackfoot who were in turn displaced by Cree and Assiniboin. Instead, the Eagle Hills area, throughout the 1700s, marked the frequent location of their raiding parties.

Saukamappee says that the advance of the Blackfoot groups into southern Alberta began after the second battle with the Snake, seemingly in the 1730s:

We thus continued to advance through the fine plains to the Stag [Red Deer] River when death came over us all, and swept away more than the half of us by the Small pox (Thompson 1968:336).

The Snake were equally decimated, and by their deaths, "had left all this fine country of the Bow River to us" (p.338). Yet Henday, who travelled along the Battle River and crossed the Red Deer (Wilson 1974:286), did not mention fear of attacks by the Snake, and the Archithinue, seemingly one of the Blackfoot groups and not the Snake, were on and south of the Red Deer in his time.

Thompson gives other information on the time of these large-scale movements in central Alberta but, again, he is ambiguous. He wrote, apparently in 1789, that the Peigan had

no tradition beyond the time of their great granfathers [sic], that they can depend on .... yet their old men always point out the North East as the place they came from, and their progress has been to the south west.

Since the Traders came to the Saskatchewan River, this has been their course and progress for the distance of four hundred miles from the Eagle Hills to the Mountains near the Missouri (1969:348).

It is not clear what Thompson meant by the arrival of the traders on the Saskatchewan. It could mean any of several dates: 1741, when the La Vérendryes established posts at the mouth of the Saskatchewan; 1751, when the French moved into or past the Nipawin area; 1767, when the Montreal traders returned to the Nipawin area; or the late 1770s when the traders built on the North Saskatchewan.

Two aspects of Saukamappee's account are important. First, the Cree and the Peigan are allies and had been so over a period of time. There is no evidence that the Cree are driving them to the southwest. Further, Saukamappee said he would have forgotten how to speak Cree had it not been for Cree traders coming to buy horses and aid them in war. As well, Attickoshish, Henday's guide was said to have "Lived long with the Earchithinues" (HBCA B.239/a/37 26 June 1754) and he and other Cree accompanied the Archithinue against their enemies (Henday 1907:339).

Second, the role of guns is puzzling. According to Saukamappee guns were a novel feature of the second battle. They were unknown to the Snake and also to the Peigan who did not know how to credit enemy deaths caused by them. Yet, these events apparently occurred in the 1730s, 50 years after the introduction of the trade at the Bay and over 15

years after the HBC regained control and provided a steady supply of trade goods. Further, the Cree of the lower Saskatchewan, Saukamappee's father's group, were the nearest of the interior groups to the Bay. Yet in the first battle, guns and ammunition were too scarce to use and in the second battle, the gun-bearers had only 30 ball each. Either Saukamappee's account actually dates to the early 1700s when the supply of trade goods was highly erratic (Thompson at one point said his account went back as far as 1700), or the use and advantage of guns in early warfare has been greatly over-rated (see Townsend 1983).

#### 12.5 FIRST-HAND OBSERVATIONS OF CREE-ARCHITHINUE RELATIONS

It is ironic that nineteenth century observers in the northern prairies witnessed a state of warfare between the Cree and Assiniboin and the Blackfoot and their allies just as Alexander Mackenzie had described. This gave great support to Mackenzie's statements which were, in fact vague and ahistoric. Such warfare had broken out at the end of the 1700s for reasons which are still not clear. Before then, and especially before the smallpox epidemic of 1781 and the coincidental arrival of traders on the Saskatchewan, the several groups had been, if not strict allies, then at least not enemies.

The alliance was noted through the 1730s, the 1750s and the 1770s, although there is some ambiguous data from the

late 1760s. It is difficult to reconcile these observations with the view that Cree and Assiniboin were then sweeping over the plains and forcing the former inhabitants from their original lands. Both Saukamappee in the early 1700s and Heday in 1754 indicate a long term alliance between the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Cree and Assiniboin and their union against their common enemy, the Snake and their allies. Cocking, in 1772-1773 presents a similar picture. However, there is information which is difficult to interpret in the inland journals kept by Joseph Smith and William Pink in the 1760s regarding the Archithinue. Joseph Smith was apparently between the Branches of the Saskatchewan River, probably in the Eagle Hills area, when he wrote that "whe dos not go in to the baren Ground for feer of the earsheadeneys." However, the next week, they received word that the latter "was not a niey hus" so they continued to travel southwest to hunt bison and trap wolves (HBCA B.239/a/52 13,18 November 1763). These Archithinue were doubtless the Snake rather than a Blackfoot group since the former were feared in summer but not winter, at which time they abandoned the northern plains (Russell 1988:146-147).

When William Pink was at the canoe-building site near the Forks of the Saskatchewan near Birch Hills, he heard of several groups upstream. These "has been at warr With the other Indians Called by them Ye,arch,a,thin,a,wocke in the

fall of the year or rather the winter and a Great Maney Ware killed on the other side" (HBCA B.239/a/56 30 April 1767). Again, these Archithinue would seem to have been the Snake since Pink had wintered near the Eagle Hills, yet wrote of other HBC winterers in the area to the west, one of whom was over eight days away (HBCA B.239/a/56 28 January 1767). This would have been a highly dangerous area to be in if relations were poor with the Blackfoot and their allies, but not if the enemy were the Snake.

The following season, Pink again mentions a raid against the Archithinue. He was west of Turtle Lake, north of the North Saskatchewan when a companion died, and in revenge members of Pink's group decided to go to war "with the Other Natives Called Ye,artch,a,thyne,a Wock and Kill as Many as the Can of them" (HBCA B.239/a/58 26 September 1767). The group split: Pink went south and the others continued westwards to the headwaters of the Beaver River. Their target may have been the Sarcee, but it is more probable that it was the Athapaskan Beaver Indians, who could be reached by following the war trail to Lesser Slave Lake and the upper Peace River as described by Mackenzie (1970:249,253).

More puzzling are the comments Pink made regarding Cree-Archithinue relations in the spring of 1768. Pink was at the canoe-building site two days' travel down-river from Moosehill Creek. One hundred tents of Archithinue set up

camp across the North Saskatchewan and another group was supposed to be on its way. Pink said that one, or both, of these groups of Archithinue

and these I am with [were] Some Yeares a Gow ware Most times at warr with one a Nother But Now the has Made an a Greement one with a Nother that the will be both as one now and will not Gow to war one with a Nother a Gainie (HBCA B.239/a/58 4 May 1768).

Further, it was arranged that when Pink returned from the Bay in the fall, the group of Archithinue "are to Gow a way up inland for to Acquaint the Rest of thare Contrey people of this" (ibid) and persuade them to trap wolves to give to the Cree.

On his way down river, perhaps near the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan, Pink and his group saw 200 tents of Archithinue who quickly broke camp and moved inland when they saw the flotilla "being in feare of those Indanes that I am with for Some Years a Gow the ware at war." The next day, Pink and 20 men went to their camp

and Made friens with them... I find that these are Difrent from them that I See at the Place of Bilding of our Canewes the Cannot paddle Nor Kill but few Foxes upon the acctont of those being at war with them Most Times and not In Couraging them to Do it (ibid:May 14 1768).

All these various groups of Archithinue are difficult to identify. Pink had just spent from 29 December to 11 February south of the North Saskatchewan and west of the mouth of Moosehill Creek area within the apparent northern



border of the Blackfoot and their allies. This would be a dangerous position for the Cree to be in if the alliance reported by Saukamappee and Henday had broken down. Pink was in the same area the next autumn and after crossing the North Saskatchewan near Moosehill Creek, he wrote that his group kept guard at night "for Feare of the other Indanes Caled Yeartche thyn newock and Cenepick we e thynewock [Snake] for Feare they Should Come up on them all on a Suden in the nigh time" (HBCA B.239/a/61 22 October 1768). Yet despite these fears, they continued to travel south and west, as did Isaac Batt, another HBC employee in another group, and Pink did not recross the North Saskatchewan until 9 March. Batt's group consisted of only three tents and there is no reason to think Pink's was much larger. Again, for such small groups to be on the fringes of Blackfoot country was courting death, if, in fact, the groups were at odds.

Blackfoot groups were in the area. The next year, Pink wintered at Manitou Lake, 110 km southeast of Moosehill Creek. He sent a gift of tobacco to "a Bodey of ye archethynnawock Caled Mithquothinowuck [Blood] for Encouradgment for to Snare Wouolves for the Trap None" (HBCA B.239/a/63 13 December 1769). Shortly afterwards he joined a group of "Black footed " Indians and accompanied them to a bison pound where they camped from 6 January to 11 February. That spring, he was joined by a Cree leader mentioned by

Henday during his wintering of 1754-55. He had been on a raid against the Snake who were for the first time seen to have guns, thought to have been obtained from the southward (HBCA B.239/a/63 1 April 1770).

It is difficult to reconcile Pink's references to enmity between the Cree and the unidentified Archithinue with the data from Henday and Cocking and his own journal of 1769-1770 which all show friendly relations. Further, Pink and other HBC men were wintering in the Eagle Hills area in close proximity to the Blackfoot and their allies immediately prior to his comments of the spring of 1768.

It is possible that relations were briefly severed between the Cree and the Blackfoot Nation groups in 1768/69, though this would seem to be unlikely. Pink said that the enmity had been long-lasting yet his journal reflects amiable relations between the Cree and Assiniboin and the Blackfoot groups during the winter of 1769/70. Since Pink was apparently accompanying the same group of Cree, it is unlikely he was simply recording differing relations between different Cree groups and the Archithinue. More likely, Pink is referring to the other members of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Sarcee and the Gros Ventre. Thus, the large camp he saw at the canoe-building site in 1768 was perhaps the Athapaskan Sarcee who moved into central Alberta at an unknown date in the 1700s. Henday would not have described them since, in his time, they would still have

been to the north. After the 1750s, none of the inland winterers are known to have gone as far west as the Edmonton area. An alliance, established in 1768, would explain why Cocking would describe them as allies in 1772.

The group Pink met while travelling down-river is less easily identified. It is highly unlikely that they were the Snake since there was constant enmity between the groups. However, they may well have been the Gros Ventre, about whom, as we shall see, little is known, even their precise identity.

## 12.6 SUMMARY

There is nothing to suggest chronic hostility between the Cree and Assiniboin on the one hand, and the Blackfoot Nation on the other. Apart from Pink's comments made in the spring of 1768, the evidence from Saukamappee in the 1730s, from Henday in the 1750s and from Cocking in the 1770s, all indicate that the Cree and Assiniboin were in alliance with the Blackfoot and their allies. There is nothing to suggest either the Cree or the Assiniboin were in a desperate search for new lands to expand their access to new fur resources. At the time when Mandelbaum has the Cree only on the fringes of the prairies, we find, instead, that both they and the Assiniboin are well established as far west as modern Edmonton.

The HBC records of the early 1700s pay little attention

to the Saskatchewan area. However, there is nothing which contradicts Saukamappee's account. That the Assiniboin were probably on the North Saskatchewan is supported by Knight's comment that the Northern Assiniboin travelled the furthest of any of the trading Indians (HBCA B.239/a/3 25 June 1717).

## 13. THE GROS VENTRE: ATSINA AND HIDATSA GROUPS IN SASKATCHEWAN

### 13.1 INTRODUCTION

The Gros Ventre pose a stumbling block for discussions of eighteenth century Indian groups in the northern plains/parkland area. Evidence that they were an Atsina group is contradicted by other data showing them to be Hidatsa. Further, the Gros Ventre are the one group who were said by contemporaries to have been driven from their original homeland by neighbouring Cree and Assiniboin.

The problem of the identity of the Gros Ventre arises because the same terms were used for Siouan-speaking Hidatsa groups on the middle Missouri as were used for Algonquian-speaking Atsina from the upper Missouri trading at posts on the North and South Saskatchewan. The HBC personnel on the Saskatchewan referred to this latter group as the Fall or Rapid Indians from the Cree powistik meaning "rapids" or "waterfalls." The Montreal traders called them the Gros Ventre, Big Bellies or, rarely, the Paunch Indians. To the traders on the Missouri River, they were the Minatarees of the Plains or of Fort de Prairie: Minataree was the Mandan name for the Hidatsa (Lewis and Clark 1987:206 n.8) while Fort de Prairie was the term for the various posts on the Saskatchewan rivers. Very often, in the earlier records,

the Gros Ventre, like the Blackfoot Nation, were simply called "Archithinue" or its many variant forms and their precise identity is not clear.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the Gros Ventre occupied the area between the South Saskatchewan and the Missouri rivers. They traded at posts along the North Saskatchewan from the Eagle Hills to the Edmonton area and were regular customers at Chesterfield House and Rocky Mountain House. However, they were said to have previously occupied the area between the Branches of the Saskatchewan. It is this former occupation, as well as their identity which poses problems.

### 13.2 THE GROS VENTRE IN SCHOLARLY STUDIES

As early as 1836, Albert Gallatin realized from a Gros Ventre word list collected by Umfreville in the 1780s on the North Saskatchewan River, that the "Rapid, Fall or Paunch Indians, sometimes also called the 'Minatares of the Prairies,'" were not related to the Hidatsa but were a "detached tribe of [the Arapaho] nation" (1973:126, 132). In 1846 Father De Smet was told by the Gros Ventre that they had separated from the Arapaho 150 years earlier (Flannery 1953:1). Since then the Gros Ventre, or Atsina as they became to be called from their Blackfoot name, were considered to be an Arapaho group.

James Mooney, in the Handbook of American Indians North

of Mexico (Hodge 1971:52), warned that they had "constantly been confused with the Hidatsa, or Gros Ventres of the Missouri." With the exception of Boyd Wettlaufer (1960) and William Byrne (1973), references to the Gros Ventre in Saskatchewan as possibly including the Hidatsa have been dismissed (Flannery 1953; Hlady 1964; Kehoe and Kehoe 1974a, 1974b).

David Mandelbaum appears to have assumed the Gros Ventre were Atsina. They lived "about the rapids of the Saskatchewan" (1979:35), or, more specifically, "about the forks ... [until] the Cree ousted them and then dislodged the Blackfoot farther to the west" (p.39). Mandelbaum scarcely discusses this event, despite its importance to his history of the Cree. In the opening statement of his study, he wrote that the Cree who lived

on the northern edge of the Great Plains, chiefly in the Park Belt ... have occupied this territory only since the beginning of the nineteenth century, for it was formerly inhabited by the Assiniboin and Gros Ventre... (p. 7).

Elsewhere, he suggests earlier dates. The period 1784-1812, was when "the Cree had already occupied the plains about the rapids of the Saskatchewan, having driven out the former occupants who were the Fall Indians, the Gros Ventre" (p.39).

Regina Flannery reviewed the historic literature for her 1953 study of the Gros Ventre. Referring to the early

occurrence of the term "Gros Ventre," in Legardeur de Saint Pierre's account written at Fort la Reine in 1751, she writes: "It is possible, of course, that the Gros Ventres here referred to are the Hidatsa of the Missouri, since some confusion between the two occurs in the later sources, but this is unlikely" (Flannery 1953:3). Following Wissler and Ewers, she identifies Cocking's Water-fall Indians and later references to the Gros Ventre as referring to the Atsina.

Flannery accepts Oscar Lewis's (1942:12 Map A) conclusion that the Gros Ventre had been well established in the Branches area of the Saskatchewan since 1750. By 1808, following the attacks on Manchester and South Branch Houses in 1793 and 1794, "the Gros Ventre had been replaced in the area between the forks of the Saskatchewan and now roamed the territory between the South Branch and the Missouri, although some of them at least went to the posts to trade" (Flannery 1953:9-10).

Walter Hlady (1964:49-51) also notes the confusion between the Hidatsa and Atsina but he, too, concludes the group were Atsina. Further, he rejects the idea that the Hidatsa were in Canada other than at the Long Creek site at the junction of Long Creek and the Souris River, within 10 km of the American border (p.52), Hlady's (1964:50) reconstruction of Gros Ventre history follows that presented earlier by Hewes (1948:5): in the early 1700s, the Atsina split from the Arapaho, then near the Little Missouri River,



and moved north to near modern Saskatoon. According to Hlady, both Henday's Archithinue and Cocking's Fall Indians were Atsina. Following Mackenzie, he regarded the Gros Ventre as occupying the area from the Assiniboine River west to the South Saskatchewan and from the Missouri to the Qu'Appelle and the Forks of the Saskatchewan.

For Diamond Jenness (1963:317-18, 326), the Gros Ventre were an Arapaho group who formed the southeastern flank of the Blackfoot in the mid-1700s and "roamed over the southern part of Saskatchewan" (p.326). However, they ceased to play any further role on the Canadian plains when they retreated south before the end of the century.

The early history of the Gros Ventre was outlined by Arthur J. Ray (1974) who also accepted them as being the Atsina. In 1690, they "held the upper Qu'Appelle valley and lower Saskatchewan River" (1974:12) and still occupied the Touchwood Hills area in the mid-1700s (p.70 n.5). He identifies the Askee Indians who traded at York Factory in the 1710s (p.21,55) as Gros Ventre from, probably, the Touchwood Hills area. He gives differing dates for their withdrawal from the lower Saskatchewan and upper Qu'Appelle: after 1793 and between 1763 and 1821 (p.98,104).

Ray differs from others in that he identified the Mandan/Hidatsa with the Mountain Indians and Ma-tain-ai-thi-nish who traded at York Factory between 1715 and 1721. The Mountain Indians and Ma-tain-ai-thi-nish were terms "applied

rather loosely to both the Mandan and Hidatsa" (pp. 21 fig.8, 55, 57). However, he does not place either group north of the Missouri River.

Dissenting views, that not all references to the Gros Ventre were solely to the Atsina, were presented by two archaeologists. Wettlaufer (1960:106-07), referring to traditional Hidatsa accounts as well as early fur trade journals, takes an extreme view. All mention of the Gros Ventre, Fall and Rapid Indians is to "a branch of the Hidatsa [who] inhabited the central portion of Saskatchewan from somewhere around 1600 until at least 1804." Byrne (1973:548-553), reviewing the same literature, concludes that the term Gros Ventre was applied to both the Hidatsa and Atsina. He concluded that the early historic observations "were documenting highly probable accounts of a seventeenth and/or early eighteenth century occupation of parts of the Saskatchewan basin by one or more splinter groups of the historic Hidatsa" (pp.553-54). However, he was roundly criticized for this (Kehoe and Kehoe 1974a, 1974b).

### 13.3 THE HISTORICAL SOURCES

The first use of the term "Gros Ventre" is in Legardeur de Saint Pierre's 1752 report from Fort la Reine when he tried to facilitate his search for the Western Sea by arranging a truce at the post between the local Cree and

Assiniboin and the "Hyactcheilini [Archithinue], the Brochets and the Gros Ventres" (1887:clxi). He arranged for the latter groups to meet him at future Fort La Jonquière, to be established 300 leagues above The Pas, in order to guide him to the Brochets and on to the source of the Missouri. However, before he arrived there, forty of fifty tents of "Yhatchelini" camped at the newly established post were killed by the Assiniboin.

This first reference to the Gros Ventre was to the Mandan and/or Hidatsa (but cf. Flannery 1953:3). These Gros Ventre were grouped with the Brochet. The latter were described by Bougainville in 1757 (Margry 1879-1888 vol xviii:188-89) as living next to the "Mandannes or Blancs Barbus" and across the Missouri River from the Pieds-Noirs, a Hidatsa group (Lewis and Clark 1987:205 n.3).

On Peter Pond's "Lord Hamilton" map of 1785 (Wagner 1955:end maps), the "Bigg Bellys" are shown south of the Qu'Appelle Valley, the first time that the Hidatsa are differentiated from the Mandan (Wood and Thiessen 1985:25). To the northwest of them but south of the South Saskatchewan are the "Black Feet" and "Jessees" [Sarcee?] and then the Rapid Indians.

The Fall or Rapid Indians, "the Powestick Athinnuewuck or Water-fall Indians," were first recorded by Matthew Cocking in 1772 (HBCA B.239/a/69 21 November - 17 December 1772/73). Near modern Unity, Saskatchewan, Cocking and his

Cree group had found an old bison pound built by the Fall Indians. On 1 December 21 tents of Powestick Indians, "friends" of the Cree, arrived from the south and camped with them for several weeks, another 7 tents having gone elsewhere. Cocking wrote that the Archithinue, seemingly these same Fall Indians, lived to the southwest and only come northeast to trade with the Indian middlemen. However, this group had come because bison were scarce and they were starving.

In 1790, Edward Umfreville published a brief description of the west based on his wintering from 1784-87 at the then most western post on the North Saskatchewan River, near modern Frenchman Butte. Among the groups of western Indians he described were the Fall Indians or Gros Ventre:

This nation is thus named by us, and the Nehethawa Indians [Cree], from their inhabiting a country on the Southern branch of the [Saskatchewan] river, where the rapids are frequent. As they are not very numerous, and have a harsh guttural language peculiar to themselves [they must be part of a distant unknown tribe].

... the Canadian-French ... call them gros ventres, or big-bellies; and that without any reason....

Though we have interpreters for all the other Indian languages, none as yet have been able to attain a competency of this to make themselves understood; and the general method of conversing is by speaking the Black-foot tongue, which is agreeable and soon acquired.

According to Umfreville, as was suggested by Cocking, the Fall Indians did not live in the Eagle Hills area but to

the south. Their name is puzzling since there are no rapids on the South Saskatchewan (e.g. Johnson 1967:253-268) except, perhaps, on its upper tributaries. However, there was a famous rapids, known throughout the west, the Great Falls of the upper Missouri. Whether they were named for this feature is not clear.

It is also not clear why the traders had difficulty with their language as opposed to that of the related Blackfoot. It is possible they were simply not well known at the post. Other evidence suggests that the Fall Indians lived far from the North Saskatchewan: almost no Fall Indians traded at the HBC posts established on the North Saskatchewan after 1778. Hudson House, had no Fall Indians in 1778/79; and only two to four men the following years until a large group was in the vicinity in 1782 (Rich 1951:75,181,183,287). As late as 1783, a group of Fall Indians came who had never been at the post before (HBCA B.87/a/6 8 February 1783).

Hostilities appear to have broken out between the Fall Indians and the Cree and Assiniboin during the 1780s. There are few references to Fall Indians at Manchester House, next to the Eagle Hills, during this period. A band of Fall Indians coming to Umfreville's Post were attacked by Cree from the South Saskatchewan River to the east (HBCA B.121/a/2 1,3 May 1788). Hostilities continued, for in the fall the traders were told that all the Cree had fled from

the South Branch downriver to the forest for fear of reprisals from the Fall Indians (HBCA B.121/a/3 11,12 September 1788). In the spring of 1790, a large group of Fall Indians came to Manchester House who had avoided all the posts for the previous two years for fear of the Cree (HBCA B.121/a/4 12 May 1790).

Finally, the Cree attacked a camp of 16 tents of Fall Indians near the South Saskatchewan the summer of 1793. In retaliation the Fall Indians plundered Manchester House and the following summer attacked and burned South Branch House, the neighbouring Pedlars' posts being able to repulse them. The Gros Ventre then fled towards the Rockies where they split into two bands:

one of them supposed to be that which raided S[outh]. B[ranch]. has formed an alliance with the Snake Indians, formerly their mortal enemies, with the intention to abandon this quarter forever, and the other band Steer course in this direction to obtain peace of us and the nations which surround us (M'Gillivray 1929:39).

Groups of Fall Indians traded sporadically at the posts on the North Saskatchewan but the group responsible for the attacks on the posts did not reappear until 14 December 1796 when a large band of over 400 of those responsible came to Edmonton House (Johnson 1967:75). Small parties of Fall Indians continued to trade at Edmonton until at least 1800 (Johnson 1967), and at Fort Vermilion in 1808-1811 (Henry the Younger 1965 vol.ii). However, they were living far to

the south of the North Saskatchewan after 1815 according to the HBC district reports. The Edmonton report described the Fall Indians as living

principally on the line of the Bad River (South Saskatchewan) and to the Southward of it, from within one hundred miles of the Rocky Mountains to the conjunction of the Red Deer River with the Bad River (Johnson 1967:24 n.1).

This is corroborated by the Chesterfield House report of 1822/23: "the Muddy River [Peigan] and Fall Inds. in general possess all that extensive country which lies between the Bow River and the Northern Branches of the Missouri" (HBCA B.34/e/1 1822/23). However, they continued to raid as far as the lower North Saskatchewan into the early 1800s (Johnson 1967:245) and to the Moose Woods area in the 1820s (HBCA B.27/e/2, B.27/e/4).

There are no first-hand observations that the Fall Indians ever occupied the Branches area. Instead, they were visitors from the south to the Eagle Hills area, especially, where they were tolerated by the local Cree and Assiniboin. Attacks by Cree and Assiniboin from the east, starting in the late 1780s, led to their avoidance of even this area. However, there are traditional accounts which differ from these observations.

#### 13.4 THE FALL INDIANS AND THE BRANCHES OF THE SASKATCHEWAN RIVER.

Despite the lack of evidence that the Fall Indians ever occupied the Branches of the Saskatchewan, they were reputed to have occupied the area until they were driven away.

Although Alexander Mackenzie was not explicit, it is clear he identified two separate groups of Gros Ventre. He outlined the groups found, in turn, up the North Saskatchewan and down the South Saskatchewan. On the headwaters of the former were the Sarcee and on the South Saskatchewan, first the Peigan, then the Blackfoot and "Next to them, and who extend down to the confluence of the South and North branch, are the Fall, or Big-bellied Indians...about six hundred warriors" (1970:116). Yet, on the accompanying map (p.67), the Blood and Blackfoot are shown between the headwaters of the two rivers while the Fall Indians occupy the middle Red Deer River: other groups on the plains are not named.

According to Mackenzie, these Fall Indians were related to the Hidatsa although this point has been ignored. In his account of the general movements of the western Indians, Mackenzie wrote:

The Fall, or Big-bellied Indians, are from the South-Eastward also, and of [emphasis added] a people who inhabit the plains from the North bend of the [Missouri] river ... to the South bend of the Assiniboine River... seven hundred men. Some of them occasionally come to the latter river to [trade] (p.117).



Mackenzie makes only a passing comment on these other Gros Ventre in his description of the Assiniboine River: "The Assiniboines and some [emphasis added] of the Fall, or Big-bellied Indians, are the principal inhabitants of this country, and border on the river, occupying the central part of it" (p.112).

These vague accounts of the Fall Indians by both Mackenzie and Umfreville are the unacknowledged source for the historical account by John Richardson included in Franklin's narrative of his first journey to the Arctic:

The nations who were driven to the westward by the [Assiniboin] and the Cree ...now inhabit the country around Fort Augustus, and towards the foot of the rocky mountains, and ... are divided into five nations:- First the Pawaustic-ethin-yoowuc, or Fall Indians, so named from their former residence on the falls of the Saskatchewan.... their language is very guttural and difficult (Franklin 1970:108).

Richardson's account became entrenched in the later descriptions of the Gros Ventre and, with the identification of the Gros Ventre as being Atsina, underlie scholarly studies up to the present. However, there are other data which present a different picture, data which are hinted at by Mackenzie, but which were not published until the turn of the twentieth century. Before examining these other data, it should be pointed out that there is clear evidence that the Fall Indians known to Umfreville in the 1780s, or at least the short vocabulary he attributes to them, were

Atsina. By implication the Fall Indians seen by Cocking are also assumed to be Atsina (Flannery 1953:4; Rich 1949:313 n.) as are all other references to the Fall and Rapid Indians (Hodge 1971:51-52). However, two persons who visited both the Missouri River and the North Saskatchewan had different opinions.

David Thompson visited the Mandan and Hidatsa villages on the Missouri River from 29 December to 10 January 1798. In his Narrative written much later he referred to the Hidatsa as the Fall Indians. In the fair copy of his journal, they are the Willow Indians, although he says that they were commonly known as the "flying Fall Indians" (Wood 1977).

Thompson then gives their history.

The Fall Indians are now removed far from their original country, which was the Rapids of the Saskatchewan river, northward of Eagle Hill; A feud arose between them, and their then neighbours, the Nahathaways and the Stone Indians confederates [sic], and [who] were too powerful for them, they then lived wholly in tents, and removed across the Plains to the Missisourie, became confederate with the Mandanes, and from them learned to build houses.... Some of them continue to live in tents and are in friendship with the Chyenne Indians, .... Another band of these [Hidatsa] now dwell in tents near the head of this River in alliance with the Peegans and their allies (1968:235-236).

He repeats this history when he later describes the Fall Indians in his discussion of the Plains Indians and their history:

The Fall Indians, their former residence

was on the Rapids of the Saskatchewan, about 100 miles above Cumberland House; they speak a harsh language, which no other tribe attempts to learn, in number about 70 tents at ten souls to each tent.... Their Chief was of a bad character, and brought them into so many quarrels with their allies, they had to leave their country and wander to the right bank of the Mississourie, to near the Mandane villages (1968:327).

Thompson is explicit: the Fall Indians are the same as the Hidatsa and they once lived near the Forks of the Saskatchewan. In this he is supported by Alexander Henry the Younger who also visited the Missouri River villagers from 19-29 July 1806. Henry refers to the Hidatsa as Big Bellies but, like Thompson, says that they call themselves the Willow Indians. He points out only that the Hidatsa were very similar to the Crow "in manners, customs, and dress" and that their speech was "nearly the same" (1965 vol.ii:335, 399).

However, in his description of the Indians at Fort Vermilion, circa 1809, he wrote:

The Big Bellies, or Rapid Indians, are now stationed S[outh]. of the Slaves, between the South Branch and the Missourie. Formerly they inhabited the point of land between the North and South branches of the Saskatchewan to the junction of those two streams; from which circumstance, it is supposed, they derive the name of Rapid Indians. They are of the same nation as the Big bellies of the Missourie, whom I have already mentioned. Their dress, customs, and manners appear to me to be the same. Formerly they were very numerous, and much dreaded by the neighbouring nations. But since the smallpox their numbers have diminished very much.... The Slaves have fought many bloody battles with them, though they are now on amicable terms.... In dressing

these [bison] robes they are far superior to the Slaves and fully equal to the Mandans.... [They were responsible for the attacks on the posts on North Saskatchewan River in 1793 and 1794]. They may now form about 80 tents, containing 240 men bearing arms (1965 vol.ii:530-531).

Still later, after his first wintering in 1810-11 at Rocky Mountain House which had been established "for the Piegans, Fall Indians, and Sarcees," Henry again described the local Indians:

The Fall Indians I have already mentioned formerly inhabited the tract of land between the North and South branches of the Saskatchewan.... their turbulent disposition was the principal cause of their abandoning their former lands] They are no doubt from the same stock as the Big bellies of the Missouri and the Crows. Their dress, manners and customs are the same throughout. In their language there is some differences; still they comprehend each other perfectly well.... (1965 vol.ii:733).

The editors of both the Thompson and Henry works state that they have confused the Hidatsa with the Atsina and that the references to the Fall Indians are to the Atsina (Thompson 1968:224 n.1; Henry the Younger 1965 vol.ii:733 n.6). Indeed Henry's editor goes so far as to insert his opinion in the body of the narrative: "They are (not) of the same nation as the Big Bellies...." It was perhaps these strong editorial statements, first published in 1897 and 1916, that led scholars to ignore the statements that the Fall Indians were related to the Hidatsa.

It is most difficult to ignore these comments. First, Thompson and Henry speak with great authority: they were the only observers of their time who knew the Fall Indians on the North Saskatchewan and who had also visited the Missouri River villages. Thompson spent only a short time at the villages, and that mostly with the Mandan. However, he had wintered at posts in the Branches area from 1786-89, 1793-94 and 1799-1800 and he was at Rocky Mountain House on the upper North Saskatchewan in 1800-02 and 1806-07.

Henry's published journal of his visit to the Missouri covers some 82 pages of fine print. Although he did not winter on the Saskatchewan until 1808-09, he then was in contact with the Fall Indians until at least the spring of 1811 and perhaps until he moved to the mouth of the Columbia River in 1813. While at the Mandan villages, he had visited both a Cheyenne and a Crow camp and had even, without further comment, seen several Arapaho. Thus when he says that the Fall Indians were related to the Hidatsa and Crow his word carries weight.

Nevertheless there are problems with their accounts. . Thompson speaks of the Fall Indian occupation of the Branches area as being in the past: "their former residence," "are now removed," "became confederate with the Mandan." The Hidatsa had been in their villages on the Missouri for many years before his observations were made. Yet Thompson fails to explain the presence of Fall Indians

in the Saskatchewan area, who were trading at posts on the North Saskatchewan during his sojourn in the west .

The same problem does not occur with Henry's account: he writes only that the Fall Indians, who are related to the Mandan, were forced to leave their homeland in the Branches area and to move to the southwest where they were found in his day. But the Fall Indians in the southwest seem to have been Atsina. François-Antoine Laroque travelled with a group of Crow, close relations of the Hidatsa, and was on the Yellowknife River near modern Billings, Montana on 9 September 1805:

At night a young man arrived who saw and conversed (I cannot say he spoke for the whole conservation was carried on by signs they not understanding one another's language) with a fort de prairie Big Belly... they are 275 or 300 Lodges (Laroque 1985:191).

These Big Belly who could not speak Crow, must have been Atsina. They were acquainted with John McDonald of Garth who was then trading at Chesterfield House as they portrayed him, correctly, as having a withered arm. As we have seen, however, Henry said that the Fall Indians and Hidatsa understood each other perfectly, although their languages were slightly different.

John McDonald of Garth apparently mentions the arrival of these Big Bellies in his Autobiographical Notes, written in his old age. However, he too gives contradictory evidence. McDonald, who was at Fort George at the time, described the attack on Manchester House in 1793:

A war had broken out between the Prairie Cree and the Mandanes on the Mississourie .... The Mississourie Indians, knowing the Cree were in league with the whites ..., determined war on them also (McDonald of Garth 1960:18-19).

According to McDonald, it was Mississourie Indians who pillaged South Branch House in 1794 and who, when he was at Chesterfield House in 1804-05, rode up to say that although they had made peace with the whites, they were at war with the Blackfoot. Supposedly, this was the group Laroque saw on the Yellowstone River.

MacDonald was not simply confusing the "Mandan" with the Atsina. In the spring of 1805, on his return from Chesterfield House, his men were attacked by the Hidatsa who were seen later with both scalps and booty (Wood and Thiessen 1985:166-69, 233, 242-43; McDonald of Garth 1960:31-33). This event means that we should re-evaluate the evidence for Hidatsa in Saskatchewan.

### 13.5 THE HIDATSA IN SASKATCHEWAN

Word of the villages on the Missouri had reached traders on Hudson Bay well before La Vérendrye's visit in 1738-39. Captives brought to Hudson Bay before 1714, apparently from the Missouri, told Jérémie (1926:33) of a river flowing to the west, of bearded men who lived in stone houses, of the use of white kettles and the cultivation of maize. Begon included added details of these captives in his report of 1716:

Le Sieur Jérémie en a vu deux à la baye d'Hudson, que ces Sauvages y ont amenés, lesquels ils avoient pris au bord de la mer, qui ressemblent à d'autres Sauvages, à l'exception qu'ils ont les cheveux crépus.... il y avoit des villes et des bourgades fortifiées; que les hommes alloient à cheval et les femmes en croupe; que ces hommes sont blancs et barbus (Margry 1886 vol. vi:497).

In 1715, the Mountain Indians told James Knight a garbled account of people who grew corn (see above section 8.5). Further, two Cree or Assiniboin Indians came to York Factory with a Crow female captive, the wife of one of them. Knight gave them presents to take to her people but the group starved to death on their return inland from the Bay (HBCA B.239/a/3 1 September 1716, 30 January 1717). These comments show only that the Cree and Assiniboin were familiar with the Missouri. Other evidence indicates the Hidatsa were utilizing southern Saskatchewan.

There is little doubt that the Naywatamee Poets seen by Henry Kelsey in the Touchwood Hills area in 1691 were Hidatsa, although they have been identified as Atsina (Morton 1973:16,113), Blackfoot (Whillans 1955:144-45) and Mandan (Tyrrell 1911:12). First, Kelsey calls them Poets, a name applied throughout the HBC records only to Siouan-speakers. Thus the group was neither Blackfoot nor Atsina, both Algonquian-speakers. Further, when he was about to meet them, Kelsey ensured that his group of Assiniboin included "one of wch Could speak both Languages for to be my



interpreter" (1929:15). Thus the group was neither Cree nor Assiniboin. Further, the Naywatamee Poets were enemies of both the Cree and Assiniboin. so were probably not just another Assiniboin group. Yet, the Assiniboin were sufficiently familiar with them that at least one member was bilingual and the groups had been able to agree on a rendezvous.

Cocking had said that among the enemies of the Cree, Assiniboin and the Blackfoot Confederacy were the Wahtee or Vault Indians. These were named after the Cree wahti meaning "hole in the ground." The Hidatsa and Mandan villagers were first made known to La Vérendrye as the "Sioux who go underground" (La Vérendrye 1968:107,298; Aulneau 1893:34). The derivation of Kelsey's "Naywatamee Poets" is this same Cree word which, in this case, refers to the Hidatsa.

There is later evidence for Hidatsa groups in southern Saskatchewan. In 1800, Peter Fidler saw evidence of what seems to have been a Hidatsa group on the South Saskatchewan, north of modern Swift Current:

...3 Mud houses [his emphasis] on this side amongst a few poplars, they are of a circular form about 9 feet in diameter & 4 1/2 high, they appear to be nearly 20 years old, they are said to have been built by a small war party from the Mis sissoury river, who live in that kind of habitation (Johnson 1967:266 n.3).

The earliest fur trade journals from the Qu'Appelle River and adjacent Assiniboin refer to raids into both those areas between 1801 and 1823 by the "Mandan," the generic term for groups from the Missouri villages (Russell 1989). Hidatsa warriors were seen with scalps and goods taken from John MacDonald of Garth's party which they had raided near Moose Woods, near Saskatoon, in 1805 .

As late as 1823, the boundaries of the re-established Chesterfield House were said to be bordered on the east "by the Stone and Flying Fall Indian lands" (HBCA B.34/e/1 1822-23). It will be remembered that much earlier, David Thompson had said upon first meeting the Hidatsa that they were "commonly called the flying Fall Indians" (Wood and Thiessen 1985:111). Thus it was probably the Hidatsa, rather than the Atsina, who occupied the Qu'Appelle valley in 1804, when Harmon wrote that the Cree and Assiniboin "seldom come so far out into the Plains as where they now are, for this part of the Country belongs to the Rapid Indians" (1957:77).

Indeed, there is even support for both Thompson's and Henry's reports of Hidatsa once living in Saskatchewan. William Clark explained to Nicholas Biddle who was editing the papers for publication:

These Minnitarees (who are what [Alexander] McKenzie calls Fall Indians) say that they have relations on the Saskashawan whom they did not know of till they met them in their war parties & in fighting them were astonished at discovering that they spoke

their own language. These probably the Minnitarees of Fort de Prairie whom McKenzie calls Fall Indians. The roving Indians on the Saskashawan were first known by the English who called them Fall Indians & when they found those of the Missouri speaking the same language called them also Fall Indians. Afterwards when it was known that the Missouri Fall Indians were called Minitarees those who spoke the same language on the Saskashawan were called Minitarees on Fort de prairie residing near the Establishment in the Prairie on that river. The Minitarees are called by the French gros ventres - by the English big bellies - names applied also to all the Fall Indians (Wood 1986:85).

Both Thompson and Henry say that the original homeland of the Fall Indians was in the Branches of the Saskatchewan - either the rapids near Prince Albert or downriver from Nipawin - but there is no historic evidence for this. The only "strange" group recorded in the Forks area was the group seen one day's travel above Fort la Corne by Anthony Henday. However, these were from the same camp he met near Red Deer, Alberta and are usually considered to have been one of the Blackfoot Nation groups. Both Cocking and Umfreville say that the Rapid Indians/ Gros Ventre came from the south. Further, few Fall Indians traded at any of the posts on the lower Saskatchewan which were established in the early 1780s.

Thus, it is problematic as to whether the Atsina or Hidatsa group of Gros Ventre were ever pushed from an original homeland in the Forks area by invading Cree. Rather, the Hidatsa seem to have occupied southeastern

Saskatchewan while the Atsina were to the southwest.

Although both groups made sporadic forays further north, neither their identity nor movements can be used to support the view that they fell before invading Cree and Assiniboin.

## 14. SUMMARY

### 14.1 THE ACCEPTED VIEW OF CREE HISTORY

An evaluation of the various proponents of the widely held view that the Cree and Assiniboin invaded the west reveals two aspects. First, the view was not established in the twentieth century. Instead, it can be traced directly back to Alexander Mackenzie's statements published in 1801. All later nineteenth century writers use his statements without, however, acknowledging their debt to him. As a result what appears to be independent support for his views by other observers is simply duplication. Second, the view as expressed by twentieth century authorities was not derived from a critical analysis of the historic sources. Instead, the literature was examined for data to support a view that was already accepted.

As explorers moved into the western hinterland from the Great Lakes and from Hudson Bay, they continued to meet Cree groups. Consequently, it was erroneously assumed that since early data placed the Cree to the east while later data placed them in the west, that the Cree themselves had moved west. This is apparent in the historical periods used by Mandelbaum and Hlady to illustrate the movement of the Cree. However, what was reflected was the expansion westwards of European knowledge of the Cree.

#### 14.2 MANDELBAUM'S HISTORY OF THE CREE

Mandelbaum, the most authoritative of the proponents of a westward invasion of the Cree, is ill-served by the evidence he advances to support his views. His work has two main flaws. First, he accepted fully the statements of Father Druillettes in the Relations of 1657 that the Cree were to be found in four groups east of Lake Nipigon. In fact, Druillettes had obtained the information second-hand from persons who knew nothing of the area west of Lake Nipigon. By placing the Cree homeland in this area as late as 1690, he ignored his own data from Henry Kelsey that the Cree were then present in east-central Saskatchewan and his own statement that the Cree of the Athabasca were raiding to the north before the arrival of the Europeans.

The second major flaw in Mandelbaum's work is the omission of Henday's 1754-1755 journal, a basic document for any study of the history of western Canadian Indians. Because Henday was the first to record extensively his day-to-day travels in the interior, his observations are crucial. Further, he shows that the Cree and Assiniboin were established in central Alberta in his time. By ignoring Henday, Mandelbaum placed the Cree in eastern Saskatchewan in the mid-1700s, some 800 km east of their western range.

Mandelbaum does not present any evidence that the Cree

migrated into the west, that fur depletions were a problem, nor that their neighbours, except for the problematic Gros Ventre, to the west were displaced. What Mandelbaum documents, instead, is that the first observers into any specific area noted the presence of Cree.

#### 14.3 THE ASSINIBOIN

There is no evidence that the Assiniboin accompanied the Cree into the west. Instead, the earliest data, even though they are vague, suggest that the Assiniboin were well established far into Saskatchewan before 1700 and that they extended beyond the Cree. Both the early French and the HBC considered them to be in contact with the Dogrib or western Athapaskans. Further, the presence of two distinct Assiniboin groups in the earliest records from the Bay indicates that they were separated from their parent Sioux and from each other before the fur trade was established.

#### 14.4 THE ARCHITHINUE

There is no evidence that the Cree and Assiniboin were sweeping over the Blackfoot groups in the mid-1700s. It is not possible to identify the various members of the Blackfoot Nation and their allies before the 1760s since they were all referred to as Archithinue, as were also their enemies further west. However, Saukamappee's account shows the Peigan were an identifiable group in the 1730s.

Further, all the first-hand accounts, from Saukamappee's time until the 1790s, show that instead of being enemies of the Cree and Assiniboin, the various groups were allies in their wars with the more distant Archithinue. The contradictory evidence of Joseph Pink in 1769 either pertained to temporary conditions or, more likely, involved the Sarcee and the Gros Ventre.

There are no data regarding the Archithinue before Saukamappee's account. Although he mentions only one camp each of Cree and Assiniboin close to the borders of the Snake territory, the lack of mention of other such groups is not surprising. Saukamappee was simply explaining how he came to be adopted by the Peigan and the presence or absence of other Cree and Assiniboin groups was incidental to his story. His account places the Peigan and their allies near the Eagle Hills in the 1730s but his description of the set battles of his day indicates a traditional warring ground where groups collected from a large area on a regular basis. However, he says nothing of the territory of the Peigan nor of their allies.

It is curious that, although James Knight describes the peace missions he sent northwest to the Chipewyans and to the Athabasca area as well as to the southwest from the Manitoba Escarpment, he makes almost no comment about the Saskatchewan River which in later days was to be the focus of the fur trade. His silence about this area may well be a



result of an already existing alliance with the Blackfoot nation. His reference to the feared enemy on the Saskatchewan is, no doubt, to the Snake whose raids were feared throughout the 1700s until the smallpox epidemic of 1781-1782.

There is no evidence that the Atsina were driven from a homeland in the Branches of the Saskatchewan River. Instead, they seem to have always been sporadic visitors from the southwest. However, the Hidatsa have played a greater role in southeastern Saskatchewan than has been realized.

#### 14.5 THE LOCATIONS OF CREE GROUPS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

There are no data on the Western Cree before 1690 that would enable us to delineate their western boundaries. However, there is nothing in the French data from Lake Superior to indicate that their borders lay east of Lake Winnipeg since the French were largely ignorant of the entire area west of Lake Superior.

Kelsey's observations of the Cree and Assiniboin resulted from his trip from the Carrot River to the Beaver/Touchwood Hills area in the summer of 1691. He mentions seeing Assiniboin but not Cree camps. However, Cree were raiding into the area and, as Kelsey's use of Cree for geographic terms indicates, the Assiniboin were quite familiar with Cree. Further, Kelsey may have simply missed

seeing Cree. If they followed the patterns of later Cree in the area, Kelsey was at the western edge of the parkland when the Cree would have just been moving inland from the Escarpment after summering on the lower Saskatchewan River.

There is no other first-hand account of the Cree and Assiniboin until Henday wintered in central Alberta in 1754-1755. Here, especially in the Edmonton area, he found both Cree and Assiniboin in small scattered wintering camps. There is no suggestion that they were recent arrivals in the area.

The identification of variously named Cree groups trading at the Bay between 1715 and 1760 and first-hand accounts of them by the HBC inland winterers between 1754 and 1775 reveal the presence of stable groups who differed from each other in the manner of their adaptations to their particular environments.

It is possible that the Cree were moving up the North Saskatchewan during the early historic period. However, there are no historic data to either support or deny the event. It is clear, however, that the Cree occupation of the upper Churchill and, perhaps the adjacent Athabasca River was independent of and preceded the fur trade. As well, the Cree appear to have been in the eastern parklands of Saskatchewan in the upper Assiniboine River area. However, both the Cree and Assiniboin appear to have avoided southeastern Saskatchewan for much of the 1700s, probably

because of the Hidatsa groups from the Missouri River who had both occupied and raided the area from Kelsey's time.

#### 14.6 THE SOUTHERN TIER OF CREE

Cree groups from the Manitoba Escarpment and Lake Winnipeg area were among the first to trade at the Bay, probably because they were already used to trading at James Bay and were aware of the plans for the York Factory area. There were vague hints from the French on Lake Superior that Cree were in the Lake Winnipeg area in the late 1600s. This is supported by statements, also by the French, at the York Factory area. The oldest daily journals from the Bay, dating from 1714, refer to several Cree groups, among them the Sturgeon Cree from the Manitoba Escarpment. They remained in the area throughout the 1700s without migrating west. The Susuhana Cree, from the southern Manitoba Escarpment were probably the same as the Crees of the Plains, mentioned by La Vérendrye 1741. Little is known of the Cree to the southwest since the earliest accounts from the Qu'Appelle and middle Assiniboine rivers date to the late 1700s. However, the Cree and Assiniboin were raiding along the upper Missouri River in 1734, according to a map drawn by Cree for La Vérendrye. Further, captives from the Mandan/Hidatsa villages had been brought to Hudson Bay between 1697 and 1714.

It is true that both Swampy Cree and Ojibwa from east

of Lake Winnipeg were moving into southern Manitoba and the Escarpment area as Mackenzie states. However, this was a movement of the late 1700s and early 1800s and did not reflect an invasion into the west. Rather these groups were replacing previous populations of Cree and Ojibwa who had been decimated by smallpox. These "recent" arrivals are still found in much the same area today.

#### 14.7 THE MIDDLE TIER OF CREE

Little is known of the Cree groups along the Saskatchewan River until 1754. Saukamappee had said that The Pas area had been the home of his "fathers" for many years. Further, he mentioned Cree and Assiniboin close to the borders of the Snake country in the 1730s similar to Henday's comments regarding Cree in Alberta. The gifts given in 1719 to a Cree "from the head of Nelson River" would strongly suggest that the Cree were then on the Saskatchewan, but, perhaps, not as far as the Assiniboin who were "on the north side of the head of Port Nelson River," probably the North Saskatchewan River.

#### 14.8 THE NORTHERN TIER OF CREE

That the Cree were long time occupants of the upper Churchill River is supported by Mackenzie's comment that there was no memory of previous occupants in the area. It is clear that at some time in the past the Cree moved into

the Athabasca area just as Mackenzie states. However, he gives no date for this move which could well have preceded the fur trade since Mackenzie was in the area only some 100 years after the arrival of traders at the Bay. There is little doubt that the alliance between the Cree and Beaver Indians established at Peace Point refers to the missions of the Cree leader, Swan, between 1715-1721, although there is no information as to the length of time the Cree were in the general area before this date. However, the Lake Athabasca area, as opposed to the Athabasca River, seems to have been peripheral to the Cree both before and after the smallpox epidemic. There is little to suggest that the Cree camps on the Slave River described by Hearne in the 1770s reflected an intensive occupation.

There is little information about the Cree occupation of the boreal forest north of the Churchill River between Southern Indian Lake and Reindeer Lake. According to Thompson, the Cree had retreated from Reindeer Lake by the late 1700s. If so, it was probably a result of the smallpox epidemic. However, like Lake Athabasca, Reindeer Lake seems to have been peripheral to the Cree: traders there during the 1800s dealt mostly with Chipewyan.

The Cree occupied the Hudson Bay Lowlands, at least seasonally, throughout the 1600s. They were aware of Munck's abandoned ships and named the lower Churchill "the River of Strangers" and Fox reported signs of Indian camps

at the mouth of the Nelson River in 1631. However, the journals from both York Factory and Churchill show the Cree lived in the interior. Their visits to the coast were sporadic, perhaps to hunt migrating geese. There is nothing to indicate the Cree displaced an earlier population of Chipewyan. At the same time, Chipewyan groups did not move east to the Bay from Great Slave Lake as a result of the fur trade. Instead, the first traders reported them, under the name of the Louzy Indians, to the north of Churchill in the 1680s.

#### 14.9 SUMMARY

The idea that the Cree and Assiniboin invaded the west is derived from Alexander Mackenzie. He thought, correctly, that because the Cree language was related to the numerous Algonquian languages spoken in the east, their original homeland must lie there as well (e.g. Siebert 1967). A close reading shows that Mackenzie does not define a time period for their movements. In fact, he mentions it in connection with continent-wide movements of all the western interior Indians which he seems to relate to the peopling of the New World.

These aspects of his thinking have been ignored and it is his other vague statements which have been taken to show that the Cree were searching for furs and that guns aided them in defeating their enemies.

We are almost forced to think of a Cree invasion into the west and their change into a plains-oriented group whenever we use the term Plains Cree. The term is an unfortunate use of words for several reasons. First, the Plains Cree never occupied the plains. Rather, they have always used the parkland as a home base and moved onto the plains only to obtain bison. They have done so since the HBC men wintered with them in the middle 1700s. The locations of Cree reserves in Saskatchewan today show that they are still occupying the parkland. Indeed, the distribution of the modern Cree today is almost exactly the same as in the middle 1700s. The only exception are the several reserves in the Wood Mountain and Maple Creek area. Thus Mandelbaum was in serious error when he described a shift from a forest-oriented to a plains-oriented life which the Cree supposedly underwent in the 1700s.

## 15. BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 15.1 PUBLISHED SOURCES

Anderson, Raoul

- 1970 Alberta Stoney (Assiniboin) Origins and Adaptations: A Case for Reappraisal. Ethnohistory 17(1-2): 49-61.

Aulneau, Jean-Pierre

- 1893 The Aulneau Collection 1734-1745. Edited by Arthur E. Jones. Montreal.

Bell, C.N.

- 1928 The Journal of Henry Kelsey (1691-92). Transactions (New Series) No.4, Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

Bell, Robert

- 1881 Report on Hudson's Bay and some of the Lakes and Rivers Lying to the West of It. Geological Survey of Canada, Ottawa.

Bigsby, John J.

- 1850 The Shoe and Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas. Two volumes. London.

Birket-Smith, Kaj

- 1930 Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology. Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921-24. Vol. VI, Pt.3. Copenhagen

Bishop, Charles and M. Estelle Smith

- 1975 Early Historic Populations in Northwestern Ontario: Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Interpretations. American Antiquity 40 (1): 54-63.

Bougainville, Louis-Antoine de

- 1908 Memoir of Bougainville: 1757. The French Regime in Wisconsin. Edited by Rueben G. Thwaites. Wisconsin Historical Collections, Vol. XVIII, pp. 167-195.

Bowsfield, Hartwell

- 1974 La France, Joseph. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 341-342. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.



Butler, Willaim Francis

1883 The Great Lone Land. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, London.

1968 The Wild North Land. Reprinted. M.G. Hurtig, Edmonton. Originally published 1873, Sampson Low, Marston, Low & Searle, London.

Byrne, William J.

1973 The Archaeology and Prehistory of Southern Alberta as Reflected by Ceramics. Three vols. National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, Archaeological Survey of Canada, Paper No. 14, Ottawa.

Campeau, Lucien

1966 Druillettes (Dreuillettes, Drouillettes, Drouillet, Drouillettes, Druellettes, Druilletes), Gabriel. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume I, 1000 to 1700. George W. Brown, General Editor, pp. 281-282. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Carver, Jonathan

1974 Travels through the Interior Parts of North-America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768. Reprinted. Coles, Toronto. Originally published 1778, London.

1976 The Journals of Jonathan Carver and Related Documents. Edited by John Parker. Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

Champagne, Antoine

1971 Nouvelles Etudes sur les La Verendrye et le Poste de L'Ouest. Les Cahiers de l'Institut d'Histoire No.17. Les Presses de l'Universit e Laval, Quebec.

1974 Gaultier de La V erendrye, Louis-Joseph. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 341-342. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Chaput, Donald

1974 Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, Jacques. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 374-376. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Christy, Miller (editor)

- 1894 The Voyages of Captain Luke Fox of Hull, and Captain Thomas James of Bristol, in Search of a North-West Passage. 2 vols. Hakluyt Society, First Series, Nos. 88-89, London.

Coats, William

- 1852 The Geography of Hudson's Bay: Being the Remarks of Capt. W. Coats in Many Voyages to that Locality between the Years 1727 and 1751. Edited by John Barrow. First Series, No. XI, Hakluyt Society, London.

Cocking, Matthew

- 1908 An Adventurer from Hudson Bay: being the Journal of a Journey Performed by Matthew Cocking, 1772-1773. Edited by L.J. Burpee. Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Third Series 2(2): 91-121.

Curtis, Edward S.

- 1976 The North American Indian. Vol. 18. Reprinted. Johnson Reprint, New York. Originally published 1928, Plimpton Press, Norwood, Mass.

Davidson, Gordon C.

- 1967 The North West Company. Reprinted. Russell and Russell, New York. Originally published 1918, University of California Publications in History, Berkley.

Davies, K.G. (editor)

- 1965 Letters from Hudson Bay: 1703-40. Vol. XXV. The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.

Dawson, K.A.C.

- 1976 Historic Populations of Northwestern Ontario. Papers of the Seventh Algonquian Conference, 1975. Pp. 157-174. Edited by William Cowan. Carlton University, Ottawa.

Dempsey, Hugh A.

- 1986 Indian Tribes of Alberta. Revised edition. Glenbow Museum, Calgary.

Denig, E.T.

- 1961 Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arickaras, Assiniboines, Crees, Crows. Edited by John C. Ewers. University of Oklahoma, Norman.

Dobbs, Arthur

- 1967 An Account of the Countries Adjoining Hudson's Bay, in the North-West Part of America. Reprinted. Johnson Reprint, New York. Originally published 1744, J. Robinson, London.

Dodge, B.A.

- 1969 Inventory of the David Thompson Journals. Department of Public Records and Archives, Ontario.

Downes, P.G.

- 1943 Sleeping Island: The Story of One Man's Travels in the Great Barren Lands of the Canadian North. Coward-McCann, New York.

Drage, Theodore Swain [Charles Swain]

- 1748 An Account of a Voyage for the Discovery of a North-West Passage by Hudson's Streights, to the Western and Southern Ocean of America, Performed in the Year 1746 and 1747, in the Ship California, Capt. Francis Smith, Commander By the Clerk of the California. Two vols. London.

Eames, Aled

- 1966 Button, Sir Thomas. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume I, 1000 to 1700. George W. Brown, General Editor, pp. 281-282. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Ellis, Henry

- 1748 A Voyage to Hudson's-Bay by the Dobbs Galley and California in the Years 1746 and 1747 for the Discovering a North West Passage, with an Accurate Survey of the Coast and a Short Natural History of the Country. Whitridge, London.

Faries, R. (editor)

- 1938 A Dictionary of the Cree Language as Spoken by the Indians in the Provinces of Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Church of England in Canada, Toronto.

Flannery, Regina

- 1953 The Gros Ventres of Montana: Part 1, Social Life. Catholic University of America, Washington.

Forbis, Richard

- 1963 The Direct Historical Approach in the Prairie Provinces of Canada. Great Plains Journal 3(1): 9-16.

Francis, Daniel and Toby Morantz

1983 Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay 1600-1870. McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal.

Franklin, John

1970 Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819, 20, 21, and 22. Reprinted. Charles E. Tuttle, Rutland, Vermont. Originally published 1823, John Murray, London.

Galatin, Albert

1973 A Synopsis of the Indian Tribes within the United States East of the Rocky Mountains and in the British and Russian Possessions in North America. Reprinted. AMS Press, New York. Originally published in Archaeologia Americana, Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society, Vol. 2, 1836.

Gates, Charles M. (editor)

1965 Five Fur Traders of the Northwest: Being the Narrative of Peter Pond and the Diaries of John Macdonnell, Archibald N. McLeod, Hugh Faries, and Thomas Connor. Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul.

Gillespie, Beryl C.

1975 Territorial Expansion of the Chipewyan in the Eighteenth Century. In Proceedings: Northern Athapaskan Conference, 1971. Edited by A. McFayden Clark, pp. 350-388. National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper 27, vol.2. Ottawa.

1981 Territorial Groups Before 1821: Athapaskans of the Shield and the Mackenzie Drainage. In Subarctic, edited by June Helm, pp. 161-168. Handbook of North American Indians, vol. 6, William C. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

Goddard, Ives

1981 Synonymy: Athapaskan. In Subarctic, edited by June Helm, p. 168. Handbook of North American Indians, vol. 6, William C. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

Gorst, Thomas

- 1978 Extract of Mr. Thomas Gorst's Journall in the Voyage to Hudsons Bay begun the 31th [sic] day of May 1670. In Caesars of the Wilderness, by Grace Lee Nute. Appendix 2, pp.286-292. Reprinted. The Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul. Originally published 1943, Appleton-Century, New York.

Gough, Barry M.

- 1983 Peter Pond. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume V 1801 to 1820. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp 681-686. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Graham, Andrew

- 1969 Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay, 1767-1791. Edited by Glyndwr Williams. Vol. XXVII, Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.

Great Britain

- 1749a Report from the Committee Appointed to Inquire into the State and Conditions of the Countries Adjoining to Hudson's Bay, and of the Trade Carried on There. Parliament, House of Commons, London.
- 1749b Papers Presented to the Committee Appointed to Inquire into the State and Conditions of the Countries Adjoining to Hudson's Bay, and of the Trade Carried on There. Parliament, House of Commons, London.

Greenberg, Adolph M. and James Morrison

- 1982 Group Identities in the Boreal Forest: The Origin of the Northern Ojibwa. Ethnohistory. 29(2): 75-102.

Harmon, Daniel W.

- 1957 Sixteen Years in the Indian Country. Edited by W.Kaye Lamb. Macmillan, Toronto.

Hearne, Samuel

- 1958 A Journey to the Northern Ocean: A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772. Edited by Richard Glover. Macmillan, Toronto.

Hearne, Samuel

- 1911 A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, and 1772. Edited by J.B.Tyrrell. Vol. VI. The Champlain Society, Toronto.

Hector, James and W.F.W. Vaux

- 1860 Notice of the Indians Seen by the Exploring Expedition Under the Command of Captain Palliser. Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London. I:245-261.

Helm, June

- 1965 Bilaterality in the Socio-Territorial Organization of the Arctic Drainage Dene. Ethnology 4(4): 361-385.

Henday, Anthony

- 1907 York Factory to the Blackfeet Country: The Journal of Anthony Hendry [sic], 1754-55. Edited by L.J.Burpee. Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada. Series III 1(2):307-361.

Henry, Alexander the Elder

- 1908 Memorandum By Alexander Henry on an Overland Route to the Pacific. In The Search for the Western Sea: The Story of the Exploration of North-Western America. Lawrence J. Burpee. Appendix, pp. 578-587. Alston Rivers, London.

- 1969 Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories Between the Years 1760-1776. Edited by James Bain. Reprinted. Hurtig, Edmonton. Originally published 1901, George N. Morany, Toronto.

Henry, Alexander the Younger

- 1965 New Light on the History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and of David Thompson. Edited by Elloit Coues. 2 volumes. Ross & Haines, Minneapolis. Originally published 1897, New York.

Hewes, Gordon

- 1948 Early Tribal Migrations in the Northern Great Plains. Plains Archeological Conference Newsletter. Vol I (4):3-12.

Hickerson, Harold

- 1956 The Genesis of a Trading Post Band: The Pembina Chippewa. Ethnohistory 3(4): 289-345.

Hind, Henry Youle

1859 Papers Relative to the Exploration of the Country between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement. British Parliament, London.

1971 Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858. Two volumes in one. Reprinted. Hurtig, Edmonton. Originally published 1860, Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, London.

Hives, Harry Ernest

1943 A Cree Grammar: Being a Simplified Approach to the Study of the Language of the Cree Indians of Canada. Published by authority of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada. Modern Press, Saskatoon.

Hlady, Walter

1964 Indian Migrations in Manitoba and the West. In Papers of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba. Series III Vol.17: 24-53.

Hodge, F.W.

1971 Handbook of Indians of Canada. Appendix to the Tenth Report of the Geographic Board of Canada. Abridged from Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico. Two volumes. Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 30. Reprinted. Coles, Toronto. Originally published 1913, Ottawa.

Hood, Robert

1974 To the Arctic by Canoe: The Journal and Paintings of Robert Hood, Midshipman with Franklin. Edited by C. Stuart Houston. The Arctic Institute of North America, Montreal.

Horden, John

1881 A Grammar of the Cree Language. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London.

Howse, Joseph

1844 Grammar of the Cree Language, with which is Combined an Analysis of the Chippeway Dialect. J.G.F. & J.Rivington, London.

Hutcheson, Maud M.

- 1969 Pierre-Gabrielle (Maret, Marais) Marest. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, pp 454-455. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Hyde, George E.

- 1959 Indians of the High Plains: From the Prehistoric Period to the Coming of the Europeans. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Innis, Harold A.

- 1962 The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History. Revised edition. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Isham, James

- 1949 James Isham's Observations in Hudson's Bay, 1743 and Notes and Observations on a Book Entitled a Voyage to Hudson's Bay in the Dobbs Galley, 1749. Edited by E.E. Rich. Vol.XII, The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.

Jenness, Diamond

- 1963 The Indians of Canada. Anthropological Series No. 15, National Museum of Canada Bulletin 65. Ottawa.

Jérémie, Nicolas

- 1926 Twenty Years at York Factory, 1694-1714: Jérémie's Account of Hudson Strait and Bay. Edited by R. Douglas and J.N. Wallace. Thorburn and Abbott, Ottawa.

Johnson, Alice M.

- 1967 Saskatchewan Journals and Correspondence 1795-1802. Vol. XXVI, The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.

- 1974 Norton, Richard. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 489-490. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Kelsey, Henry

- 1929 The Kelsey Papers. Edited by Arthur G. Doughty and Chester Martin. Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

Kehoe, Alice B.

- 1981 North American Indians: A Comprehensive Account. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs.



Kehoe, Thomas F. and Alice B. Kehoe

1974a The Identification of the Fall or Rapid Indians.  
Plains Anthropologist, Vol.19 (65):231-32.

1974b Note to "The Identification of the Fall or Rapid  
Indians." Plains Anthropologist, Vol.19 (66):302.

King, Richard

1836 Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the  
Arctic Ocean in 1833, 1834 and 1835: Under the  
Command of Capt. Back, R.N. Richard Bentley,  
London.

Knight, James

1932 The Founding of Churchill, Being the Journal of  
Captain James Knight, Governor-in-Chief in  
Hudson's Bay, from the 14th of July to the 13th of  
September, 1717. Edited by J.F. Kenney. J.M.Dent  
and Sons, Toronto.

Lacombe, Albert

1874 Grammaire de la Langue des Cris. Beauchemin &  
Valois, Montreal.

La Potherie, Bacqueville de (Claude-Charles le Roy de la  
Potherie)

1968 Letters of La Potherie. In Documents Relating to  
the Early History of Hudson Bay. Edited by J.B.  
Tyrrell, pp. 143-370. Reprinted. Greenwood Press,  
New York. Originally published 1931. Vol. XVIII,  
The Champlain Society, Toronto.

La Vérendrye, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes et de

1968 Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de  
Varennes de la Vérendrye and his Sons. Edited by  
L.J.Burpee. Reprinted. Greenwood Press, New York.  
Originally published 1927, Vol. XVI. The Champlain  
Society, Toronto.

1982 Details of the Names and the Distance of each  
Nation, both to the North of Lake Superior, and on  
the Lands recently discovered and established in  
the West, presented to the Monsieur the Marquis de  
Beauharnois ... by the Sieur de La Vérendrye...  
Appendix A, pp.92-94. In Group Identities in the  
Boreal Forest: The Origin of the Northern Ojibwa  
by Adolph M. Greenberg and James Morrison.  
Ethnohistory. 29(2): 75-102.

- Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, Jacques  
1887 Memoir or Summary Journal of the Expedition of Jacques Repenigny Legardeur de Saint-Pierre...Charged with the Discovery of the Western Sea. In Report on Canadian Archives 1886. Note C, pp. xlviiii-clxix. Ottawa.
- Lewis, Oscar  
1942 The Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture with Special Reference to the Role of the Fur Trader. J.J.Augustin, New York.
- Lewis, Meriwether and William Clark  
1987 The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition: August 25, 1804- April 6, 1805. The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Vol. 3. Edited by Gary E.Moulton. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.
- Lindsay, Charles  
1873 An Investigation of the Unsettled Boundaries of Ontario. Hunter Ross, Toronto.
- Lowie, Robert H.  
1910 The Assiniboine. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. IV, part 1, pp. 1-270. New York.  
  
1963 Indians of the Plains. Reprinted. The Natural History Press, Garden City. Originally printed 1954, McGraw-Hill, New York.
- McDonald of Garth, John  
1960 Autobiographical Notes. In Les Bourgeois de la Compagne du Nord-Ouest: Recits de Voyages, Lettres et Rapports Inédits Relatifs au Nord-Ouest Canadien. Edited by L.R.Masson. Vol.II, pp.1-59. Reprinted 1960. Antiquarian Press, New York.
- MacGregor, James G.  
1954 Behold the Shining Mountains: Being an Account of the Travels of Anthony Henday, 1754-55, The First White Man to Enter Alberta. Applied Arts Products, Edmonton.
- M'Gillivray, Duncan  
1929 The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray. Edited by A. S. Morton. Macmillan, Toronto.

- McInnes, William  
1913 The Basins of the Nelson and Churchill Rivers. Memoir No.30. Geological Survey, Department of Mines, Ottawa.
- Mackenzie, Alexander  
1970 The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. Edited by W.Kaye Lamb. Extra Series No. 41, Hakluyt Society, London. Reprinted by Macmillan of Canada, Toronto.
- Mandelbaum, David G.  
1936 Changes in an Aboriginal Culture Following a Change in Environment, as Exemplified by the Plains Cree. Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, New Haven.  
  
1940 The Plains Cree. American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers 37(2): 155-316.  
  
1979 The Plains Cree: An Ethnographic, Historical, and Comparative Study. Canadian Plains Studies Number 9, Canadian Plains Research Centre, Regina.
- Marest, Gabriel  
1968 Letter from Father Marest. In Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay. Edited by J.B. Tyrrell, pp. 103-142. Reprinted. Greenwood Press, New York. Originally published 1931. Vol. XVIII, The Champlain Society, Toronto.
- Margry, Pierre  
1879-1888 Decouvertes et établissements des Français dans l'ouest et dans le sud de l'Amerique Septentrionale 1614-1754: memoires et documents inédits recueillis et publiés. Six volumes. Maisonneuve et Leclerc, Paris.
- Masson, L.R.  
1960 Les Bourgeois de la Compagne du Nord-Ouest: Recits de Voyages, Lettres et Rapports Inédits Relatifs au Nord-Ouest Canadien. Two volumes. Reprinted 1960. Antiquarian Press, New York. Originally published 1889-90, Montreal.
- Mayer-Oakes, William J.  
1970 Archaeological Investigations in the Grand Rapids, Manitoba, Reservoir. Department of Anthropology, Occassional Paper No. 3, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

- Meyer, David  
1985 The Red Earth Crees, 1860 - 1960. Canadian Ethnology Service Paper No. 100, National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Ottawa.
- Michelson, Truman  
1936 Indian Language Studies on James and Hudson's Bays, Canada. In Explorations and Field-work of the Smithsonian Institute in 1935. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.
- Morantz, Toby  
1977 James Bay Trading Captains of the Eighteenth Century: New Perspective on Algonquian Social Organization. In Actes du Huitième Congrès des Algonquinistes. Edited by William Cowan, pp.77-89. Carlton University, Ottawa.
- Morse, Eric W.  
1979 Fur Trade Routes of Canada/ Then and Now. Second edition. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Morton, Arthur S.  
1973 A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71. Second edition. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Munck, Jens  
1897 The Expedition of Captain Jens Munck in Hudson's Bay in Search of a North-west Passage in 1619-20. Edited by C.C.A.Gosch. Book II, First Series, No. 97, Hakluyt Society, London.
- Neatby L.H.  
1969 Swan (Captain Swan). In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, page 617. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Nicks, John  
1985 Thompson, David. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume VIII, 1852 to 1860. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 878-884. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Nute, Grace Lee  
1966 Chouart Des Groseilliers, Médard. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume I, 1000 to 1700. George W. Brown, General Editor, pp. 223-228. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

- 1978 Caesars of the Wilderness. Reprinted. The Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul. Originally published 1943, Appleton-Century, New York.
- Oldmixon, John  
1968 The History of Hudson's Bay Containing an Account of Its Discovery and Settlement, the Progress of It, and the Present State; of the Indians, Trade, and Everything Else Relating to It. In Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay. Edited by J.B. Tyrrell, pp. 371-410. Reprinted. Greenwood Press, New York. Originally published 1931. Vol. XVIII, The Champlain Society, Toronto.
- Palliser, Captain John  
1859 Papers Relative to the Exploration by Captain Palliser. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, June 1859. London.
- 1968 The Papers of the Palliser Expedition 1857-1860. Edited by Irene M. Spry. Vol. XLIV. The Champlain Society, Toronto.
- Patterson, E. Palmer II  
1972 The Canadian Indian: A History Since 1500. Collier Macmillan, Don Mills.
- Pentland, David H.  
1978 A Historical Overview of Cree Dialects. In Papers of the Ninth Algonquian Conference, 1977. Pp. 104-126. Edited by William Cowen. Carlton University, Ottawa.
- 1981 Synonymy: Western Woods Cree. In Subarctic, edited by June Helm, pp. 267-270. Handbook of North American Indians, vol. 6, William C. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.
- Petitot, Emile  
1885 On the Athabasca District of the Canadian North-West Territory. The Canadian Record of Science I(1):27-55.
- Pouliot, Léon  
1969 Le Roy de la Potherie, dit Bacqueville de La Potherie (La Poterie), Claude-Charles. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, pp 421-424. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

- Radisson, Pierre  
 1961 The Exploration of Pierre Esprit Radisson. Edited by Arthur T.Adams. Ross and Haines, Minneapolis.
- Ray, Arthur J.  
 1972a Indian Adaptations to the Forest-Grassland Boundary of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, 1650-1821: Some Implications for Interregional Migration. Canadian Geographer 16(2): 103-118.
- 1972b Early French Mapping of the Western Interior of Canada: A View From the Bay. Canadian Cartographer 2: 89-98.
- 1974 Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Hunters, Trappers and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay 1660-1870. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Rich, E.E. (editor)  
 1939 Colin Robertson's Correspondence Book, September 1817 to September 1822. Vol.II. The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.
- 1948 Copy Book of Letters Outward &c Begins 29th May 1680 Ends 5 July, 1687. Vol.XI. The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.
- 1951 Cumberland House Journals and Inland Journals 1775-1779. First Series. Vol.XIV, The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.
- 1952 Cumberland House Journals and Inland Journals 1779-1782. Second Series. Vol. XV, The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.
- 1957 Hudson's Bay Copy Book of Letters Commissions Instructions Outward, 1688-1696. Vol.XX, The Hudson's Bay Record Society, London.
- Rich, E.E.  
 1960 Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870. Three volumes. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto.
- 1967 The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857. McClelland and Stewart, Toronto.
- 1974 Isham, James. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 301-304. University

of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Richardson, Sir John

1852 Arctic Searching Expedition: A Journal of a Boat-voyage through Rupert's Land and the Arctic Sea. Harper, New York.

Robson, Joseph

1752 An Account of Six Years Residence in Hudson's Bay, from 1733 to 1736 and 1744 to 1747. J. Payne and J. Bouquet, London.

Roe, Frank Gilbert

1974 The Indian and the Horse. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Rossignol, M.

1939 Property Concepts among the Cree of the Rocks. Primitive Man XII (3): 61-70.

Rousseau, Jacques

1969 Jérémie, dit Lamontagne, Nicolas. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, pp 296-300. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Russ, C.J.

1974 La Corne, Louis (Jean-Louis, Pierre, Louis-Luc, Louis Francois) de. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 331-332. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

1974 Noyon, Jacques de. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp 493-494. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Russell, Dale R.

1971 Fieldnotes in possession of the author.

1982a The Ethnohistoric and Demographic Context of Central Saskatchewan to 1800. In Regional Overview and Research Considerations, edited by David Burley and David Meyer, pp. 150-185. Nipawin Reservoir Heritage study, Vol. 3, Saskatchewan Research Council Publication No. C-805-25-E-82.

1982b The Eighteenth Century Parkland Cree. In Regional Overview and Research Considerations, edited by David Burley and David Meyer, pp. 186-210. Nipawin Reservoir Heritage study, Vol. 3, Saskatchewan Research Council Publication No. C-805-25-E-82.

1988 Native Groups in the Saskatoon Area. In Out of the Past: Sites, Digs and Artifacts in the Saskatoon Area. Edited by Urve Linnamae and Tim E.H. Jones. pp. 131-153. Saskatoon Archaeological Society, Saskatoon.

1989 The Historical Background of the Upper Souris River: 1734-1881. Saskatchewan Research Council Publication No. E-903-3-E-89.

Russell, Pete and Mabel Russell

1978 In Search of Henry Kelsey's Grave. Modern Press.

Saint-Pierre, Jacques Repentigny Legardeur de

1887 Memoir or Summary Journal of the Expedition of Jacques Repentigny Legardeur de Saint-Pierre... Charged with the Discovery of the Western Sea. In Report on Canadian Archives 1886, Note C, pp. xlviiii-clxix. Ottawa.

Schoolcraft, Henry R.

1969 Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States. Six volumes. Reprinted. Paladin Press, New York. Originally published 1851-1857, Lippincott, Grambo, Philadelphia.

Siebert, Frank T. Jr.

1967 The Original Home of the Proto-Algonquian People. In Contributions to Anthropology: Linguistics I (Algonquian) pp.13-47. Anthropological Series 78, National Museum of Canada Bulletin 214. Ottawa.

Sharrock, Susan R.

1974 Crees, Cree-Assiniboines, and Assiniboines: Interethnic Social Organization on the Far Northern Plains. Ethnohistory 21(2): 95-122.

Silvy, Antoine

1968 Journal of Father Silvy from Belle Isle to Port Nelson. In Documents Relating to the Early



History of Hudson Bay. Edited by J.B. Tyrrell, pp. 37-101. Reprinted. Greenwood Press, New York. Originally published 1931. Vol. XVIII, The Champlain Society, Toronto.

Simpson, Sir George

- 1931 Fur Trade and Empire; George Simpson's Journal. Edited by Frederick Merk. Harvard University Press, Harvard.

Skinner, Alanson

- 1914 Notes on the Plains Cree. American Anthropologist. n.s. 16: 68-87.

Smith, James G.E.

- 1975 The Ecological Basis of Chipewyan Socio-territorial Organization. In Proceedings: Northern Athapaskan Conference, 1971. Edited by A. McFayden Clark, pp. 389-461. National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper 27, vol.2. Ottawa.

- 1976 On the Territorial Distribution of the Western Woods Cree. In Papers of the Seventh Algonquian Conference, 1975. Pp. 414-435. Edited by William Cowan. Carlton University, Ottawa.

- 1981 Western Woods Cree. In Subarctic, edited by June Helm, pp. 256-270. Handbook of North American Indians, vol. 6, William C. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

- 1987 The Western Woods Cree: Anthropological Myth and Historical Reality. American Ethnologist 14(3): 434-448.

- n.d. Preliminary Notes on the Rocky Cree of Reindeer Lake. ms.

Smythe, Terrance

- 1968 Thematic Study of the Fur Trade in the Canadian West:1670-1870. Agenda Paper 1968-29. Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Ottawa.

Spry, Irene M.

- 1979 Cocking (Cochin, Cockan, Cockings), Matthew. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume IV 1771 to 1800. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp 156-158. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

- Stone, Lyle M. and Donald Chaput  
1978 History of the Upper Great Lakes Area. In Northeast, edited by Bruce C. Trigger, pp.602-609. Handbook of orth American Indians, vol.15, William C. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.
- Syms, E. Leigh  
1985 Fitting People into the Late Prehistory of the Northeastern Plains. In Archaeology, Ecology and Ethnohistory of the Prairie-Forest Border Zone of Minnesota and Manitoba. Edited by Janet Spector and Elden Johnson. Pp. 73-107. Reprints in Anthropology, Volume 31. J & L Reprint, Lincoln.
- Tanner, John  
1956 A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner during Thirty Years Residence among the Indians in the Interior of North America. Edited by Edwin James. Reprinted, Ross & Haines, Minneapolis. Originally published 1830, London.
- Thistle, Paul C.  
1986 Indian-European Trade Relations in the Lower Saskatchewan River Region to 1840. Manitoba Studies in Native History II, University of Manitoba Press, Winnipeg.
- Thompson, David  
1962 David Thompson's Narrative. Edited by Richard Glover. Vol. XL, The Champlain Society, . Toronto.  
  
1968 David Thompson's Narrative of his Explorations in Western America 1784-1812. Edited by J.B. Tyrrell. Reprinted. Greenwood, New York. Originally published 1916. Vol. XII, The Champlain Society, Toronto.
- Thorman, George E.  
1969 Thanadelthur. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, pp 627-628. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.  
  
1974 Smith, Joseph. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 594-595. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

- Thwaites, Reuben G.  
1896-1901 The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents.  
73 volumes. Burrows Brothers, Cleveland.
- 1904-1907 Early Western Travels 1748-1846. 32 volumes.  
Arthur H. Clark, Cleveland.
- 1908 The British Regime in Wisconsin, vol.18. Wisconsin  
Historical Society Collections, Madison.
- Townsend, Joan B.  
1983 Firearms Against Native Arms: A Study in  
Comparative Efficiencies with an Alaskan Example.  
Arctic Anthropology. 20(2): 1-33.
- Tremblay, Victor  
1969 Silvy, Antoine. In Dictionary of Canadian  
Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne,  
General Editor, pp 607-609. University of Toronto  
Press, Toronto.
- Trudeau, Jean  
1966 Culture Change among the Swampy Cree Indians of  
Winisk, Ontario. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation,  
Catholic University of America, Washington.
- Tyrrell, J.B.  
1911 Hearne: A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in  
Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean. Vol. VI, The  
Champlain Society, Toronto.
- 1934 The Journals of Samuel Hearne and Philip Turnor  
between the Years 1774 and 1792. Vol. XXI, The  
Champlain Society, Toronto.
- Umfreville, Edward  
1954 The Present State of Hudson's Bay. Edited by W.S.  
Wallace. Ryerson Press, Toronto.
- Voisine, Nive  
1969 Robutel de la Noue, Zacharie. In Dictionary of  
Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David  
M. Hayne, General Editor, page 581. University of  
Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Wagner, Henry R.  
1955 Peter Pond, Fur Trader & Explorer. Western  
Historical Series Number 2. Yale University  
Library.

- Warkentin, John and Richard I. Ruggles  
1970 Historical Atlas of Manitoba: A Selection of Facsimile Maps, Plans and Sketches from 1612 to 1969. Manitoba Historical Society, Winnipeg.
- Wettlaufer, Boyd and William J. Mayer-Oakes  
1960 The Long Creek Site. Anthropological Series No. 2. Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina.
- Wheeler, Clinton J.  
1977 The Historic Assiniboine: A Territorial Dispute in the Ethnohistoric Literature. In Papers of the 8th Algonquian Conference 1976. Edited by William Cowan. Carlton University, Ottawa.
- Whillans, James W.  
1955 First in the West: The Story of Henry Kelsey, Discoverer of Canadian Prairies. Applied Arts Products, Edmonton.
- Williams, Glyndwr  
1969 Stuart (Stewart), William. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, pp 614-616. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- 1974 Coats, William. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 127-128. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- 1978 The Puzzle of Anthony Henday's Journal, 1754-1755. The Beaver Outfit 309(3):41-56.
- Wilson, Clifford  
1974 Henday (Hendey, Hendry), Anthony. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 285-287. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Wolfart, H. Christoph  
1973a Boundary Maintenance in Algonquian: A Linguistic Study of Island Lake, Manitoba. American Anthropologist 75(5): 1305-1323.
- 1973b Plains Cree: A Grammatical Study. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society n.s. 63(5).

- Wolfart, H. Christoph and David Pentland  
 1979 The "Bowery" Dictionary and Henry Kelsey. In Papers of the Tenth Algonquian Conference. Pp. 37-42. Edited by William Cowan. Carlton University, Ottawa.
- Wood, W. Raymond  
 1977 David Thompson at the Mandan-Hidatsa Villages, 1797-1798: The Original Journals. Ethnohistory, Vol. 24(4):329-342.
- 1986 The Origins of the Hidatsa Indians: A Review of the Ethnohistorical and Traditional Data. J&L Reprint Company, Lincoln.
- Wood, W. Raymond and Thomas D. Thiessen (eds.)  
 1985 Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains. Canadian Traders among the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians, 1738-1818: The Narratives of John Macdonnell, David Thompson, Francois-Antoine Laroque and Charles McKenzie. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.
- Wright, James V.  
 1968 Cree Culture History in the Southern Indian Lake Region. National Museum of Canada Bulletin 232. Ottawa.
- Yerbury, J.C.  
 1976 The Post-Contact Chipewyan: Trade Rivalries and Changing Territorial Boundaries. Ethnohistory 23(3): 237-263.
- 1981 Lake Athabasca Region before 1765. Alberta History 29(1): 31-35.
- Zoltvany, Yves F.  
 1969 Greysolon Dulhut (Du Lhut, Du Luth), Daniel. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Volume II, 1701-1740. David M. Hayne, General Editor, pp 261-264. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- 1974 Gaultier de Varennes et de La Verendrye, Pierre. In Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume III, 1741 to 1770. Frances G. Halpenny, General Editor, pp. 246-254. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

## 15.2 ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of  
Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba

## Post Records

## Chesterfield House

District Report B.34/e/1 (1822)

## Fort Carlton

District Report B.27/e/2,4 (1818,1826)

## Fort Churchill:

Post Journals B.42/a/1-127 (1718-1802)

Correspondence Inward and Outward B.42/b/1b-25, 44  
(1754-1780, 1792-1801).

Accounts B.42/d/1-67 (1717-1790)

Inward Correspondence A.11/13-15 (1741-1789)

## Fort Ellice:

Post Journal B.63/a/1 (1793-94)

## Fort Pelly

District Report B.159/e/1 (1818-19)

## Severn Post

Post Journal B.198/a/11 (1768-69)

## York Factory:

Post Journals B.239/a/1-90 (1714-1789)

Correspondence Inward and Outward B.239/b/1-16,  
40-60 (1717-1758, 1780-1798).

Accounts B.239/d/1-87 (1688-1790)

Inward Correspondence A.11/114-117 (1742-1791)

Andrew Graham's Observations on Hudson's Bay.

E.2/4-13

Peter Fidler's Journal Books

E.3/1-3

## Public Archives of Canada

MG 19 D 2

Falconer, William ms.

Remarks on the Natives near the Cost [sic] of  
Hudson's bay and Straits, with some remarks  
on the Climate, etc. Original in Archives du  
Séminaire de Québec.

CMS.41 C 1/0 A.115

Church Missionary Society (microfilm)