

THE NATIONAL POLICY, THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND ORIGINAL SETTLERS:
LAND CLAIMS OF THE METIS,
GREEN LAKE, SASKATCHEWAN
1909-1930

A Thesis Submitted to the College of
Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of Native Studies
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

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Spring 1997

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ABSTRACT

This thesis questions the adequacy of the Department of the Interior's response to the land claims of Metis settlers in Green Lake, Saskatchewan.

Metis people originally settled in Green Lake because of the pattern of development of the fur trade. Green Lake was a major nexus on the fur trade transportation system, which encouraged Metis settlement and community development. After Confederation, when the national policy generated regional differentiation through uneven development, Green Lake remained under fur-trade domination.

National policy expansion reached Green Lake with surveys in 1909 and 1911, replacing fur-trade property relations with the *Dominion Lands Act*. The surveys revealed Green Lake as a fur trade settlement with property claims consistent with the fur trade economy. Prior treatment of such claims under national policy regulations promised recognition of Metis claims based on prior settlement.

Economic recession and World War I led to the abatement of national policy expansion. As a result, the department postponed action on the Metis claims until renewed interest in national policy settlement. Legislation passed in 1919 provided new direction to departmental consideration of the Green Lake claims. The only remnant of recognition of fur trade settlement was reference to 1908 legislation requiring occupancy at the time of treaty. The department subsequently disposed of Metis claims by offering most claimants only a right to purchase claimed land.

Departmental response to Metis claims at Green Lake was inadequate on several grounds. It failed to consider adequately property relations extant from the fur trade economy. It acted without due consideration for established precedents associated with the national policy. It acted *ultra vires* to carry out and justify a restrictive and mean spirited response to Metis claims. The retroactive nature of 1908 legislation unfairly penalized claimants in the Treaty Six area. The department's limitation of the eligibility of claimants by constrictive criteria was compounded by its failure to examine seriously the evidence of Metis settlement that would have met such criteria.

At the time of the 1930 transfer of land administration to the prairie provinces, the land claims of the Metis settlers of Green Lake remained unsatisfied.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. F. Laurie Barron, for his patience, advice, editorial work and his encouragement. I want to thank my committee members: Dr. David E. Smith, for sharing his knowledge of Canadian government and his always insightful conversation; Dr. James B. Waldram, for his insistence that theory, advocacy and research can share the same platform; Dr. Frank Tough, for his critical comments, his stimulating discussion of economic history, and the financial support he has arranged as Head of the Department of Native Studies through provision of sessional lecturer positions. I also thank my external examiner, Dr. David Miller, for his attention to my work and his willingness to participate in the oral defence of this thesis. I have been fortunate to receive and wish to acknowledge financial support from the University of Saskatchewan in the form of a College of Arts and Sciences Honours Scholarship and a College of Graduate Studies and Research Master's Thesis Scholarship.

My respectful appreciation goes to Dr. Howard Adams for his dedicated instruction in Metis history during my undergraduate studies. As well, I would feel remiss if I did not acknowledge Professor Ken Hatt's original work on the Green Lake land claims for the Native Council of Canada: his blazes helped me find my way through the forest of files. I also greatly appreciated the forbearance of the staff of the Saskatchewan Archives Board as they suffered my sometimes manic requests for evermore files and photocopying: thank you to D'Arcy Hande, Maureen Fox and especially Nadine Small for her interest. As well, I was fortunate to be able to share my troubles and my ideas with my contemporary in the graduate program, Rudolfo Pino-Robles. There can also be no doubt about all the teaching done by the questions of my many students over the past few years, especially those from the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program in Prince Albert. Thank you all.

Finally I am grateful to Murdine McCreath, whose support and encouragement helped me complete this project, and her friend, now also my friend, Kathy Hodgson-Smith.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF METIS SETTLEMENT AT GREEN LAKE, 1670-1870	4
The lay of the land	4
'First contact': Pedlar/HBC competition moves inland	8
Holding the fort: NWC/HBC competition in Green Lake	12
Green Lake and the HBC monopoly	16
CHAPTER TWO	
THE NATIONAL POLICY AND GREEN LAKE	28
Uneven development: the east-west articulation	29
Uneven development: the north-south articulation	36
Uneven development and the Metis Resistance	38
CHAPTER THREE	
THE NATIONAL POLICY TURNS NORTH	46
Factors leading to the surveys	47
Baseline surveys, 1909-10	51
The surveys of 1911-12	55
CHAPTER FOUR	
METIS SETTLEMENT AT GREEN LAKE, 1911-12	67
CHAPTER FIVE	
THE DECADE OF DELAY, 1912-1922	90
The lack of response: 1912-1919	93
Defining the options: the Miles survey claimants, 1920-1922	102
CHAPTER SIX	
DISPOSITION OF METIS LAND CLAIMS: 1923-1930	114
Preparing for the disposition	114
The disposition of the claims	118
CONCLUSIONS	135

BIBLIOGRAPHY	142
APPENDIX A	
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, 1912	149
The Laliberte family	149
The Morin family	152
The Aubichon family	154
The Sinclair family	157
The De(s)rocher family	158
Annie and Napoleon Girard	158
The Kennedy family	159
The Merasti and Lafleur families	159
Non-Aboriginal residents	159

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Birth and settlement data	68
Table 4.2: Occupational data	71
Table 4.3: Work-force data	73
Table 4.4: Agricultural/animal husbandry data	74
Table 4.5: Fixed capital assets	76
Table 4.6: Number and ages of children	78
Table 6.1: Summary of dispositions of Metis claims	119
Table A.1: Tentative family groupings, 1912	150

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1.1: The northwestern boundary of Rupert's Land	6
Fig. 1.2: The Churchill/Saskatchewan/Athabasca Divides	7
Fig. 3.1: Portion of the map of the Crean Expedition, 1908	52
Fig. 3.2: Powell Survey preliminary map, 1911	57
Fig. 5.1: Plan of Green Lake Settlement, 1915	96
Fig. 6.1: Annotated plan of Green Lake Settlement, 1923	116

INTRODUCTION

In the negotiations leading up to the *Manitoba Act* of 1870, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald chided the Metis for wanting benefits "fitting for civilised men" while also claiming "the privileges granted to Indians."¹ One Red River delegate to the negotiations, Father N.J. Ritchot, replied that "because these settlers wish to be treated like other subjects of Her Majesty," it did not follow that "those among them who have a right as descendants of Indians should be obliged to lose those rights."² Ritchot's resistance eventually resulted in the set-aside of 1.4 million acres of land for the children of the Metis and the subsequent identification of scrip payments as satisfaction of Metis Aboriginal title. Consequently, most contemporary discussion of Metis land claims revolves around the issue of Aboriginal title and the efficacy of the scrip process in relieving the Crown of the burden of Metis Aboriginal title to land.

While not denying the importance of Aboriginal title to Metis land claims, this thesis is not concerned with land claims arising out of Aboriginal title. Rather, it studies Metis claims to land based on settlement, that most important element of what John A. Macdonald would have held to be the qualities of "civilised men." Macdonald had, after all, conceded Canadian recognition of claims to land by the original settlers just before chiding the Metis for claiming further land rights based on Aboriginal title.

Administration of land became the responsibility of the Department of the Interior, which operated within the context of the larger set of policies gathered under the rubric of the national policy. That policy, as the thesis describes, had brought on the annexation of Rupert's Land by Canada. However, placing the national policy in an exhaustive theory of international political economy lies outside the interest of this work. As a result, the work is guided, at best, by a loose coalition of ideas perhaps best summed up by Wallerstein's assumption "that there exists a concrete singular historical system which I shall call the 'capitalist world-economy'."³ Wallerstein identified the geographical and temporal origins of that system as, respectively "Europe (or most of it) plus Iberian America" and "the long sixteenth century." From that origin the system "subsequently expanded to cover the entire globe."⁴ These central

notions, with some subsidiary amplification, are "methodological or metaphysical premises" to which must be added "a few substantive ones about the operations of the capitalist world-economy."⁵ The mode of production of the world-economy has been the process of using capital to amass more capital, the process of capital accumulation through the "commodification of everything."⁶ Some theorists have defined this process of capital accumulation very narrowly, limiting it to the outlay of capital for the purchase of labour to produce a surplus that the capitalist can then confiscate. Wallerstein expanded that definition through emphasis on unequal exchange as the central process. Unequal exchange can be internal in the axial relationship of labour to capital, or external in the relation between core and periphery areas. For some purposes the divergence disappears in the international division of labour and the subsequent uneven development between geographical regions. In some, but not all, instances such core-periphery relations are ensconced in a political superstructure of "so-called sovereign states" active within the framework of the world system.⁷

The uneven development implicit in world-system theory was central to the national policy response to interstate competition between the United States and Canada. The establishment of a Canadian frontier of investment was a means to the accumulation of capital by a particular class within a specific sovereign state in the expanding world-system. That policy provided the framework for departmental decisions, including those imposed on the original settlers in Green Lake.

National policy objectives initially acknowledged original settler claims as a means to the peaceful resolution of Metis\Canadian conflict and its discouragement of immigrant settlement. Such loss of land to original settler claims was not critical: Vernon Fowke said of agricultural lands as investment opportunities, ". . . there were so many more acres."⁸ By the 1920s, however, Metis resistance over original settler claims was no longer a threat to further settlement and the number of available acres for such settlement had greatly declined. It was in that context that the Department of the Interior dismissed the bulk of Metis claims to land in Green Lake.

Notes

¹ N.J. Ritchot, "The Journal Of Rev. N.-J. Ritchot March 24 To May 28, 1870," *Manitoba: The Birth Of A Province*, ed. W.L. Morton (Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society Publications, 1965) 141.

² Ritchot 141.

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Three Instances of Hegemony in the History of the Capitalist World-Economy," *The Theoretical Evolution of International Political Economy*, eds. George T. Crane and Abla Amawi (New York: Oxford Press, 1991) 236.

⁴ Wallerstein 236.

⁵ Wallerstein 237.

⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1983) 11. Wallerstein titled the first chapter of this work "The Commodification of Everything: Production of Capital."

⁷ Wallerstein, "Hegemony" 237.

⁸ Vernon Fowke, *Canadian Agricultural Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946) 141. As cited in Paul Phillips, "The Hinterland Perspective: The Political Economy of Vernon C. Fowke," *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory* 2.2 (Spring-Summer 1978) 78.

CHAPTER ONE
THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF METIS SETTLEMENT
AT GREEN LAKE, 1670-1870

Metis settlement on the shores of Green Lake began because of the pattern of development of the mercantile fur trade. That pattern of development reflected a combination of geographical features and the social organization of the efforts to meet the demands of the European fur markets. Three eras mark the historical development of the fur trade and its effect on settlement in western Rupert's Land. The first one hundred years of the fur trade in western Rupert's Land, 1670-1770, was an era of Aboriginal control of the inland collection and transportation systems.¹ Trade with Europeans occurred primarily on the shores of Hudson Bay. This period saw limited settlement in Rupert's Land beyond the shores of Hudson Bay. The Aboriginal-controlled flow of goods developed during the protohistoric period, a time of indirect contact and then middleman activity by Aboriginal participants.² Competitive expansion inland marked the second period of the fur trade, 1770-1821. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and the North West Company (NWC) built competing collection and transportation systems that displaced Aboriginal control of transportation. As Arthur Ray put it, the extension of non-Aboriginal transportation inland ". . . required the maintenance of large, spatially fixed settlements, together with rigid time schedules for cargo shipments along set routeways."³ These "fixed settlements" became the predominant sites of year-round human occupation in most of Rupert's Land. By the end of this period Metis settlement was evident in Green Lake. The HBC monopoly and the Metis anti-colonial resistance to that monopoly in the form of the free trade movement defined the third period, 1821-1870. A cohesive regional economy based on the fur trade became the context and rationale for continued Metis settlement at Green Lake. Such settlement generated corresponding *de facto* recognition of Metis property rights within the community.

The lay of the land

The story of settlement in Green Lake began with the physical geography of western

Rupert's Land. The height of land that marked the western boundary of Rupert's Land was of particular significance to the historical importance of Green Lake (Fig. 1.1). Rivers to the northwest of the divide flowed north as part of the Mackenzie River drainage to the arctic. Rivers to the southeast of the divide were part of the Hudson Bay drainage system and flowed essentially east toward Hudson Bay. The Churchill River and the Saskatchewan River basins were the major drainage systems west of Hudson Bay and defined most of western Rupert's Land.

Two significant crossing sites on the height of land affected Green Lake, the first at Methye Portage, northwest of Ile-à-la-Crosse, and the second near Lac la Biche. Methye Portage provided entry into Rupert's Land for Lake Athabaska fur transported by Dene and Cree middlemen. Their destination was usually the Hudson's Bay Company's forts that 'slept by the frozen sea' of Hudson Bay. The customary Aboriginal route to Hudson Bay from the height of land at Methye Portage followed the Churchill River east from Ile-à-la-Crosse. It then went "down the Sturgeon-Weir River and Lakes Namew and Cumberland to the Saskatchewan and back along the Grass River route from York Factory."⁴ The headwaters of that Aboriginal transportation system attracted the first non-Aboriginal traders to Ile-à-la-Crosse. Trade in Ile-à-la-Crosse meant greater control over the transportation system back to the home market. The second significant crossing site, Lac la Biche, was located near the most westerly end of the Churchill River drainage area. West of Lac la Biche lay the Athabaska River and Lesser Slave Lake. Travel north down the Athabaska River provided a second route to Lake Athabaska. Travel west up the Athabaska River led eventually to the Athabaska pass, entry to Caledonia and access to the Columbia River. The Columbia fell first south and then west to the Pacific Ocean at Fort Vancouver in present day Portland, Oregon. Just south of Lac la Biche, the Beaver River flowed first east to Green Lake, and then north to Ile-à-la-Crosse where it joined the Churchill River and flowed eastward again.

The Saskatchewan River lay just south of a second height of land that ran generally parallel to the Beaver River. That height of land divided the Churchill and North Saskatchewan River drainage areas (See Fig. 1.2). Travel south from Green Lake provided an important connection between the two drainage basins. Green Lake was thus a nexus for both east-west and north-south travel. Both Lac la Biche and Green Lake, like Ile-à-la-

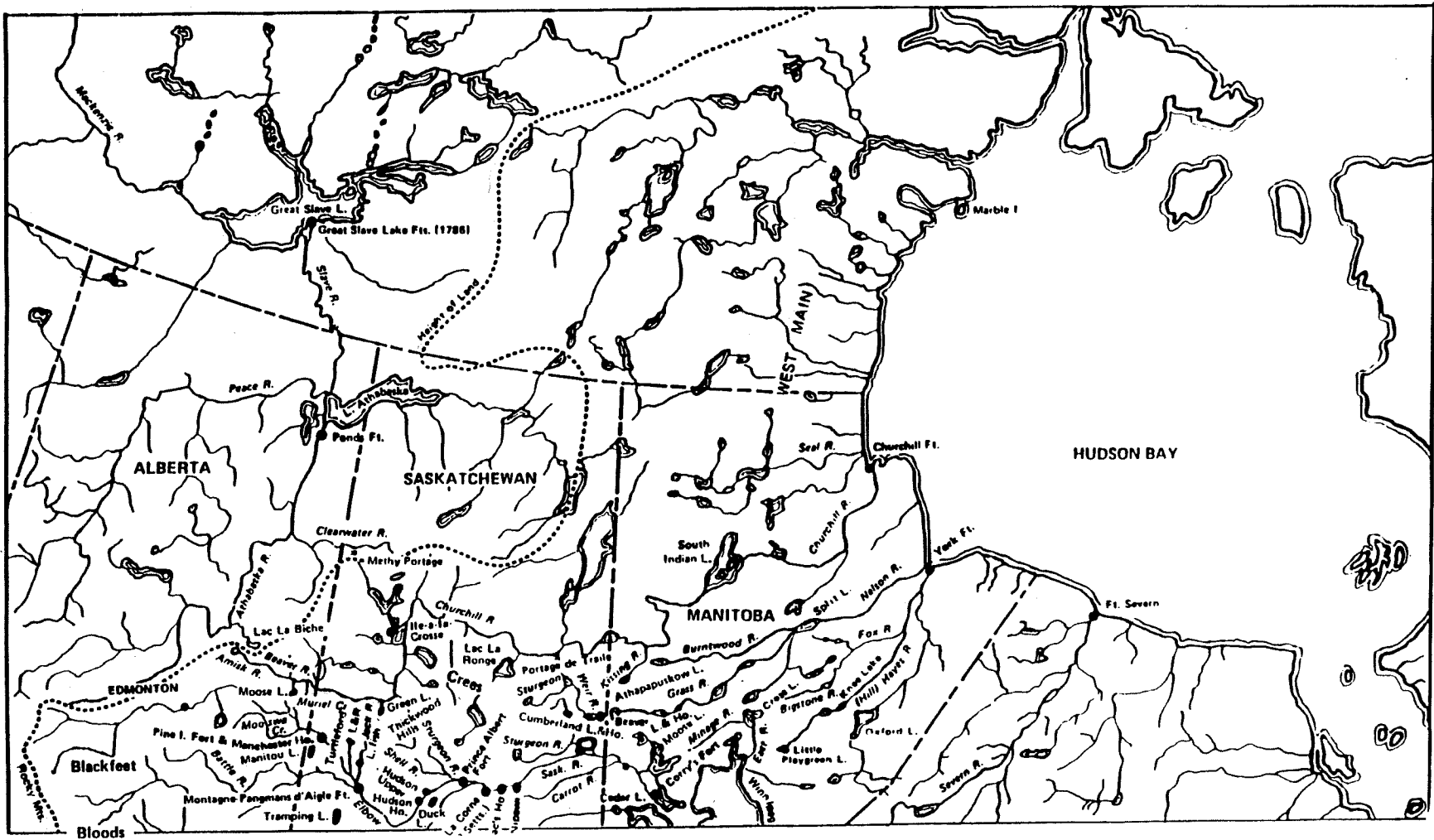


Fig. 1.1: The northwestern boundary of Rupert's Land

Yerbury 1986

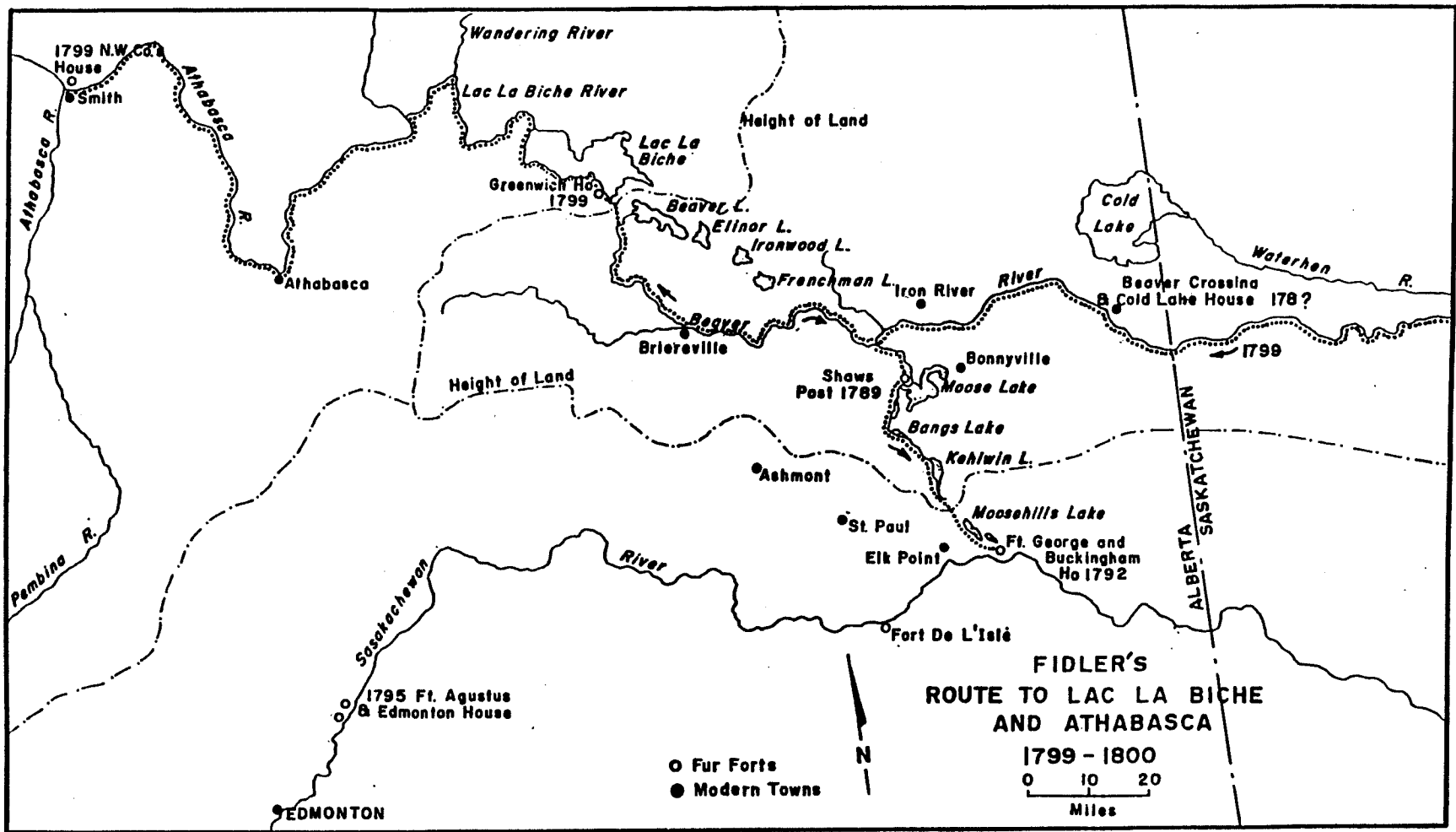


Fig. 1.2: The Churchill/Saskatchewan/Athabasca Divide

MacGregor 1966

Crosse, would become sites of permanent Metis settlement.

'First contact': pedlar/HBC competition moves inland

The intrusion of non-Aboriginal fur traders into western Rupert's Land was the direct result of long-standing competition between the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and first French and then English traders out of Montreal by way of the Great Lakes. That competition drove the site of direct trading constantly farther inland; waterways provided local direction to the expansion. The so-called pedlars established posts ever farther northwestwards during the second half of the eighteenth century, replacing Aboriginal delivery systems and diverting the Aboriginal flow of fur away from HBC posts on Hudson Bay.⁵ To outflank the HBC, the Montreal-based traders continually moved the sites of trading inland, extending their transportation system out of Grand Portage on the north shore of Lake Superior. From there the fur flowed to Montreal and then European markets.

The HBC's establishment of its first inland post at Cumberland House in 1774 concluded a twenty-year period of exploratory travel by HBC servants. The period had begun with Anthony Henday's notable 1754 journey into Alberta by way of the Saskatchewan River. In the period 1763 to 1774, HBC servants made more than forty separate journeys into inland wintering grounds.⁶ Many of those travels resulted in seasonal stays on the upper waters of the Saskatchewan and Churchill River systems.⁷ As early as 1763 HBC servant Joseph Smith wintered near Prince Albert. Smith reported that the deserted remains of La Corne's fort just downstream from the forks had been burned to the ground.⁸ Smith returned to the same area in the 1763-64 season and witnessed the dispatch of seventy-one canoes carrying furs to Fort York at the end of the season. However, Smith died soon after beginning the return voyage to Hudson Bay.⁹ Events after Smith's death revealed two points about the nature of the trade at this date. The first point concerned the "Leader," the senior-ranking Aboriginal member of the large canoe flotillas ostensibly under the direction of the trader. The fact that Joseph Smith's Leader delivered the flotilla to York Fort without benefit of Smith's direction underlined the autonomy of the Aboriginal transport system.¹⁰ A second point worthy of note in Joseph Smith's case regards his "canoe and tent mate."¹¹ She returned to York with Smith's personal possessions and their son. The Governor later paid to her the value of Smith's

personal furs in "Necessaries for the Support of her Self and his child."¹² That recognition suggested increased acceptance and encouragement of such liaisons by the HBC. The growth of that acceptance accompanied the increased need for labour as trade routes and settlement moved farther inland.¹³

The five-year period from 1763 to 1768 saw increases numbers of pedlars and HBC servants on the Saskatchewan and the first European at Green Lake. Isaac Batt, the second inland winterer for the HBC in 1763-64, likely spent the winter close to the Pas. The Governor at York reported that HBC servants had seen no pedlars inland, presumably either by Batt or Smith.¹⁴ In the 1765-66 season Batt and Louis Primo wintered inland. At the end of the season they relayed the news of the presence of pedlars along the waterways they had travelled. In the 1766-67 season, no fewer than six HBC servants wintered inland. Louis Primo ventured closer to Green Lake, having been "sent to 'the famous . . . Beaver River,' which had not yet been seen by European eyes. He must have travelled up the Churchill River, with which he is later reported as being familiar."¹⁵ Batt moved inland farther south, apparently following the North Saskatchewan River route travelled by Joseph Smith. Morton thought that he wintered at the Sturgeon River just west of Prince Albert.¹⁶ In the 1767-68 season William Pink returned to the Saskatchewan to pursue the north branch farther. He then travelled north from the Saskatchewan either by way of "the valley of the Shell River" northwest of present day Prince Albert, or alternatively by way of Jackfish and Turtleford Lakes north of present-day North Battleford.¹⁷ At any rate, on 19 August 1767, "he was on the bank of the 'Amisk-o-Cepee,' the Beaver River itself, 'a noated river for Beaver'."¹⁸ If Pink did ascend the Shell River, he was likely the first non-Aboriginal trader to pass by Green Lake. He then continued west up the Beaver River, wintering near Edmonton before returning to Hudson Bay the following year.

In the summer of 1768 the British colonial administration declared that it would no longer constrain the fur trade to the west of the Great Lakes. Morton marked this event: "Now began the rush of the English into Rupert's Land . . ." ¹⁹ The consequence would be increased pressure on the HBC to compete farther inland, thus moving the site of trading and settlement sites to the western reaches of Rupert's Land and Green Lake.

James Finlay had been the first of the Montreal Englishmen to reach the

Saskatchewan, and he wintered in 1768-69 in charge of "twelve Frenchmen" at Nipawi on the Saskatchewan.²⁰ His personnel suggest a dual linkage, forward to the Green Lake Metis population, and back to the Great Lakes mixed-blood population from which they were likely drawn. He used competitive hyperbole to describe HBC men "collecting the Indians and driving them like slaves down to York Fort." Finlay likely meant to justify his disregard for the HBC Charter; his traders held up the returning flotilla of HBC servant William Pink for a week while bargaining for the best of the flotilla's furs.²¹

An absence of pedlars inland marked the 1769-70 season. Their absence was the result of the confiscation of their inland-bound supplies by the Indigenous residents of the Rainy Lake area just northwest of Lake Superior. The lack of competition showed up in the returns to the HBC at York Fort, where trade of 34,000 Made Beaver represented a one-third increase over the trade of the prior year.²² The next year, Louis Primo and three other HBC servants traded up the Churchill and the Saskatchewan. Again they met few if any pedlars.²³ The following season (1771-72) only Isaac Batt and Louis Primo wintered inland. However, returning with a flotilla of 160 canoes, Batt and Primo saw their usual success reduced by the presence of Montreal traders at Cedar Lake on the lower Saskatchewan. By the time they made it back to York Fort, pedlar trade had reduced their retinue to thirty-five canoes.²⁴

In 1772 the HBC's Matthew Cocking travelled up the Saskatchewan to the forks of the Saskatchewan. He then went south to the area of present-day Batoche, west to the North Saskatchewan, southeast to the Asquith-Biggan area, and then back to the Forks in May of 1773. He reported pedlars all along the Saskatchewan. Cocking returned to York Fort with only sixteen canoes because of the loss of furs to the pedlars.²⁵ Perhaps the best indicator of the growing inland influence of the pedlars was the desertion of Louis Primo in 1773 from the HBC. After several years of advocating a more permanent Company presence inland, Primo recognized the turn in the tide of the trade and joined the stronger forces of the pedlars.²⁶ The next year Isaac Batt joined him.²⁷ In the spring of 1774, Primo and Joseph Frobisher established a "log tent" on the Churchill at Portage du Traite, where the Sturgeon-Weir River led south to the Saskatchewan at Cumberland House. Primo capitalized on his HBC experience to direct the descending canoes to Frobisher's post with near complete success, getting "as many furs as his canoes could carry."²⁸ One month later, Samuel Hearne left Fort

York with instructions to establish an inland post. That post marked the permanent move of the HBC to Cumberland House in 1774.²⁹ This began what was to become a pattern of the construction of a series of competing posts at important inland sites. Cumberland House was only the first of many fur-trade posts that were to become permanent settlement sites in what is now northern Saskatchewan.

In June of 1776 pedlars Thomas Frobisher and Alexander Henry the Elder successfully travelled up the Churchill River to meet the incoming middlemen transporting fur east.³⁰ The two groups met on the shores of Ile-à-la-Crosse and exchanged some 12,000 beaver pelts, and numerous otter and marten pelts.³¹ To insure sufficient provisions to feed the brigade on its return journey eastward, Frobisher "sent a packet overland" to his brother Joseph, who at the time traded at the mouth of the Sturgeon River near Prince Albert. Thomas instructed Joseph to meet him at Cumberland with provisions derived from the readily available buffalo herds that Joseph could reach on the plains to the south. Morton described this as "the first use in history of the track by Green Lake to the Saskatchewan."³²

The success of Thomas Frobisher at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1776-77 encouraged others to join him. Alexander Mackenzie said "in the spring of the year 1778 some of the traders on the Saskatchiwine river finding they had a quantity of goods to spare agreed to put them into a joint stock, and gave the charge and management of them to Peter Pond, who, in four canoes, was directed to . . . proceed still further; if possible to Athabaska, a country hitherto unknown but from an Indian report."³³ From that time on, Ile-à-la-Crosse served as a major nexus on the transportation systems of the northwest fur trade. During the 1780s "Alexander Mackenzie and Patrick Small, quickly followed by Roderick Mackenzie and Duncan M'Gillivray, established themselves at Ile-à-la-Crosse."³⁴ Green Lake was first established as an outpost of Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1782.³⁵ The first recorded Metis child born in Ile-à-la-Crosse, Charlotte Small, arrived in 1785.³⁶ Although Charlotte would eventually marry David Thompson and leave the northwest, she was but the first of many mixed-blood children born in western Rupert's Land from 1785 on. Most would remain to form the nuclei of Metis settlement.

A 1785-86 North West Company (NWC) journal and account book places ninety men in the English River district, which at the time included the upper Churchill and Athabaska

regions.³⁷ It listed thirty-one as at Ile-à-la-Crosse, including Patrick Small. The Athabaska region hosted the most NWC personnel, forty-eight men under the direction of Cuthbert Grant and Peter Pond. The NWC posted the smallest number of men for the winter in the seasonal outpost at Lac La Ronge. That outpost's occupants included Francois Aubichon and Nicholas Laliberte, evidently new to the service.³⁸ Based on their relationship to Toussaint Lesieur, Laliberte and Aubichon may have helped establish the first permanent NWC post in Green Lake in 1786. Lesieur, Patrick Small's second-in-command at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1785-86, was in charge of Laliberte and Aubichon at Lac La Ronge that year. When Lesieur established the "new post up the Beaver River" in the Fall of 1786, his confreres of the previous season likely accompanied him.³⁹ The Laliberte and Aubichon surnames became permanently linked to Green Lake: 125 years later (1912), the Aubichons and Lalibertes would be the two largest family groupings in Green Lake.

Holding the fort: NWC/HBC competition in Green Lake

By 1787 the "infernally quarrelling of petty Canadian pedlars" began to subside with the increasingly effective organisation of the operations of the NWC. Ile-à-la-Crosse became "the heart of the inland fur trade."⁴⁰ To tap the riches of the upper reaches of the Athabaska River and the Lesser Slave Lake fur country, the NWC expanded its base of operations. It organized expeditions to establish posts west of Green Lake by further travel up the Beaver River. Thus they established posts at Lac d'Original (Moose Lake), "within easy reach of Fort George on the North Saskatchewan,"⁴¹ and at Lac la Biche on the Athabaska drainage.⁴²

To the south, the site of trade expanded westward up the North Saskatchewan. Following the earlier lead of the pedlars, HBC Inland Master Thomison had established both Manchester House and Carlton House in 1794.⁴³ By 1795 the HBC had established itself near Edmonton, thus completing the competitive occupation of the North Saskatchewan. For the NWC, annual returns in those years justified the employment of "a hundred or so men" along the North Saskatchewan.⁴⁴ This was at least partly because since 1793 it had become the practice to provision Ile-à-la-Crosse with pemmican from the various Forts des Prairies of the time.⁴⁵ During the winter, dog sleds carried provisions north to Ile-à-la-Crosse by way of Green Lake.⁴⁶

William McGillivray's 1793 journal described the NWC operations as seen from Ile-à-la-Crosse. From that location, his "immediate concern was with the posts on Reindeer Lake, Lac la Ronge, and Lac d'Orignal, and with outposts at Green Lake and Waterhen Lake."⁴⁷ Morton added: "The post on Green Lake, and . . . Lac d'Orignal, besides gathering furs of the several regions, acted as links connecting the English River Department with that of the Forts des Prairies (Saskatchewan)."⁴⁸ In 1795, for example, pemmican that originated at Fort St. George on the North Saskatchewan relieved the NWC personnel at Green Lake, whom starvation had reduced to "making soup out of the fish bones cast out in the autumn."⁴⁹ As well, pemmican from the Saskatchewan provisioned both the immediate needs of the post at Ile-à-la-Crosse and the Athabaska Brigade as it headed east down the Churchill toward Cumberland House.⁵⁰ The same "express" that had delivered the pemmican from St. George returned laden with "goods from Green Lake, much needed for the summer trade at Fort George."⁵¹

In 1798, David Thompson reached the upper course of the Athabaska River by means of the Beaver River. Along the way, he visited the NWC post at Green Lake, noting its position "two-thirds of a mile east from his entry into the lake."⁵² That site would remain the centre of the settlement at Green Lake for some 150 years. Elliot Coues, editor of Thompson's journals, emphasized the importance of the Beaver River as a route to (and from) the upper Athabaska River:

Before quitting Alberta again, Beaver r. is joined by Little Beaver r., and in this last small stream is found the feature which makes the Beaver r. so important a waterway. For this northern tributary heads so close to Lac la Biche or Red Deer l. that the intervening distance is easily portaged, and the lake discharges by the river of the same name into the Athabasca, thus establishing a remarkable connection. It was a regularly travelled route for many years.⁵³

In effect, the Beaver River allowed the NWC to encircle the Athabasca fur country. The NWC became "the masters of Athabasca," and by that "enjoyed its most prosperous years."⁵⁴

Thompson's journey during the winter of 1798-99 followed the Beaver River-Athabaska River route to its junction with the Clearwater River. He then turned upstream to Methye Portage and from there south again to reach Ile-à-la-Crosse in May of 1799. One month later he married Charlotte Small, the fourteen-year-old daughter of Patrick Small and the first recorded mixed-blood child born in Ile-à-la-Crosse (1785).⁵⁵ Thompson's journal of

that year was notable for two observations. First, Thompson verified the continued presence of the Laliberte name in the region by recording the presence of a "La Liberte" as part of his party travelling west up the Beaver River between Green Lake and Fort George in 1799.⁵⁶ Thompson's second contribution was the mention of agricultural pursuits. The first in a long line of optimists about the agricultural possibilities in northern Saskatchewan, Thompson wrote: "after the ice has left the Lake [Ile-à-la-Crosse] has a fine warm summer; Barley, Oats and sometimes Wheat come to maturity, and good gardens of all the common vegetables; for the Lake moderates the frosts and cold of Autumn."⁵⁷ Thompson's interest in the agricultural possibilities reflected the subsistence nature of agriculture in the fur trade economy. The large gardens of the posts provided a necessary supplement to the diet that helped provide the ability to stay in one place and have access to an adequate diet. By the 1800s, the question was no longer whether post sites would be permanent settlements; the question became which company would occupy the best sites.

Whatever respite had been found from quarrelling traders by the formation of the NWC, the peace was to be short-lived. By 1799 the HBC (under the direction of Peter Fidler)⁵⁸ had set up a post in Ile-à-la-Crosse and the competition began anew: "a series of offensives was directed against points already occupied by the Canadians - Green Lake, Essex House,⁵⁹ Lac la Biche (Greenwich House), Lesser Slave Lake."⁶⁰ At each point, they established an HBC post.⁶¹ With the attempted intrusion of the HBC, several independent or former NWC traders amalgamated under the banner of the XY Company. The result was "unremitting competition between 1800 and 1804."⁶² The XY Company joined the existing NWC and HBC establishments in Green Lake, building a depot there to complement its depot in Ile-à-la-Crosse and thus better provision posts in Athabaska.⁶³

Initial HBC attempts to set up in Ile-à-la-Crosse came to a stop with NWC efforts to make life miserable for HBC's William Auld and a contingent of six men. Auld withdrew to Green Lake in early 1800. The post at Green Lake fared little better. When Fidler returned from Athabasca to Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1804, "he was informed that the Northwesters had destroyed the Company's garden at Green Lake and burnt the house to ashes."⁶⁴ By 1805 open hostilities broke out between the HBC employees and those of the newly re-amalgamated NWC, which had reabsorbed the XY Company in 1804. An 1804 list of

employees of the NWC included Gerard, another surname later identified with the Green Lake community.⁶⁵

Continued HBC attempts to maintain permanent residence in Ile-à-la-Crosse were abandoned in 1806, and then resumed by Fidler in 1809. Constant bullying, especially by the infamous Samuel Black, again drove the HBC out of Ile-à-la-Crosse in the spring of 1814.⁶⁶ Events in the Athabasca region paralleled those in Ile-à-la-Crosse, Green Lake and Red River. HBC journals tell of the seizure of HBC goods and personnel by NWC Indians, noting "their Half Breeds in charge of them."⁶⁷ NWC agents seized the HBC post at Green Lake twice, in December 1816 and March 1817.⁶⁸ The NWC 'bully' in the Green Lake incidents was Peter Skene Ogden: "To the Hudson's Bay men he was 'that murderer Ogden,' accused of holding a Hudson's Bay Indian in the water and then shooting him at Green Lake in 1816."⁶⁹ Giraud noted that ". . . the worst [attacks] were committed at Green Lake, around Ile-à-la-Crosse and at Lesser Slave Lake."⁷⁰ It was not until 1818 that the HBC reestablished posts at Ile-à-la-Crosse and Green Lake.⁷¹

In 1819 the British Admiralty involved Green Lake in its attempt to establish the fabled northwest sea passage and secure a commercial transportation link to the Far East. As part of that effort, "Lieutenant John Franklin was sent on an overland journey to establish the whereabouts of the northern coastline of the North American continent in the hope of guiding the seaborne expedition toward its destination."⁷² Franklin arrived in Hudson Bay ill-equipped and undermanned, essentially dependent upon the goodwill of the quarrelling companies to provision and transport his party.⁷³ Setting off from York Factory on 9 September 1819, Franklin reached Cumberland House after forty-four days of travel. His party stayed there until January 1820, when they set off "with carioles, sledges, dogs and drivers" on the two-week journey to Carlton House.⁷⁴ From Carlton they headed north toward Ile-à-la-Crosse. After one week of travel (from ten to twenty miles per day), the party approached "Pelican Lake" (Chitek Lake). There "finding almost immediately a firm track," the party "met an Indian and his family who had come from the houses at Green Lake." They informed Franklin "the track [to Green Lake] was well beaten the whole way."⁷⁵ The party reached Green Lake the next day, and was ". . . honoured with a salute of musquetry."⁷⁶ Franklin described the Green Lake posts:

These establishments are small, but said to be well situated for the procuring of furs; as the numerous creeks in their vicinity are much resorted to by the beaver, otter, and musquash. The residents usually obtain a superabundant supply of provision . . . Green Lake lies nearly north and south, is eighteen miles in length, and does not exceed one mile and a half of breadth in any part. The water is deep, and it is in consequence one of the last lakes of the country that is frozen. Excellent tittameg and trout are caught in it from March to December. . . .⁷⁷

Like Thompson's earlier description of agriculture, Franklin's emphasis on the fish of Green Lake underscored another basis for settlement at the site. The substantial fishery provided an important subsistence base for a settled population; the commercial value of the fishery to the fur trade (and later export markets) was important to community development in Green Lake.

Franklin's 1820 visit to Green Lake was only for two days, but he reported being "much amused by the novelty of the salute given at our departure, the guns being principally fired by the half-breed women in the absence of the men."⁷⁸ The gender bias of Franklin's amusement should not obscure his documentation of a settled mixed-blood population occupying Green Lake at the time of his visit. In "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," Jennifer Brown reminded us of the necessity to consider the Metis descendants of Metis mothers. Brown expressed interest in investigating "how many metis families by the late nineteenth century looked back to an apical woman ancestor who . . . combined femaleness and a European father's surname."⁷⁹ Franklin's report suggested that such an investigation could profitably begin in Green Lake and similar communities of western Rupert's Land at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Green Lake and the HBC monopoly

As Morton described it, the amalgamation of the NWC and the HBC in 1821 "inaugurated a new phase in the history of the Canadian West."⁸⁰ This was to be as true for Green Lake and the other small Metis communities as it was for the larger economic and political structures of the fur trade. The HBC's important Northern Department included the upper Churchill River drainage area, including the Beaver River and Green Lake. The Northern Department was to be governed by George Simpson, who "had played the Northwester's game successfully without losing their respect for him and without awakening personal rancour."⁸¹ Simpson oversaw the transition in the northwest from an economy based

on competitive oligopoly to one based on the efficiencies of monopoly.

Throughout the northwest the HBC and the NWC had each established posts at critical junctions of the transportation networks created by the trade. The maintenance of two posts at the same site was no longer necessary after the merger. In Athabaska, where the NWC had been dominant, the HBC posts near NWC posts were all closed. The upper Churchill River posts seem to have generally followed the pattern of those of Athabasca. At Ile-à-la-Crosse, the former HBC's Fort Superior gave way to the NWC post. In Green Lake the HBC abandoned its Essex House in favour of the NWC post on the northeast shore as described by Thompson.⁸² On the Saskatchewan, the HBC posts predominated; the NWC Fort Augustus gave way to the HBC Edmonton House, and the HBC Carlton House eclipsed the NWC La Montee.⁸³ Locations occupied only because of the competitive search for a geographical advantage simply lost their posts no matter their previous affiliation.

The excess capacity engendered by competition went beyond the number of buildings; the companies had overstaffed posts to provide protection for those who worked there. Simpson estimated that there were "twice too many men for the service."⁸⁴ The end of competition released many employees whose positions in the trade the competition had previously required. Simpson also directed the restructuring of the transportation routes between the posts as well, often after his personal inspection. Simpson's brief pass by Green Lake in 1824 exemplified just such a downsizing of the transportation system.

Simpson had arrived in Ile-à-la-Crosse after "having performed the voyage from York in 22 Days . . . the quickest passage ever made."⁸⁵ The next morning, Simpson left Ile-à-la-Crosse to travel south up the Beaver River past Green Lake and then westward toward the Athabaska River and Lesser Slave Lake. He did not mention Green Lake, but the Beaver River became the target for his displeasure: "On account of its lowness, the people almost constantly in the Water dragging the Canoe; the Weather cold raw and disagreeable thick fogs and raining at intervals Daily."⁸⁶ His experiences on the River Biche only exacerbated Simpson's aggravation with the Beaver River route, which descended from Lac la Biche toward the Athabasca. As he put it, ". . . A more disagreeable navigation or piece of Road I never travelled; the River itself was nearly dry so that it became necessary to carry the Baggage at least four fifths of the way. . . ." ⁸⁷ Not only had the entire journey from Ile-à-la-

Crosse been miserable, but on reaching Fort Assiniboine on the Athabaska River (north of Edmonton House), Simpson discovered that the Saskatchewan Brigade had reached there before him.⁸⁸ His failure to get to Fort Assiniboine first ". . . shews how much shorter the route is by the Saskatchewan than by the Beaver River and accounts for some arrangements I am about to suggest . . . "⁸⁹ Simpson ordered the unification of "the Lesser Slave Lake Brigade and the Columbia Express transport with the Cumberland House and Saskatchewan transport as far as Edmonton House on the North Saskatchewan"; from "Edmonton House the Lesser Slave Lake Brigade and the Columbia Express could reach the Athabaska River by means of a horseroad which Cardinal, the freeman, was to cut."⁹⁰ In effect, Simpson had removed Green Lake from the major east/west trade route of the HBC when he established the new route in 1825. He claimed the change saved the HBC 1000 pounds per year, and cut the personnel of the combined brigades by some 35 men out of the original 79. Simpson had been conservative in his initial estimate that there was "twice too many men for the service" in the northwest.⁹¹ Innis later claimed: "The number of servants employed by the contending companies was triple the number required in quiet times, and, more especially, when the business came to be managed by one firm. . . ."⁹² Under Simpson, it was clearly to be the economic interests of the Company that were to be the primary concern of governance, and the efficiency of monopoly led to redundant employees.

There has been some tendency to focus on the ex-employees who retired to Red River after the merger and to fail to recognize those who did not. The HBC encouraged the movement to Red River, the London Committee asserting that if the unemployed were "allowed to remain in their present condition, they will become dangerous to the Peace of the Country and the safety of the trading Posts."⁹³ The Company provided religious instruction and education in the colony for ex-employees, along with plots of land of various sizes.⁹⁴ Some have even argued that this was the beginning of Metis settlement.⁹⁵ The focus on Red River has, however, tended to obscure the settlement already in process farther west in communities like Green Lake. At Green Lake all the necessities for continued settlement were available: continued opportunity for seasonal labour on the north/south transportation system, soil open to agricultural activity, a noted fishery and a plentiful supply of fur-bearing animals. The settlement begun during competition continued after the merger.

After the 1824 loss of the traffic of the Lesser Slave Lake and Columbia Express on the Beaver River, the east-west flow of goods and personnel had shifted from Green Lake to the north branch of the Saskatchewan River. Green Lake lost its Company connection to the Lac la Biche area. However, Ile-à-la-Crosse retained its importance on the Churchill River route to Lake Athabaska. As well, during the 1830s "Fort Carlton, near the wintering ground of the buffalo, was a great pemmican post in its southerly aspect, while it drew an abundance of peltry from the woods to the north."⁹⁶ Green Lake as much as ever remained the mediating point between these important posts. Provisions from Carlton would be "carried overland to Green Lake in the winter, and thence by canoe to Ile-à-la-Crosse in the spring."⁹⁷ Green Lake would remain an important halfway point between the Saskatchewan and Churchill River systems for as long as Rupert's Land remained a coherent regional economy based on the fur trade. Labour on the transport of goods would remain an important economic feature to those who resided there, providing continued rationale for occupation of the Green Lake site.

According to A.S. Morton, Simpson learned the value of agriculture to Company posts during his stay in Athabasca in 1820. There, said Morton: "When pemmican was not to be had at the posts of either company, the Northwesters got their canoes up to the Peace River forts on potatoes grown in that region, and were trading with the Indians before the Englishmen, who had to hunt by the way, could arrive."⁹⁸ Drawing on that experience, Simpson's administration included the encouragement of agricultural production at posts such as Green Lake. Morton added that such encouragement "needed to do no more than stimulate and regulate a development already existing" at several locations, as Thompson's 1799 journal had noted with respect to Ile-à-la-Crosse.⁹⁹ While agricultural attempts at Red River in the early 1800s were less than successful at provisioning the broader trade, small gardens proliferated across the northwest. "Potatoes, cabbage, and the like, were grown, even at Fort Wedderburn on Athabaska Lake."¹⁰⁰ Franklin noted five acres of "wheat, barley, oats and potatoes" during his 1820 visit to Carlton House.¹⁰¹ Agriculture was widely practised as a part of settlement at the time of the merger. Morton concluded that, where "the soil could be brought under cultivation without the toil of clearing it of woods, agriculture was the simplest means of finding a livelihood for the surplus labour cast off from the posts after the Union. . . . They lived on fish and the proceeds of the chase, but they ensured themselves against

periods of scarcity by cultivating gardens."¹⁰² Although later dwarfed by the commercial agriculture of the prairie economy, subsistence agriculture found its place early in fur trade settlements like Green Lake.

Despite his advocacy of post agriculture, Simpson saw many drawbacks to the growth of Metis settlement that such agriculture supported at the inland posts. The increased population exhausted local resources at an accelerated pace: The fisheries declined and a growing post population pushed game out of the easy reach of post hunters. "Above all," contended Marcel Giraud, Simpson "feared that the Metis, once they were gathered in villages, would carry on the fur trade on their own account."¹⁰³ Simpson cited settlements like Green Lake, where discharged Metis "occupied themselves with hunting, simple cultivation, and free trading."¹⁰⁴ Most worrisome for Simpson was that "by virtue of their birth [they] claimed a 'right to settle where they please and to deal with the natives as they think proper'."¹⁰⁵ Metis settlements like Green Lake were to become the focus of much of the free trade campaign as "centres of commercial opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company."¹⁰⁶ The Metis occupants of the settlements welcomed the free traders out of Red River, from whom they could expect better payment for their furs than available at the local post. The threat, of course, was to the monopoly position of the HBC. So it was that Simpson "fought against the tendency of the freemen to put up houses in the neighbourhood of the trading forts."¹⁰⁷ Giraud concluded that Simpson was not very successful in stopping the practice. In Green Lake subsistence agriculture, available fur-bearing animals, a strong fishery and the need for a seasonal workforce for transportation purposes all combined to encourage settlement.

Besides employment in the free trade economy, openings began to appear again for Company employment. As early as 1825, the HBC experienced difficulties recruiting outside Rupert's Land and began to re-engage servants inland.¹⁰⁸ Company activity in Green Lake was evident in the Minutes of Council of the Northern Department. In 1822 HBC downsizing was evident in an attempt "to remove the establishment of Green Lake to Cold Lake."¹⁰⁹ However, by 1824 the HBC assigned James Heron as Clerk at Green Lake for the winter, and a "Clerk & 2 men including an Interpreter" the next summer.¹¹⁰ In 1825 they reassigned Heron to Ile-à-la-Crosse and Northern Council minutes were silent regarding staffing at Green Lake until 1831. That year the Company assigned an Interpreter to manage the trade there for the

winter. That arrangement remained in place through the Council of 1836, when "Thos. Hodgson" was assigned as Interpreter at Green Lake. It is likely that he was the "T. Hodgson, later of Fort Edmonton, [who] in the winter of 1822-23, built the first York boats" used in the Athabaska drainage.¹¹¹ By 1840 Hodgson had achieved the rank of Postmaster at Green Lake.¹¹² In the summer of 1843 he served as Postmaster at Ile-à-la-Crosse when Chief Factor Roderick Mackenzie took furlough. Hodgson also served as Postmaster at Ile-à-la-Crosse in the summer and Green Lake for the winter the following year.¹¹³ That system of management showed the ongoing relationship between the communities of Ile-à-la-Crosse and Green Lake in that period. Both belonged to the English River District of the Northern Department, which also included posts at Portage La Loche, Rapid River and Deer Lake when in operation. As an administrative centre for the English River district, "Ile-à-la-Crosse exported many young people to remote centres which in turn began to raise new families with the old family name."¹¹⁴ Whether from emigration or immigration between the two posts, 17 of 40 'Ile-à-la-Crosse' employees of the HBC circa 1870 carried surnames prevalent in Green Lake at the time of survey in 1912.¹¹⁵ For example, by 1866 a Samuel Laliberte had become Chief Factor at Ile-à-la-Crosse.¹¹⁶ A Pierre Laliberte served as one of six clerks in the District, and a second Pierre Laliberte worked as a servant. Either might have been the Pierre Laliberte born in 1844 at Green Lake or his father who became known as 'old' Pierre Laliberte and was a resident in Green Lake until his death in 1903.¹¹⁷ Such generational connections would have been consistent with the century-long history of regional cohesion between the two centres.

Increasingly, as the HBC monopoly entrenched itself, there grew a parallel fur trade structure based on free trade with American traders. Ron Bourgeault put it: "In the 1840s, overt opposition by the Metis commercial class to the economic and political colonial structure took place with the struggle for free trade in fur."¹¹⁸ This independent trade included many smaller fur trade communities of Rupert's Land. Marcel Giraud directly linked the growth of Metis nationalism in Rupert's Land to the role played by small settlements like Green Lake. The various HBC brigades first created a link between the people of the Red River colony and the western settlements based on prolonged periodic contact.¹¹⁹ Trade with the brigade personnel prepared local populations for the arrival of the Red River free traders as they spread westward along the transportation systems. Additional circumstances forged

ties between the colony and the far-flung settlements. As the century wore on, men from Red River often worked at the local posts; other young men travelled out from the colony "in search of adventure"; men from the forest fringes "were engaged to take to Red River the cartloads of meat and furs," and toward the end of the monopoly there began the exodus from the colony to the newly established missions in the west.¹²⁰ For Giraud, however:

... it was the traders from the colony who most developed the relations between the West and the Red River. The growth of the cartage industry particularly favoured the increase of free trade. Even if he had only scanty resources at his disposal, the trader could equip a cart with merchandise and set off for the West, where he could install himself near a settlement of freemen or in the vicinity of a fort, and . . . succeed in accumulating a considerable amount of furs.¹²¹

Giraud concluded that the residents of the settlements became accustomed to trading with the free traders. They "reserved their best furs . . . to await the arrival of the free traders in their carts."¹²² Such arrangements were more than an occasional temporary phenomenon: "It was the same at Lac la Ronge, at Cold Lake, at Green Lake, in the valley of the Qu'Appelle River and that of the Swan River, at Le Pas, at the mission of Rossville near Norway House, and everywhere the freemen or Indians gathered together."¹²³ The settlements provided the infrastructure that made possible the trade linkages between the Metis petit bourgeoisie of the Red River colony and their hinterland clientele.

The dominance of the HBC monopoly and the monolithic nature of the fur trade economy created a sense of regional unity in Rupert's Land. However, a parallel sense of national unity evolved out of opposition to the HBC and became centred in Red River. Within the settlements growing in the hinterlands, two additional developments completed the parallel structures of the free trade movement. The first was the development of local traders, sometimes in conjunction with transportation subcontracts with the HBC. A good example was Desjarlais of La Loche, who combined transport of Company goods over Methye Portage with a private trade in furs. Contracting with the brigades to bring him goods besides those they carried for the Company, Desjarlais could "trade with the Indians at terms more advantageous than either the Company or the merchants from the colony could offer."¹²⁴ Desjarlais carried out the trade without fear of Company interference because of his critical role in the transportation link, "and he used the Company's horses without scruple to transport

the merchandise he received."¹²⁵

The second development in the establishment of secure transportation for free-trade goods occurred when the western Metis began to travel on their own to the colony. Whether by birch-bark canoe or Red River cart or by foot and horseback, the traders and travellers completed the links that created a network of both trade and nationalist sentiment between the Red River metropolis and its western hinterland.¹²⁶ The 1859 introduction of steam boats on the Red River south to the United States augmented east-west travel. That in turn encouraged a slow attrition of Metis cartage enterprises from the United States route. They moved out onto the Canadian prairies where steam travel was less accessible. The trails led northwest to Fort Carlton and Fort Edmonton by way of Fort Ellice and posts on the Swan River during 1860s-70s.¹²⁷ The once remote forts of the northwest were "served by the caravans whose trails traversed the wide plains and the gentle hills of the prairie, and extended into the parkland."¹²⁸ The growth of economic unification caused by regular and constant trade and travel fostered a growing sense of national unity that complemented the regional unity created by the monopoly. That sense of national unity reached its highest expression in the events of 1869-1870 in Red River, just as the HBC abandoned the monopoly that had created regional unity.

Behind the formation and entrenchment of representative government in Red River by the Metis resistance, there stretched the rivers, trails and Metis settlements of the greater northwest. The loss of both the regional unity born of monopoly and the national unity born of opposition to that monopoly set those settlements on different roads, depending on where they fell in the new arrangements of power being created in Rupert's Land now that it had become part of the Canadian state. By 1870, the stage had been set for the creation of uneven development *within* the northwest, an internal state of uneven development that was to match in its disparity the old contrast between the British colonial homeland and its mercantile colony of Rupert's Land.

Notes

¹ Arthur S. Morton, *A History of The Canadian West to 1870-71* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939) 299, J. Colin Yerbury, *The Subarctic Indians and the Fur Trade* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986) 10.

² Yerbury 10-11. Yerbury summarized the earlier work of C.A. Bishop and A.J. Ray, who employed this chronological unit in "Ethnohistorical Research in the Central Subarctic: Some Conceptual and Methodological Problems," *The Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology* 4, no. 1: 116-44.

³ Arthur J. Ray, "Periodic Shortages, Native Welfare, and the Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1930," in *The Subarctic Fur Trade*, ed. Shepard Krech (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1984) 9.

⁴ Yerbury 55.

⁵ It is useful here to include A.S. Morton's explanation of the term 'pedlar': "It was the name given by the Hudson's Bay Company's servants to the French and English fur-traders from Montreal. It points at a difference in their methods of trading. The English Company waited for the Indians to come down to its forts on the Bay. Even when its servants travelled inland, as they did steadily from 1754, they did not go to trade, but with presents to rally the Indians for the voyage to the factory. In contrast the French, and after them the English from Montreal, went to the natives and established posts among them; they even sent servants out to the Indians' tents with assortments of goods to trade *en deroine*, as it was called. Hence, the term 'pedlar.' The word is used here as a convenient name for the individual traders from Montreal who came in as rivals of the Hudson's Bay Company, and is confined to the period before the formation of the 'General Partnership,' known as the North West Company." Morton 257.

⁶ Morton 272.

⁷ Morton 272.

⁸ Morton 274.

⁹ Morton 274-5.

¹⁰ Morton 275.

¹¹ As quoted in Morton 275.

¹² As quoted in Morton 275.

¹³ Ron Bourgeault, "The Indian, the Metis and the Fur Trade: Class, Sexism and Racism in the transition from 'Communism' to Capitalism," *Studies in Political Economy*, No. 12 (Fall, 1983) 60.

¹⁴ Morton 275.

¹⁵ Morton 275.

¹⁶ Morton 275.

¹⁷ Morton 277.

¹⁸ Morton 277.

¹⁹ Morton 270.

²⁰ Morton 279.

²¹ Morton 279.

²² Morton 281.

²³ Morton 282.

²⁴ Morton 282.

- ²⁵ Morton 284.
- ²⁶ Morton 286.
- ²⁷ Morton 304.
- ²⁸ Morton 290.
- ²⁹ Morton 290.
- ³⁰ Yerbury 57.
- ³¹ Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1930, rev. ed. 1970) 195.
- ³² Morton 318.
- ³³ Alexander Mackenzie, *A general history of the fur trade* (London, 1801) xii-xiii, cited in Harold A. Innis, *Peter Pond: Fur Trader and Adventurer* (Toronto: Irwin & Gordon, 1930) 80.
- ³⁴ Marcel Giraud, *The Metis in the Canadian West* vol. 1, trans. George Woodcock (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986) 189.
- ³⁵ Morton 451.
- ³⁶ Robert Longpre, *Ile-à-la-Crosse 1776-1976: Sakitawak Bi-Centennial* (Ile-à-la-Crosse: Ile-à-la-Crosse Local Community Authority, 1977) 4.
- ³⁷ Harry W. Duckworth, ed., *The English River Book: A North West Company Journal and Account Book of 1786* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1990) xxxi.
- ³⁸ Duckworth xxxiii, xxv.
- ³⁹ Duckworth 157.
- ⁴⁰ Longpre 6.
- ⁴¹ Morton 451.
- ⁴² Giraud, vol. 1 189.
- ⁴³ E.E. Rich, *The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967) 181.
- ⁴⁴ Giraud, vol. 1 186-87.
- ⁴⁵ Morton 347.
- ⁴⁶ Morton 347.
- ⁴⁷ Morton 451.
- ⁴⁸ Morton 451.
- ⁴⁹ Morton 451.
- ⁵⁰ Morton 451.
- ⁵¹ Morton 460.
- ⁵² Morton 452.
- ⁵³ Elliott Coues, ed. *The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and of David Thompson*, vol. 2 (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1897) 573.
- ⁵⁴ Giraud, vol. 1 189.
- ⁵⁵ Longpre 4.
- ⁵⁶ Coues 561.
- ⁵⁷ David Thompson, *David Thompson's Narrative 1784-1812* (1962) 558, as cited in Longpre 9.
- ⁵⁸ Morton 516.
- ⁵⁹ Although Giraud adds Essex House to the list, that was in fact the name of the HBC post established beside the NWC post in Green Lake. See Morton 453.

- ⁶⁰ Giraud, vol. 1 197.
- ⁶¹ Giraud, vol. 1 197.
- ⁶² Yerbury 68.
- ⁶³ Yerbury 69; Morton 512.
- ⁶⁴ Morton 519.
- ⁶⁵ L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, vol. 1 (New York: Antiquarian Press, 1960) 395-400, cited in Longpre 17.
- ⁶⁶ Longpre 12.
- ⁶⁷ HBC B.39/a/7, fo. 3d, cited in Yerbury 84.
- ⁶⁸ Yerbury 84.
- ⁶⁹ E.E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870*, vol. 2 (1959) 366.
- ⁷⁰ Giraud, vol. 1 487.
- ⁷¹ Morton 611.
- ⁷² Clive Holland, "John Franklin and the Fur Trade, 1819-22" in *Rupert's Land: a Cultural Tapestry*, ed. Richard C. Davis (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988) 97.
- ⁷³ Holland 98.
- ⁷⁴ Holland 102.
- ⁷⁵ Franklin 123.
- ⁷⁶ Franklin 123.
- ⁷⁷ Franklin 123.
- ⁷⁸ Franklin 124.
- ⁷⁹ Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3.1 (1983):39-46 42.
- ⁸⁰ Morton 623.
- ⁸¹ Morton 626.
- ⁸² Morton 630.
- ⁸³ Morton 630.
- ⁸⁴ Morton 631.
- ⁸⁵ George Simpson, *Remarks Connected with the Fur Trade in the Course of a Voyage from York Factory to Fort George and Back to York Factory*, ed. Frederick Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968) 16.
- ⁸⁶ Simpson 18.
- ⁸⁷ Simpson 22-23.
- ⁸⁸ Merk 24.
- ⁸⁹ Simpson 25.
- ⁹⁰ Merk 27.
- ⁹¹ Morton 631.
- ⁹² Innis, *Fur Trade in Canada* 288.
- ⁹³ As quoted by George Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1975) 29. Woodcock provides no source for the quotation, and attributed it to Simpson. Morton correctly attributed the same quotation as coming from the Committee in a letter to Simpson of February 27, 1822. See Morton 632. The letter is reprinted in R. Harve Fleming, ed., *Minutes of the Council, Northern Department, 1821-31* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1940) 300-312.
- ⁹⁴ Morton 631-37.

- ⁹⁵ Woodcock 30. George Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (London: Longmans, Green, 1936) 13.
- ⁹⁶ Morton 697.
- ⁹⁷ Morton 697.
- ⁹⁸ Morton 637.
- ⁹⁹ Morton 638-39.
- ¹⁰⁰ Morton 638.
- ¹⁰¹ Morton 638.
- ¹⁰² Morton 639.
- ¹⁰³ Marcel Giraud, *The Metis in the Canadian West*, vol. 2, trans. George Woodcock (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986) 353-4.
- ¹⁰⁴ Giraud, vol. 2 354, citing HBCA "D 4/69, p. 13: Simpson's report. Norway Ho., 30 June 1829."
- ¹⁰⁵ Giraud, vol. 2 354, citing HBCA "D 4/69, p. 13: Simpson's report. Norway Ho., 30 June 1829."
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- ¹¹⁰ Fleming 76-77.
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- ¹¹³ Oliver 854-55.
- ¹¹⁴ Longpre 21.
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CHAPTER TWO

THE NATIONAL POLICY AND GREEN LAKE

The previous chapter emphasized the cohesive nature of the fur trade in Rupert's Land before 1870 and Green Lake's historical position within that regional unity. Until the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada in 1870, regional differences within Rupert's Land depended primarily on geophysical features. Uneven development brought on by economic and political influences was significant primarily with respect to Rupert's Land's relationship to the colonial motherland through the HBC. Before 1870, Rupert's Land had evolved as an underdeveloped hinterland subject to the European metropolis.

Two features of the uneven development characteristic of the pre-confederation period would change because of the transfer. The first change would be the assumption of colonial dominance over much of Rupert's Land by central Canada. This east-west differentiation would replace the older Britain-Rupert's Land dichotomy typified by HBC dominance after 1821. However, the change to colonial domination of Rupert's Land by Canada would foster a second instance of uneven development that was equally important: regional differentiation would develop between north and south, coincidental with east-west differentiation due to the national policy. As Canada assumed dominance in the agricultural territory of the former Rupert's Land, the HBC would largely retain economic control over much of the northern area. East-west uneven development has received considerable attention in the study of the political economy of Canada. The north-south division has received less attention. This was at least partially due to the primary cause of north-south differentiation: the failure of the national policy to extend its scope beyond the fertile belt of the Canadian prairies.

The disparity in the analytical effort expended on the two instances of uneven development parallels a similar disparity in many studies of the Metis people. Following the transfer of Rupert's Land, those accounts treat the HBC as essentially irrelevant with respect to the Metis. Two factors contribute to this treatment. The first is the assumption of a decline of the fur trade commensurate with the rise of industrial agriculture. This assumption is based

on a myopic focus on the prairie at the expense of northern forests and, to a lesser extent, parkland areas. The second factor arises when such accounts focus solely on the Metis of the plains, who wrongly become representative of all Metis. That perspective reduces fur trade history to irrelevancy as it focusses attention on the 1885 resistance of the Metis in the fertile belt against the incursion of government forces driven by the national policy.

The limits of the national policy created the conditions leading to north-south differentiation. For that reason it is necessary to first describe the national policy and its creation of east-west uneven development before turning to the north-south variant. Subsequent chapters will then describe how the interplay between those variants affected the land claims of the Metis in Green Lake.

Uneven development: the east-west articulation

The following discussion of the national policy owes its conceptual structure to the first four chapters of Vernon Fowke's *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy*.¹ Fowke began with a very narrow definition of the national policy, one for which he reserved capital letters, as in National Policy. That narrow definition referred to the tariff protection for Canadian manufacturers associated with the 1878 election campaign of John A. Macdonald. The newly elected Conservative government put the National Policy in practice in March of 1879. Its implementation represented the abandonment of the mercantilist assumption that tariffs were only for government revenues.² The Macdonald National Policy was an "ambitious business-state coalition,"³ designed to help the "nascent Canadian Bourgeoisie,"⁴ a group of wealthy businessmen who Macdonald could then count on to support the Conservatives with their financial contributions. A second, broader, definition equated the national policy, now without capitals, with larger, though still specifically national, development strategies. Those included: the Canadian Pacific Railway, chartered by new legislation in 1881; western settlement, defined primarily by the *Dominion Lands Act*, 1872; pro-immigration policies; harbour development; and subsidization of steamship service to Europe and Asia to help the export of Canadian products.

For Fowke, however, a third sense of the national policy predated Confederation. That national policy included as the central purpose "to form and develop in British North America

a political and economic unit on a national basis."⁵ That new Dominion was to include all British territory in North America to "more effectively cope with alterations which had taken place in Imperial and continental relationships and which rendered the old arrangements obsolete if not wholly inadequate."⁶ Internal political forces prompting confederation grew out of the failure of the *Act of Union*. The 1840 British legislation had joined Upper and Lower Canada into one province, but the practice of duality had not worked well. Confederation was to resolve the difficulty by loosening the bonds between the two former provinces.⁷ Representation by population was to govern the new national effort, while local purposes were to be left to the local government of the individual provinces.⁸ External political forces promoting confederation centred on Britain's increasing reluctance to carry the costs of the defence of both the maritime colonies and the St. Lawrence. There had been increasing friction between Britain and the United States, and friction between the United States and individual provinces. The new federation of the previous dependencies would assume the former British burden of Canadian defence.

While the political forces leading to confederation did not directly affect Rupert's Land, related economic factors did. The economic forces leading to confederation had both North American and European elements. United States expansion westward after 1814 had already once reduced trade through Montreal when the North West Company had lost its lucrative Great Lakes fur trade. As the Great Lakes developed the first wheat economy, the assumption by Montreal mercantilists of the continental nature of their commerce again fell victim to U.S. expansionism.⁹ American canals and railways drew western agricultural commerce to New York rather than the St. Lawrence. In an attempt to compete, Canadian provinces had overinvested in The Grand Trunk Railway and the St. Lawrence Canal.¹⁰ The financial instability added to the political instability of the *Act of Union* and provided added impetus toward confederation. British reluctance to carry the costs of defence paralleled the laissez-faire stance of the British government in economic matters epitomized by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. The British refusal to continue trade preference for its colonies forced the colonies to "find a new development strategy."¹¹ Already engaged in competition with a growing neighbour to the south, the British North American colonies lost the hope of further economic integration with the mother country. Confederation provided, at a minimum,

the attraction of solidarity in a world increasingly careless of the colonies' individual well-being. It also added an opportunity for expansion.

Confederation, "the framework of a second national state in North America," required three major elements.¹² The first, political unification, came about with the *British North America Act* of 1867. The second element was the requirement for economic integration of the individual dependencies, based both on free-trade between the provinces and on development of the inter-colonial railways. The third requirement was a new area for exploitation of resources, "a new frontier of investment."¹³ The new country would fulfill this last requirement through the annexation of Rupert's Land and the Pacific colonies.

In the period before Confederation, developers had recognized immigration as a means to capital growth. Immigrants paid transportation fees, both to gain entry to the country and then to reach their destination once within colonial boundaries. They brought capital resources with them, either as cash or the tools and implements they transported.¹⁴ As pioneer settlers gathered in sufficient numbers, their presence and the meeting of their needs resulted in the development of local mixed-product market centres.¹⁵ These factors meant that immigration and settlement were commercial as well as agricultural; the proponents of the national policy saw "the economic effectiveness of migration and settlement" at yielding greater development in both Upper and Lower Canada.¹⁶ Despite the perceived value of increased immigration, Canadian immigration dropped in the 1850s and 1860s.¹⁷ As the united provinces had grown in population, there had been a corresponding decrease in the availability of good land. That "land hunger . . . had become one of the most persistent traits of farmers in Canada West in the 1850s and 1860s."¹⁸ Simultaneously, a distinct lack of Canadian competitiveness with the American westward expansion had become evident. The geographical wall thrown up by the Precambrian Shield added to the claustrophobic sense that there was not sufficient land available to draw the required number of capital-generating immigrants.¹⁹

By as early as 1860, it had become evident to St. Lawrence merchants that they would have no share in the U.S. agricultural trade. As a result, creating an agricultural export area, a hinterland of their own, would be necessary. Three facts, however, were just as readily apparent. First, no agricultural expansion westward would be possible with the HBC in

control of Rupert's Land. Second, Canadian control over such expansion would not be possible without a railway extending westward. Finally, expansion westward was beyond the capability of any single province. News of another development only exacerbated frustration with these factors: the Fraser and Caribou gold discoveries of the middle of the century added one last impetus to the drive for expansion westward.²⁰

It is always suspect to lay at the feet of any individual the causative role in historical events, but sometimes one individual is active in several facets of change. One such man was E.W. Watkin, a member of the British House of Commons.²¹ Watkin presided over the Grand Trunk Railway, whose British investors had engaged him to pursue their best interests. In that endeavour, Watkin secured British support for consideration of both the union of the British North American colonies and a coast-to-coast railway. He promoted the 1864 Quebec Conference for the consideration of revival of the flagging inter-colonial railway and "to further the union of the provinces."²² Perhaps most importantly, Watkin was the chief organiser of the International Financial Society which bought a majority interest in the Hudson's Bay Company. Watkin thus contributed "to at least four of the segments of national policy: disposal of the Hudson's Bay Company's barrier to the West; a Pacific railway; union of the British territories; and development of the West from the Red River settlement to the Pacific Coast."²³ Fowke suggested that all of this activity "can be fully appreciated only by reference to the age-old quest of Europeans for a short route to the Indies."²⁴ The idea of the great northern sea had once supported the search for that route. The fact that the British now knew such a sea route did not exist did not dilute the need for the shorter route. Britain by mid-century had extensive commercial contacts with China. There was no Suez Canal, no Panama Canal. The route around Cape Horn was dangerous enough to bring into question the possibility of profit in the face of calamitous losses. Now that railway technology was available, the possibility arose of its use to go overland across the American land mass rather than sailing around it. Nonetheless, that same possibility opened a new danger in the uncertain nature of British-American relations. Watkin phrased it:

Try for one moment to realize China opened to British commerce; Japan also opened; the new gold fields in our own territory on the extreme west, and California, also within reach; India, our Australian Colonies - all our eastern empire, in fact, material and moral, dependent (as at present it too much is) upon an overland communication through a foreign state.²⁵

That "foreign state" was, of course, the United States. The alternative was, just as obviously, the confederation of British territories that was to become the Dominion of Canada. Westward expansion was not an afterthought. As David Smith put it, "The colonies of British North America had to unite in order to expand."²⁶ The annexation of the west, and coincidentally, the subjugation of its Aboriginal inhabitants, was woven into the very fibre of the new Canadian state.

Two related elements of westward expansion hold special interest for this thesis: the extension of federal power as internal colonialism in the North West Territories (NWT); and federal control of land to carry out the disparate aims of the national policy in both the NWT and the new province of Manitoba. Both elements were evident in the negotiations between Canada and the Metis of Red River which led to the entry of Manitoba into confederation.

Legislation introduced by John A. Macdonald in June 1869 provided for the colonization of the soon-to-be-acquired HBC lands. Introduced at the end of a busy session, the legislation passed easily, at least partly because it cited the temporary nature of the essentially colonial administration the legislation proposed: "a governor and council appointed in Ottawa."²⁷ Macdonald's private correspondence suggested a more permanent restriction of provincial powers until "the present residents will be altogether swamped by the influx of strangers."²⁸ The subsequent application of the legislation to the Northwest Territories, the area of the former Rupert's Land not covered by the *Manitoba Act*, belied its "temporary" nature. There, "It was re-enacted in 1871 as permanent without any alteration whatever."²⁹ Only the negotiators from Red River saved the "postage-stamp" province of Manitoba from the same fate, and then only partially. Macdonald's opening gambit in the negotiations over the institutions of governance for the newly acquired territory was in fact that of the legislation of 1869. The chief negotiator from Red River quickly refused that proposal; Abbe Noel Ritchot was set on securing responsible government as instructed by his Red River constituents.³⁰ Ritchot refused several Macdonald overtures designed to limit the political aspirations of the "present residents." He rejected as inadequate both a promise to shorten the time before the introduction of democratic institutions and a proposal to salt the proposed advisory council with territorial representation. Ritchot's insistence on an elected assembly essentially forced the concession of provincial status. At that point the negotiations turned to

the limitations on the size of the new province, with Cartier emphasizing "the need for several provinces in the North-West."³¹ Provincial status was muted for the remainder of the former Rupert's Land and Northwest Territory.

The second critical restriction on provincial exercise of power affected both Manitoba and the remainder of the territory the HBC was about to transfer. The issue was the control of public land; Macdonald denied Ritchot's insistence on control of public lands by the local legislature as practised in the original provinces. Instead, the federal government would administer those lands. As Chester Martin put it in 1929, "Manitoba was the solitary exception within the British Empire to accepted British practice with regard to control of the crown lands and it still remains, in respect of public lands, literally not a province but a colony of the Dominion."³² Federal control of crown lands was the price paid by the Metis of Manitoba for the 1.4 million acres set aside for their use in Section 31 of the *Manitoba Act*. The "purposes of the Dominion" cited in that act were clearly the purposes of the national policy. Provincial control of land, said Macdonald, "might be obstructive to immigration," and therefore should be "under one control and that the Dominion legislature."³³ Westward expansion would proceed under federal control. Uneven development of the west for the benefit of the east would be the first of the geographical differentiations affecting land claims in Green Lake.

After 1870, the question was no longer whether the spatially-specific process of internal colonization of the west by the east would proceed. What remained uncertain was the rate of and limits to that colonization process. Janine Brodie has pointed out that "there was a considerable lag between federal government initiatives to make the western hinterland constitutionally and structurally compatible with the new national design" and substantial prairie settlement.³⁴ The slow rate of development of the west raised the issue of the import of a policy that appeared not to achieve its ends for some years. The "failure" of the national policy until the 1890s has provided fodder for the anti-tariff critique by John Dales.³⁵ Dales essentially argued that those who sang the praises of the national policy were far too taken with its mythology of nation-building and too little aware that most of the policy's supposed accomplishments would have occurred anyway. The economic basis of Dales' argument stemmed from the distinction between growth in gross national product (GNP) and GNP per

capita. Growth in GNP, or extensive growth as Dales described it, was typical of the national policy: "geographical expansion, immigration, the exploitation of new resources, railway building, and the extension of manufacturing and service industries to keep pace with the growth of the national economy."³⁶ In contrast, GNP per capita, or intensive growth "involves better job opportunities rather than more job opportunities, more highly trained people rather than more people, better use of capital and land rather than more capital and land — in brief, a better performance rather than a larger one."³⁷ Dales applauded the interest of economic historians and theorists in intensive growth, praising "improvement of resource *quality* as a third path to the wealth of nations."³⁸ Dales offered his critique of the national policy with respect to national development, but it seems equally true of regional development. The critical element, however, is the availability of optional development strategies inferred by Dales' critique. The assertion that the national policy may not have been economically sound would be of little surprise to the Aboriginal inhabitants of Rupert's Land and the many subsequent agricultural occupants who engaged in struggles against the CPR and other eastern corporate interests.

The point of the above is not, however, to play historical might-have-beens; the question is why the elements of the national policy were chosen despite, as Dales argued, their economic ineptitude with respect to larger national interests. The question reflects some ambiguity about the relationship of the state to capitalist development. Reg Whitaker described the heart of the anomaly: "the Canadian state and the Canadian nation were not one and the same."³⁹ The national policy "had far more to do with the creation of a viable national bourgeoisie . . . than it had to do with a 'public sector'."⁴⁰ The active government involvement in western settlement related little to the well-being of western populations by way of government intervention; it was, "from the outset, biassed in terms of its impact both on social classes and class fractions and on geographic space."⁴¹ Hierarchies arose within western populations. Immigrant settlers added to the capital accumulation process in a way that Indigenous populations did not; no Metis or Indian paid transport to reach the west, and few added capital value by importation of equipment or cash. That the land had to be cleared of Aboriginal subsistence and mercantile interests to accommodate the new frontier of investment could be justified by what Whitaker described as "the claims for British racial

superiority and the celebration of militarism and the longing for war which characterized much of the imperialist writing and agitation."⁴² Class, not race, was the fundamental driving force; but theories of racial superiority added justification for the class-induced exploitation of geographically specific resources.

Whitaker makes an additional point relevant to Dales' critique of national policy shortcomings. It is entirely possible for governments to make mistakes and to be inadequate in "their capacity to develop appropriate collective forms of behaviour to achieve concrete objectives set by their conception of their class interests."⁴³ Immigrants did not immediately fill the western spaces created for them by the national policy. Nonetheless, the national policy proceeded under the apprehension that development would occur quickly. It preferred extensive growth over the potential of intensive growth to enable participation by Indigenous populations in capitalist growth. Again, the question was not one of race, but of opportunistic preference for quick profit by non-Indigenous class interests. In the process, the national policy "failed to develop a nationalist basis for the state system."⁴⁴ Instead, the "singularly *economic* basis of the instruments of the new nationality" led to the east-west uneven development characterized as internal colonialism.⁴⁵ In the geographical regions dominated by the national policy, Aboriginal marginalization through the treaty process was one of the more obvious consequences of the haste to generate extensive growth. 'Settlement' of Metis land claims served the same purpose.

Uneven development: the north-south articulation

The developmental divergence of northern Rupert's Land from its southern area was presaged in the early 1850s by the Canadian government "putting forward the possibility that some of the Company's territory, suitable for settlement, might be made over to Canada."⁴⁶ E. E. Rich added that in 1856 "Simpson thought the Company could do as well without the Charter as with it" by relying on economic competence alone.⁴⁷ That same year Governor-General Sir Edmund Head suggested "Canada might acquire some of the Company's territory," though he wondered how Canada could manage any territory it might get.⁴⁸ The Chief Justice for Canada West, William Henry Draper, went to London to put Canada's case before the Parliamentary Enquiry regarding the HBC. He opposed any HBC rights that might

prevent Canadian occupation "of tracts adapted for settlement."⁴⁹ Draper recognized the HBC's need for a monopoly of the fur trade, but "suggested that the fur trade should be moved further north, so as to leave the prairie lands open for settlement."⁵⁰ The Select Committee appeared to accept some partition of Rupert's Land, recommending ". . . Canada to be enabled to annex to her territory such portion of the land in her neighbourhood as may be available to her for the purposes of settlement. . . ."⁵¹ The Company likewise appeared amenable to division, noting however that to continue to administer the northern lands it would need to remain solvent despite the loss of pemmican supplies from the settled territory. It also expressed concern that Canada ensured order in Red River and prevented it being used "as a spring-board" for fur trade competition with the HBC.⁵²

In the late 1850s proposals had been made for intercontinental telegraph lines to cross both the Atlantic and the Bering Strait. In 1862, Canada approached the HBC to share the burden of a transcontinental line. The HBC demurred, citing disruption of the pemmican supply areas and lack of funds for that purpose. More proposals for telegraph and railway lines, including offers associated with Watkin and his attempts to advance the Intercolonial Railway and revive the fortunes of the Grand Trunk, finally resulted in the Company's Governor Berens retorted: "If these gentlemen are so patriotic, why don't they buy us out?"⁵³ Eventually, a buyout of HBC shares occurred in 1863 engineered by the International Financial Society (IFS). Consideration of a north-south division of Rupert's Land clearly grew in intensity after the IFS purchase of HBC shares. The prospectus jointly authored by the HBC and the IFS had told the new buyers the southern district would be opened to settlement and existing southern posts would serve as nuclei for such settlement.⁵⁴ The prospect of the realization of capital gains through sale of settlement lands had clearly dominated any consideration of the fur trade in the IFS purchase of stock. The purchasers would expect the Company to realign its geographic interests accordingly. The HBC traders viewed the new management structures with justifiable suspicion, especially in view of imminent attempts to limit their profit-sharing capacity in the Company. Nonetheless, they shared in the advocacy of a geographic division to the extent that "the new management would confine the fur trade to the more profitable areas." Their hope was to remove the drag on profits in "the plain districts" and those to the east and on the west coast.⁵⁵ Changes brought on by the IFS

purchase added to growing technological change; Rupert's Land was being drawn closer to Canadian settlement by steam on the waterways and railway development. The new corporate management was "determined to exploit the change as fully as possible," for the interests of the Company "had been placed in the hands of men whose first object was to realize the values of the southern parts of Rupert's Land rather than to manage a trade to the north."⁵⁶ The question remained of how to provide good government over the newly articulating economic relationships developing in the region(s). The *British North America Act* would answer part of the question; the *Deed of Surrender* would complete the equation.

Governor-General Sir Edmund Head's earlier proposals for a jurisdictional reversion from the Charter back to the Crown were prophetic. Head proposed that "a Crown Colony should be set up at Red River"; although the Company could still manage its own affairs, "royal government had become necessary for the settlers."⁵⁷ The northern boundary suggested by Head was even more important to this thesis: he proposed "the North Branch of the Saskatchewan . . . or a line from the Rockies to Edmonton and Cumberland and thence to Lake Winnipeg and on to the Canadian frontier somewhere north of Lake Superior or Lake Huron."⁵⁸ Although it would take several years, and both the terms of transfer and the actual area transferred would change significantly, Head accurately predicted the general line of demarcation for north-south uneven development after the transfer to Canadian jurisdiction.

Uneven development and the Metis Resistance

In August of 1870, as the Canadian troops slogged on toward Red River to defeat Metis aspirations, Donald A. Smith plotted transportation changes designed "to avoid the necessity of again trusting to French halfbreeds."⁵⁹ The La Loche Brigade was the immediate target of Smith's ire for having left four boatloads of Mackenzie district supplies sitting on the banks of the Grand Rapids on the lower Saskatchewan. With the aid of Chief Factor Lawrence Clarke of Carlton, he arranged that some replacement goods would be immediately sent north from Carlton to La Loche to supplement the Mackenzie district. Smith pointed out to the Committee that with the introduction of steam transportation on the Saskatchewan between Grand Rapids and Carlton, they could abolish the La Loche Brigade and the Saskatchewan district "would be relieved from the necessity of providing vast quantities of

provisions to man these mutinous brigades."⁶⁰ Meanwhile, in the English River district, the "lower posts" at Rapid River, Deer's Lake and Pelican Lake would continue to ship to and from Norway House "by the District brigade, which however, instead of eight boats, will include only three."⁶¹ For the 1872 season, goods for the "Upper Posts" would come from Red River "overland in carts via Carlton to Green Lake."⁶² The fact that "A cart road has now been completed between Green Lake and Ile à la Crosse" would ensure speedy passage of the supplies for the Mackenzie district by the new route through Green Lake.⁶³ Although created out of immediate expediency, the change to the more southerly route matched the national policy's westward expansion.

After two failed attempts, the HBC in 1874 succeeded in having the 150-foot Northcote built above the Grand Rapids.⁶⁴ The Northcote successfully arrived at Carlton House ten days after setting out; it "had recouped much of its cost in a single trip."⁶⁵ Improvements to the trail from Carlton to Green Lake and at Portage La Loche enhanced Carlton as "the steamboat supply depot for the northern trade."⁶⁶ On the other side of the height of land at Portage La Loche, a small steamer was placed on the Clearwater River.⁶⁷ Made possible by the southern improvements in east-west transportation, new north-south trade routes developed. By 1878 the HBC could send goods north by way of Cumberland House, Carlton and Edmonton.⁶⁸ Those options fulfilled Smith's desire to avenge the resistance of the La Loche Brigade. The last brigade carrying a shipment of northern goods from Cumberland House to La Loche left in 1883.⁶⁹ From 1870 to 1885 the Green Lake route prospered, though eventually the rail line to Edmonton would designate that city as the point of northern shipment.⁷⁰ The addition of steam vessels in the Athabasca River/Mackenzie River area contributed to the decline of traffic through Green Lake. By 1888, the sternwheeler Athabasca travelled north from Athabasca landing, rendering obsolete the revised traffic pattern through Green Lake.⁷¹ Capital had replaced labour, and the old arteries of traffic that had created regional unity disappeared. The lighter veins of north-south traffic only emphasized the diverging interests across the regional boundaries proposed by Governor Head in 1863.

The importance of Green Lake in the immediate post-transfer era was apparent in the schedule of land grants annexed to the Deed of Surrender. Although the total land to be set

aside in the entire English River District was only 190 acres, the Company retained 100 of those acres in Green Lake.⁷² Whether increased traffic or hopes for agriculture prompted this set-aside is not clear. Green Lake was not without its problems from a Company perspective. Free traders were active in the area in 1875, especially "a Metis named La Ronde."⁷³ Increasing prices paid for furs would meet that immediate problem, but the wider problem of competition would only get worse for the HBC as the improved transportation provided easier access to the community. Green Lake remained on the northern edge of the territory in which extensive cash buying increased as competition grew through the 1880s and 1890s.⁷⁴ That position with respect to the cash economy would prove typical of Green Lake's position on the boundary between the two developing economies: the fur trade solitude to the north and the industrial-agricultural frontier of investment developing in the south.

The separation of north from south was evident to one traveller who left behind his impressions of the Green Lake route in the post-transfer era. John Macoun travelled south from Methye Portage in 1875, and he related:

On reaching Green Lake, Mr. [James Nicol] Sinclair, the officer in charge of the post . . . received me most kindly and at once took steps to enable me to continue my journey. The only available animals were an old ox and a miserable horse, and with these and a young Cree for guide, who was never over the road before, I was to start the next day, from the southern end of the lake, for Carlton, a distance of 140 miles.⁷⁵

The next morning, Macoun likely had his fears of the journey south magnified by the birch-bark canoe manned by Sinclair to ferry him to the southern end of the lake; he claimed to have been "afraid for my life," and that only by helping to paddle could he "take my mind off the danger" of tipping the unsteady craft.⁷⁶ James Nicol Sinclair would play a significant role at Green Lake at the time of the 1885 resistance. Beal and Macleod noted that after the confrontation and shootout at Duck Lake, Lawrence Clarke raised considerable concern in Prince Albert that "the Green Lake depot bulged with nearly a hundred thousand kilograms of supplies" ready to move north.⁷⁷ The shipment included "two hundred guns and large quantities of ammunition."⁷⁸ However, someone had forewarned Sinclair on April 15 of possible danger. He "immediately began emptying the warehouse and caching the contents at various places along the banks of the Beaver River."⁷⁹ On April 26, the same day that Cree from Big Bear's band encouraged local Cree to sack the HBC post at Lac la Biche, an unidentified group of raiders appeared at Green Lake: "Sinclair pacified them with food from

his remaining stocks. He claimed not to have any arms or ammunition and they left without troubling the settlement further."⁸⁰ Given the quantity of goods, there is some difficulty with the impression left by Beal and Macleod that Sinclair acted alone. George Stanley, however, offered an even more creative version of events:

On April 26th, the greater part of the stores having been cached, the whites at Green Lake . . . embarked in their boats when the Indians appeared. The savages were intent upon plunder rather than slaughter and, without molesting the whites, only forced the Hudson's Bay Company trader to open the Company's shop. The Indians gave themselves over to pillage while the trader escaped to overtake the bateaux with their terrified human occupants.⁸¹

The similarities between Stanley's account and that of Beal and Macleod were likely because both depended upon information provided by Lawrence Clarke. Neither mention the local Metis population, yet the only record of non-Aboriginal residence in the settlement is that of the occasional traveller or itinerant Oblate priest. James Nicol Sinclair was himself eligible for and received scrip in 1889.⁸²

Friesen has suggested that many saw the attack on Green Lake at the time as part of a larger Indian/Metis threat. It is not surprising to find that at least one source of that concern was the arch-provocateur Lawrence Clarke advancing the interests of the HBC. In his attempt to raise troops to march on Green Lake from Prince Albert, Clarke stated that "Riel's success at Green Lake" would create "a very undesirable impression" on the northern Indians, implying that the whole north would then be open to Indian aggression.⁸³ Friesen, however, goes on to point out that Clarke's claims (and gullible historians) "have created a concerted Indian-metis war where, in fact, sporadic raids for food and violent acts by a few young Indian rebels happened to coincide with the metis uprising."⁸⁴ The apparent divergence of interests between the Metis residents of Green Lake and the raiding party seem to confirm Friesen's version of events. Just as importantly, it underlines an apparent divergence of interests between the Metis population of Green Lake and that of the St. Laurent community.

Uneven regional development had created quite different circumstances for the Metis population of northern Saskatchewan in comparison to those farther south. South of the North Saskatchewan, surveys driven by the expansion of the national policy directly confronted Metis claims to land. Around Batoche, for example, those Metis who had left behind the full-scale application of the national policy in Red River began to see that same

policy reflected in their treatment on the South Saskatchewan. By comparison, in the north the fur trade economy remained relatively intact, and land usage patterns remained unchallenged. The primary discernible change that had taken place with the transfer was the change in transportation routes. For some time, those changes may have marginally improved the position of the Metis settlement at Green Lake.

Metis national unity had been born of united opposition to a unitary opponent, both having a single epicentre at Red River. In the fifteen years between the transfer and the Metis armed resistance to the national policy in 1885, uneven regional development fragmented that singular focus. From a southern perspective, the Metis of the north became as marginalised as the Aboriginal peoples being isolated on the reserves. In fact, the Metis people of Green Lake continued to function within a colonial fur trade economy dominated by mercantile interests like the HBC. Their direct contact with the expansionary force of the national policy would be delayed for another twenty-five years. By that time, any hope of a unified national resistance had long been laid to rest.

Notes

¹ Vernon C. Fowke, *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1957).

² J.F. Conway, *The West: The History of a Region in Confederation* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1984) 23.

³ John Richards and Larry Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979) 15.

⁴ Janine Brodie, *The Political Economy of Canadian Regionalism* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990) 90.

⁵ Fowke 4.

⁶ Fowke 4.

⁷ Donald V. Smiley, *The Federal Condition in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1987) 38.

⁸ Fowke 5.

⁹ Fowke 6.

¹⁰ Brodie 94-5.

¹¹ Brodie 92.

¹² Fowke 7.

¹³ Fowke 8.

¹⁴ Fowke 13-17.

¹⁵ Fowke 18.

¹⁶ Fowke 21.

¹⁷ Fowke 24.

¹⁸ David Gagan, "Land, Population, and Social Change: The 'Critical Years' in Rural Canada West," *Canada's Age of Industry, 1849-1896* eds. Michael S. Cross and Gregory S. Kealy (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982) 99.

¹⁹ Fowke 27.

²⁰ Fowke 28-9.

²¹ The activity of Watkin has been described in several sources. Fowke's version is related below; he cited A.R.M. Lower, *Colony to Nation* (Toronto, 1946), and R.G. Trotter, *Canadian Federation*, (Toronto, 1924). In "Aboriginal Rights Versus the Deed of Surrender: The Legal Rights of Native Peoples and Canada's Acquisition of the Hudson's Bay Company Territory," *Prairie Forum*, vol. 17 no. 2 (Fall 1992), Frank Tough cited E.E. Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company* (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1959) 816-49, and Elaine Allan Mitchell, "Edward Watkin and the Buying-Out of the Hudson's Bay Company," *Canadian Historical Review* 34, no. 3 (1953) 219-44. Donald V. Smiley confirmed Watkin's role as president of the Grand Trunk Railway in *The Rowell/Sirois Report* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963) 29. "Edward Watkin's Northern Vision" is described in R.T. Naylor, *Canada in the European Age, 1453-1919* (Vancouver: New Star, 1987) 277-279.

²² Fowke 31.

²³ Fowke 31.

²⁴ Fowke 32.

²⁵ As quoted in Fowke 32.

²⁶ David E. Smith, *The Invisible Crown: The First Principle of Canadian Government* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) 14.

²⁷ D.N. Sprague, *Canada and the Metis, 1869-1885* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1988) 29.

²⁸ Sprague 30.

²⁹ P.B. Waite, *Canada 1874-1896: Arduous Destiny* (Toronto, 1971), 65.: As cited in Donald Swainson, "Canada Annexes the West: Colonial Status Confirmed," *Riel to Reform: A History of Protest in Western Canada*, ed. George Melnyk (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1992) 69.

³⁰ Philippe R. Mailhot, "Ritchot's Resistance: Abbe Noel Joseph Ritchot and the Creation and Transformation of Manitoba," diss., U of Manitoba, 1986, 96.

³¹ Mailhot 96-7.

³² Chester Martin, "during the ... hearings [related to the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Transfer of the Natural Resources of Manitoba* (Ottawa, 1929)]," as quoted by Eric Kierans, *Report on Natural Resources Policy in Manitoba* (Winnipeg, 1973) 1, cited by Swainson, 70.

³³ Chester Martin, "*Dominion Lands*" Policy (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973) 140.

³⁴ Brodie 113.

³⁵ John Dales, *The Protective Tariff in Canada's Development* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1966), excerpted as "Canada's National Policies" in *Readings in Canadian History: Post-Confederation* eds. R. Douglas Francis and Donald B. Smith (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986) 2nd ed., 52-62. J.H. Dales, "'National Policy' Myths, Past and Present," *Journal of Canadian Studies* Vol. 14, No. 3 (Fall 1979), 92-94.

³⁶ Dales, *Protective Tariff* 58.

³⁷ Dales, *Protective Tariff* 59.

³⁸ Dales, *Protective Tariff* 58-9.

³⁹ Reg Whitaker, "Images of the state in Canada," *The Canadian state: Political Economy and Political Power*, ed. Leo Panitch (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977) 44.

⁴⁰ Whitaker 35.

⁴¹ Brodie 104.

⁴² Whitaker 48. Whitaker refers to "Carl Berger's masterful intellectual history, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto 1970)."

⁴³ Whitaker 28.

⁴⁴ Whitaker 47.

⁴⁵ Whitaker 47.

⁴⁶ Rich, *History* 795.

⁴⁷ Rich, *History* 796.

⁴⁸ Rich, *History* 797.

⁴⁹ Rich, *History* 797.

⁵⁰ Rich, *History* 797-8.

⁵¹ Rich, *History* 799.

⁵² Rich, *History* 803.

⁵³ Rich, *History* 829-32.

⁵⁴ Rich, *History* 841.

- ⁵⁵ Rich, *History* 845-6.
- ⁵⁶ Rich, *History* 848.
- ⁵⁷ Rich, *History* 854.
- ⁵⁸ Rich, *History* 854-5.
- ⁵⁹ Smith to The Governor and Committee, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, A.11/51 (1 August 1870) fol. 100. Frank Tough made this document available to the author.
- ⁶⁰ Smith (91) 10.
- ⁶¹ Smith (94) 15.
- ⁶² Smith (93) 14.
- ⁶³ Smith (93) 14.
- ⁶⁴ A.A. den Otter, "The Hudson's Bay Company's Prairie Transportation Problem, 1870-85," *The Developing West: Essays on Canadian History in Honour of Lewis H. Thomas* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1983) 29.
- ⁶⁵ den Otter 29.
- ⁶⁶ den Otter 30.
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- ⁶⁸ Innis, *The Fur Trade* 344.
- ⁶⁹ Philip Goldring, *Papers on the Labour System of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1900* vol. 2 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1980) 156.
- ⁷⁰ Bruce Peel, *Steamboats on the Saskatchewan* (Saskatoon: Western Producer, 1972) 31.
- ⁷¹ Arthur Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 19.
- ⁷² Oliver 960.
- ⁷³ Ray 27.
- ⁷⁴ Ray 75.
- ⁷⁵ John Macoun, *Autobiography of John Macoun, Canadian Explorer and Naturalist, 1831-1920* (Ottawa: Ottawa Field-Naturalists Club, 1979) 123.
- ⁷⁶ Macoun 124.
- ⁷⁷ Bob Beal and Rod Macleod, *Prairie Fire: The 1885 North-West Rebellion* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1984) 235.
- ⁷⁸ Beal and Macleod 235.
- ⁷⁹ Beal and Macleod 235.
- ⁸⁰ Beal and Macleod 235.
- ⁸¹ Stanley 347.
- ⁸² Ken Hatt, "Scrip, Lots and Leases: The Administration of Land and Metis Claims at Green Lake" unpublished report for the Native Council of Canada, March 31, 1980. 15.
- ⁸³ Clarke to Irvine, April 25th, 1885: Clarke, Statement, Rebellion Losses, Green Lake, H.B.C., as cited in Stanley 347.
- ⁸⁴ Gerald Friesen *The Canadian Prairie: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) 153.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATIONAL POLICY TURNS NORTH

As suggested in the last chapter, the settlement envisioned by the national policy was slow to develop despite government activity to encourage expansion. However, when the expansion did occur, it arrived with enthusiasm. Janine Brodie has described the period of 1890-1910 as "the period of frontier expansion, . . . the so-called Golden Years of the National Policy, or the Wheat Boom."¹ Similarly, Donald Smiley has written of "the buoyant years of the fulfilment of the national policy from 1896-1911."² From the beginning of the twentieth century to the First World War, more than 2.5 million immigrants arrived in Canada.³ Some 900,000 took up residence in the prairie provinces, where two thirds of the population was then involved in agricultural production.⁴ During the same period, "settled lands in the prairies increased seven-fold."⁵ Brodie added: "By 1913 the value of wheat and flour exports alone were greater than the value of all exports in 1896."⁶ The growth of Central Canada reflected the regional growth of the prairies: there, secondary manufacturing had increased by 150 percent.⁷ As well, B.C.'s lumber production doubled between 1908 and 1911, with 90 percent of that production travelling inland. Smiley concluded: "The objectives of the Macdonald-Laurier national policy had been achieved by about 1914," especially with respect to the fact that "By the beginning of the First World War all but a small part of the arable lands in Canada were under cultivation."⁸ The impressive economic expansion of the era had specific regional effects on the frontier of settlement to the south of Green Lake.

After 1885 Prince Albert gradually became the central point of departure for northwestern Saskatchewan. It replaced Fort Carlton as the primary distribution point for goods destined northward to the Lac La Ronge area and northwesterly to Ile-à-la-Crosse *via* Green Lake. In 1890 the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Railway linked Prince Albert to Regina and the rest of the world economy.⁹ Prince Albert seemed poised to live up to its promise as the gateway to northern Saskatchewan. The merchants of Prince Albert saw the 1897 discovery of gold in the Yukon as an economic development opportunity. Local boosters promoted the Prince Albert - Green Lake trail as "the best, safest, and withal the

poor man's route to the El Dorado of the north."¹⁰ The "poor man's route" set out from the rail head in Prince Albert, then followed the 140-mile wagon road to Green Lake. From there it went north through Ile-à-la-Crosse and over Methye Portage on its way to the Mackenzie River. Near the Arctic Ocean, the "poor man" could then head up the Yukon River into the gold-bearing streams of the Yukon. The new route was, of course, the old route that the HBC had abandoned five years earlier.¹¹

Winter of 1898 saw increased activity in the retail sector of Prince Albert: the town chipped in \$800 to advertise the route, an increase in canoe and scow building for transportation along the route became evident, and merchants stocked miners' and prospectors' supplies. In Regina, the Legislative Assembly formally requested that the Dominion government display the Prince Albert route to the Yukon on maps showing the gold-bearing regions. In the summer of 1898, the Territorial Commissioner of Public Works inspected the trail to Green Lake. He then ordered his department to improve the trail by cutting trees and shoring up bridges along the route.¹² No more than a steady trickle of miners chose the arduous overland route through Green Lake into the north. The local Board of Trade blamed spring breakup: the South Saskatchewan River had carried away two spans of the CPR railway bridge in Saskatoon.¹³ Despite this early setback, regional expansion began to reflect the larger trends as the new century began. Nothing was more symbolic of that expansion than the surveys that the Department of the Interior carried out in preparation for the arrival of settlement.

Factors leading to the surveys

Three economic sectors conspired to drive the frontier of commercial expansion northward during the first decade of the twentieth century: forestry, the fishery and agriculture. Forestry activity in northern Saskatchewan was quite limited in 1900. Five camps employing about 100 men produced less than one million board feet per year.¹⁴ Even when counting these seasonal intruders, four hundred was "an overgenerous estimate" of the total non-Aboriginal population of the forests of northern Saskatchewan.¹⁵ This began to change with the 1903 sale of Timber Berths 1048 and 1049 to William Cowan and the Big River Lumber Company. Each timber berth gave the licensee cutting rights in 250 square miles of

forest to be selected in not more than 25 blocks.¹⁶ Cowan paid a \$5000 "bonus for a license," then began the selection and survey of prime blocks of white spruce, including a substantial block bordering on Green Lake. The largest blocks, however, surrounded the soon-to-be rail head at the village of Big River on the south end of Crooked (Cowan) Lake.¹⁷

Fitzgerald reported that pressure on the forests was also evident north of Battleford. By 1907 "... urgent demands for lumber by parklanders, north of the Battlefords particularly, and north and east of Lloydminster, encouraged the establishment of small saw mills" as far north as Turtle Lake.¹⁸ The Department of the Interior granted a few homestead entries at Meadow Lake, but soon cancelled them because of failure to fulfil homestead duties. Fitzgerald noted: "Great swarms of mosquitos forced residents to leave some low-lying northern areas each spring."¹⁹ Despite the most northerly cancellations, the smaller lumber mills enabled a larger homesteader population all along the forest fringe as the mills cut into the forested areas.²⁰ Southeast of Green Lake, Crooked Lake became the means of getting logs to the steam-driven sawmill built in 1908 at Big River on the south end of the lake. The owners established the mill to process timber from timber berths 1048 and 1049. Building a rail line to Big River would then avoid the long overland hauls increasingly faced by lumbering operations as they moved farther north and west from the mill and rail head at Prince Albert. As well, the Canadian Northern Railway company was by 1909 building their line in the direction of the mill at Big River. They had laid the track as far as Shellbrook, and graded the roadway a considerable distance beyond that point. Work was to resume in the spring of 1910.²¹

Expansion along the Prince Albert to Green Lake trail greatly accelerated with the completion of the rail to Big River. In 1912 the Big River Lumber Company had two thousand men cutting trees. It produced five million board feet of lumber from fire-kill alone, and a total of twenty-three million board feet was recorded on-site at Big River, with more in the bush; they cut an estimated 1.3 million logs in 1912.²² The bulk of the logging activity was limited to blocks near the rail head at Big River. Both the rail line and the logging activity appeared ready to move on to the more distant blocks on the shores of Green Lake. As well, the availability of forestry employment encouraged northern settlement: "Bushwork was regarded by most settlers as a means by which they could improve their farms: obtain seed;

a cow; some hens; a new harness; or put a down-payment on a plough . . . such employment was necessary, if farms were to develop and prosper. . . ."23 Fitzgerald estimated "Over ninety-five per cent of pioneers, until the outbreak of war, worked for at least part of the winter in the bush for the lumber companies."24

The commercial fishery started developing in small lakes north and west of Prince Albert during the 1890s to serve the local retail market in Prince Albert.²⁵ The construction of the Big River rail line expanded the commercial fishery northeast of Green Lake to Dore Lake. Most of the catch "was sent to other parts of the province, the rest to Chicago."²⁶ Like bush work, the expanded commercial fishery drew the fringe settlers north for winter work to supplement homesteading.²⁷ The extent of the participation of the original Metis settlers in the commercial fishery remains undocumented for Green Lake. However, at Ile-à-la-Crosse the commercial fishery "played a vital role in the livelihood of the Metis," and the occupational data for Green Lake supports that interpretation.²⁸ Nonetheless, as the commercial catch grew, as far north as Buffalo Lake it would increasingly be "largely taken by white people working independently or for fish companies. The non-Aboriginal fishermen were largely from the northern fringe of settlement and they camped in the region for the fishing period only."²⁹ The change in the fishery was both indicative and supportive of the northward push of commercial agricultural settlement, the third factor leading to the surveys.

Praise for the agricultural potential of the forested regions of Saskatchewan began long before the actual need for such lands for agricultural settlement. Irish geographer John Palliser's negative reports of the late 1850s on the prairie triangle are well known, but commentators less often discuss his optimism regarding settlement in the forest lands.³⁰ Although primarily interested in the establishment of an agricultural economy, Palliser recognized the abundant fish and wood resources as natural allies for the agricultural settler. He noted as well the potential for abundant hay crops and access to good grazing land. The frequent fires would accelerate the clearing of the forests that paved the way for cultivation.³¹

John Macoun's 1875 journey through the Green Lake area had encouraged him to write: "There can be no question about the value of the land north of the Saskatchewan. Settlers going there are assured of three essentials — wood, water and hay for cattle."³² Macoun thought conditions might be even better farther north of the Churchill-Saskatchewan

River divide: "The low altitude and the long day are great advantages. . . . I was at Ile-à-la-Crosse almost due north of Battleford . . . and saw some potatoes still as green in September as they were in July. I was told . . . that these potatoes hardly ever were killed by frost in September . . . I am told that all kinds of grain are grown successfully."³³

In 1879 HBC Chief Factor Christie, on a trip from Prince Albert to Fort Pitt, wrote: "This magnificent country is beautifully timbered, well watered and supplied with much fish."³⁴ After visiting Green Lake Post, Christie was enthusiastic: "What a really splendid country to settle in!"³⁵ J. Burr Tyrell examined the Beaver River Plain in 1893 and 1894; he seconded Chief Factor Christie's endorsement of Green Lake. On his way to Green Lake, Tyrell likened the land along the Prince Albert - Green Lake trail to the land in "Manitoba to the west of lakes Manitoba and Winnipegosis, including Duck and Riding mountains. . . ." ³⁶ The difference in latitude between the two regions did not deter Tyrell's enthusiasm. Travelling north along the Beaver River between Green Lake and Ile-à-la-Crosse, Tyrell praised the land as "well adapted for agricultural purposes," and advised: "the rank vegetation gives promise of abundant harvests."³⁷ However, agricultural settlement north of the North Saskatchewan River was slow to develop. Farmers just south of Prince Albert experienced several years of low moisture in the late 1890s. This prompted them to examine the lands beginning to open north of the North Saskatchewan. However, according to Fitzgerald the Nisbet and Pines forest reserves and the presence of the three large Indian reserves at the east end of Sturgeon Lake discouraged settlement before the twentieth century.³⁸

As early as 1900 the Dominion Government had begun to consider the necessity of turning northward "to pursue its policy of filling the great empty spaces of the west."³⁹ Various representatives of the Department of the Interior ranged widely through the forested regions. They issued reports that "found a way into newspapers, settlers guides, political speeches and, especially, were passed between prospective settlers by word of mouth . . . the optimistic passages of the surveyor's writings encouraged farmers until the 1930's."⁴⁰ Positive descriptions of gardens in the settlements encouraged prospective settlers to look ever northward, while the current *Settler's Guide* often omitted cautious or unfavourable reports by investigators.⁴¹ Worried that a shortage of available lands might put off prospective immigrants, the Department of the Interior in 1908-09 sent Frank Crean to detail

the agricultural potential of the "The New Northwest."⁴² (See Fig. 3.1) Crean's employers were not disappointed; his remarks about Green Lake were typical of the agricultural boosterism of the era, but they also provided a look at Metis settlement in Green lake:

At and around the Hudson's Bay Company's post on the north end of Green Lake there is a considerable settlement of half-breeds. A Roman Catholic mission is established here. Revillon Freres have also a post. The priest has a good garden having all kinds of vegetables, and also a small fruit garden growing currants, gooseberries, raspberries and strawberries. These all thrive and mature. Green Lake is important as a stopping place for freighters in winter and consequently large quantities of hay are stacked. Some oats and barley are grown but no real effort has been made to farm. Father Teston of the mission says that he has grown oats and barley for fifteen years in succession and so far has not had a failure. I interviewed a native named Morin, who said that he had grown potatoes, oats and barley in small quantities for thirty-five years and could not recall having ever had a failure. He has never kept a record of when he sowed or when he harvested, neither has the Reverend Father. Morin owns thirty-five head of cattle and twelve head of horses. He has sown wheat on six or seven occasions and it always ripened. In his opinion there is no doubt that wheat could be raised anywhere in the locality. The ice in Green Lake goes out early and it is generally very late before it freezes. The summers are always warm and there is ample rain. The gardens, which I saw here, were certainly fine although they were not cared for as they should have been. Weeds were allowed to grow in profusion.⁴³

On further examination of the west side of Green Lake, Crean added:

The Crops were not very far advanced when I was there, nor indeed did any resident sow grain to any extent. There was a small field of oats, a small field of barley and the usual gardens. The gardens, as is customary in the fur country, are neglected; but yet the vegetables seem to grow in profusion. Lettuces and radishes in fourteen days grow from seed to a size fit for table use. On Sunday, July 14, I saw some radishes one and one-half inches in diameter, fourteen days' growth.⁴⁴

With the support of enthusiastic commentators like Crean, the advance of the agricultural frontier appeared destined to follow the path set by forestry and the fishery. The survey of potential agricultural lands as far north as Green Lake began in 1909 with the survey of the sixteenth base line, which crossed Green Lake just south of the settlement.

Baseline surveys, 1909-10

The survey of the sixteenth baseline east from the third meridian began in late March 1909, under the direction of surveyor Arthur St. Cyr. The survey started from the north east corner of township 60, range one (approximately 60 miles north of Prince Albert) and headed

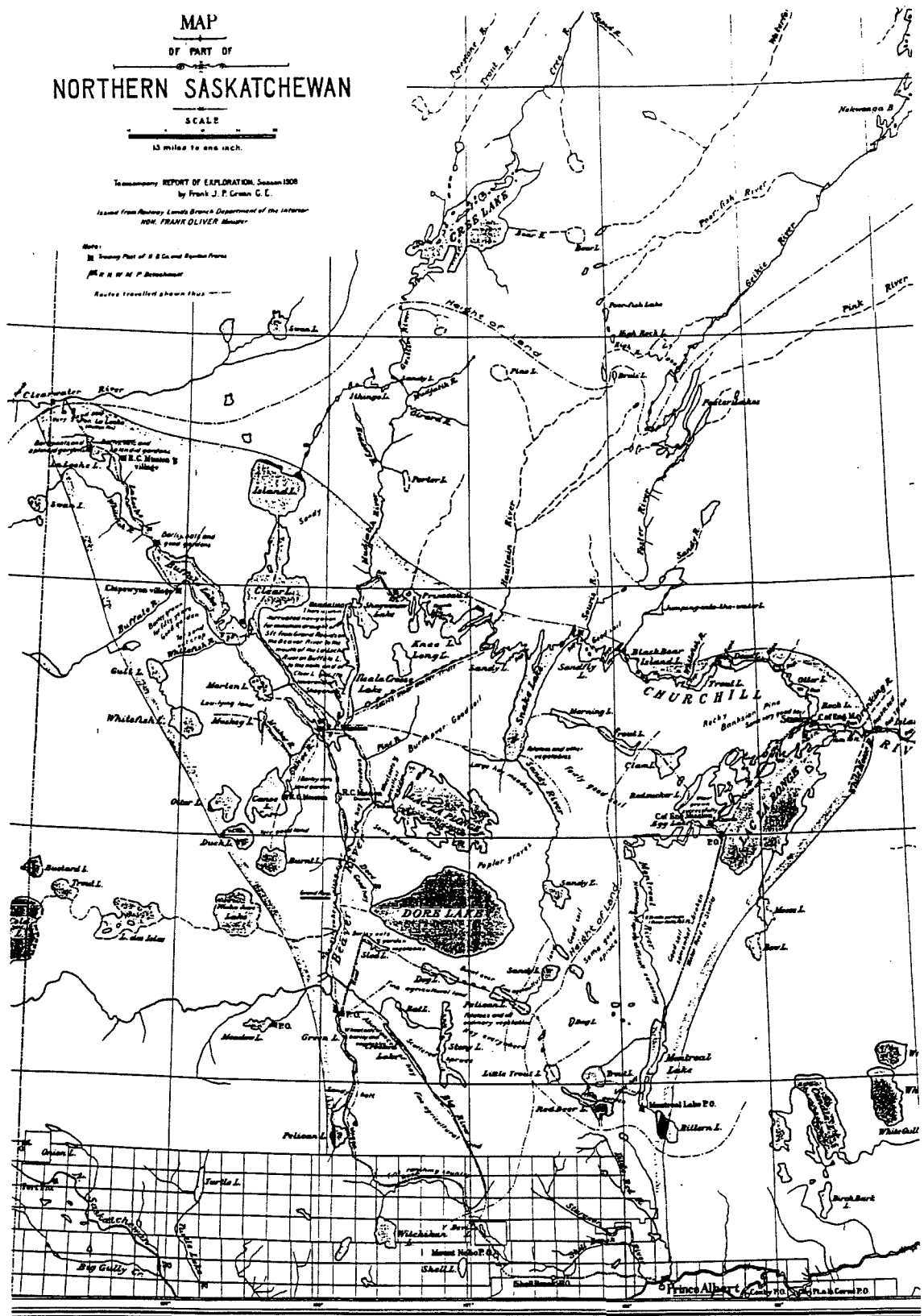


Fig. 3.1: Portion of the map of the Crean Expedition, 1908.

SAB Map B15/65

toward Green Lake, some seventy miles due west. Essentially, the survey found more agricultural land the closer it got to Green Lake.

The first ten miles the survey party travelled had burnt over several times, exposing the soil of what is today the northeastern portion of Prince Albert National Park. St. Cyr judged the soil to be of poor quality for agriculture, as it was "generally stony."⁴⁵ The many lakes of the Montreal Lake drainage "could be seen in every direction."⁴⁶ Once the survey party crossed over the height of land near Pelican (Lavallee) Lake, good soil for agriculture was first noted. At Pelican Lake St. Cyr reported: "Louis Lavallee a half-breed has resided for many years. He has a large garden where he raises vegetables."⁴⁷ The lake was more than six miles long, promising a large winter fishery. Hay meadows surrounded the north end of the lake, promising feed for both horses for transportation and the wintering of cattle.

The survey party encountered "extensive swamps and bogs" on the twenty-mile stretch between Pelican Lake and Stony (Delaronde) Lake. However, "good and fairly level land" was found northeast of Stony Lake, some twenty-five miles east of Green Lake."⁴⁸ The previous year St. Cyr had picked up at Stony Lake "supplies which had been left by the freighters at a squatter's house as the only place where they could be safely cached."⁴⁹ At the southern end of Stony Lake, a five-mile portage led to Crooked (Cowan) Lake. An important feature of Crooked Lake was its 30 mile length and its northwesterly angle, well suited for transportation of people and goods north toward Green Lake. The land between Crooked Lake and Stony Lake was "good and level with some prairie spots and hay meadows."⁵⁰ The north end of Crooked Lake was the site of large hay meadows, and was "connected with Green Lake by a road principally used by freighters during the winter."⁵¹ Although the lands adjoining the lakes were generally wooded, St. Cyr suggested that some "would be neither difficult nor expensive to clear. Good hay is plentiful everywhere and would provide fodder for numbers of cattle."⁵² St. Cyr assumed that the railway would continue north and bring additional settlement activity. He noted that the farmers in Shellbrook, sixty miles to the south, had raised "phenomenal crops, principally oats."⁵³ New settlers to the region would not have to rely on agriculture alone for their first year's income:

During the winter months employment at remunerative prices could be secured by the newcomers either from the lumber companies who always hire a large number of men or by freighting merchandise for the two fur trading companies at Green Lake which

still remains the gateway to the northern fur trade and where immense quantities of supplies . . . have to be brought for distribution to their distant outposts.⁵⁴

St. Cyr did not mention the fate he intended for the Metis freighters engaged in the distribution system, although he recognized the importance of freighting to the Metis of Green Lake:

Their chief occupation and that on which they mostly depend for a living is to freight goods from Prince Albert to the south end of Green Lake where they are loaded in barges and brought across the lake to the Hudson's Bay Co. and M.M. Revillon Bros fur trading posts for distribution to their northern outposts.⁵⁵

He might have added the importance of the ranching activity of the Metis in an era when animal power pulled sleds in winter and wagons in summer.

The promotion of the use of new non-Aboriginal homesteaders to replace the traditional Metis transportation of goods may have reflected the difficulty surveyors experienced in securing freighter services. Given both the Metis ranching operations and their regular employment by the fur companies, it is not particularly surprising that they were hesitant to adjust their customary seasonal occupations for the benefit of the new but temporary labour markets created by survey parties. St. Cyr complained from Big River: "Several freighters (half breeds) arrive from Green Lake and after long argument decide their [*sic*] to load some of my supplies & horse feed, but they won't promise to take them past Green Lake."⁵⁶ Whatever St. Cyr's difficulty with employees, his reports gave ample evidence of widespread Metis settlement in the survey region and the assistance of those settlers to the survey endeavour. Typically, St. Cyr "Went to Sled Lake & borrowed a sled & set of harness from Narcisse Lafleur,"⁵⁷ "Paid off Joe Paquin, the head packer,"⁵⁸ and having returned to Green Lake, was "Trying to hire Major Laliberte as a labourer to replace men who did not return as promised."⁵⁹ The long Metis experience in the region provided an accumulation of both knowledge and the appropriate tools. St. Cyr related having "continued my travels along the North Shore of Dore Lake and came to Michael Desrocher's."⁶⁰ Desrocher informed St. Cyr of an old trail connecting Dore Lake with Lake Laplonge."⁶¹ The importance of Metis ranching activity was evident in St. Cyr's description of his predicament in the 1910 survey season:

On the point formed by the junction of the two streams live a few families of Indians and one half-breed name J. Bte. Aubichon, on whom I relied much to put up sufficient

hay for my pack ponies in the summer of 1910. But when I came to his place in the month of December, I could not procure enough to feed my ponies sufficiently, and had to discontinue my survey during part of the winter.⁶²

St. Cyr goes on to describe the location as "Aubichon's stopping place," suggesting a provision of wider services by Aubichon to Metis freighters.

On 23 August 1909, the survey of the sixteenth baseline reached the Green Lake settlement. St. Cyr described it as "grouped around one of the oldest and most important trading posts established by the Hudson's Bay Company in this country."⁶³ Father Teston gave St. Cyr a tour of the Roman Catholic Mission's garden. Obviously impressed, St. Cyr concluded that it was "well known that the cultivation of the soil was begun here very many years ago and that barley, oats and potatoes and all ordinary vegetables have since been successfully grown . . . Father Teston . . . cultivates several kinds of small fruits such as currants etc."⁶⁴ St. Cyr described the settlement as "peopled with half-breeds who all own horses and cattle, it being easy to provide fodder by cutting wild hay of which there is an abundance along the Beaver River and especially at a place call[ed] 'Flu Hill' at the confluence of Meadow River with Beaver River."⁶⁵ Having described Green lake and environs, St. Cyr continued into Alberta with the sixteenth baseline survey.

When St. Cyr surveyed the seventeenth baseline in 1910, he reported that "On the north shore of Sled Lake [northwest of Green Lake] . . . some half-breeds took up land twelve years ago. They have comfortable houses and on the land they have cleared they grow all the ordinary vegetables and some have raised oats and barley . . . they also own horses and cattle for which they procure feed from the hay meadows around Lizard Lake."⁶⁶ He also reported "Good land . . . in range 12 near Beaver River," and that the Beaver River was the "only one in the country explored which is suitable for driving logs."⁶⁷ He failed to mention that at the seventeenth baseline the river flowed north, away from the sawmills of the approaching industrial development to the south.

The surveys of 1911-12

In anticipation of homesteaders taking up agricultural land around Green Lake, the Department of the Interior engaged Dominion Land Surveyor (DLS) W.H. Powell to survey township and section lines. On 25 September 1911, Powell took a Statutory Declaration from

Edward Beatty in support of Beatty's claim to a quarter-section of land near Green Lake. That declaration was the first entry in the Department of the Interior's record of claims to land by the settlers of Green Lake. During such activity, the DLS was to record people who had taken up residence in the area before the survey. The department provided the surveyors with statutory declaration forms designed to record evidence upon which the Department could base decisions regarding the nature of the claimants' settlement on the land. It was both ironic and prophetic that the first official claimant under the new land title system in the Green Lake area was one of only two non-Aboriginal settlers in the area, and likely the most recent. The other, Father Jules Teston, had been a resident since 1890.⁶⁸ The nature of Beatty's residence in Green Lake in 1912 remains uncertain. Waiser identified Beatty as an "HBC clerk" in *The New Northwest*, but Beatty declared himself a farmer in his 1912 declaration.⁶⁹ Beatty may have done that in recognition of the importance of agricultural claims to land as compared with claims based on fur trade occupation of land.

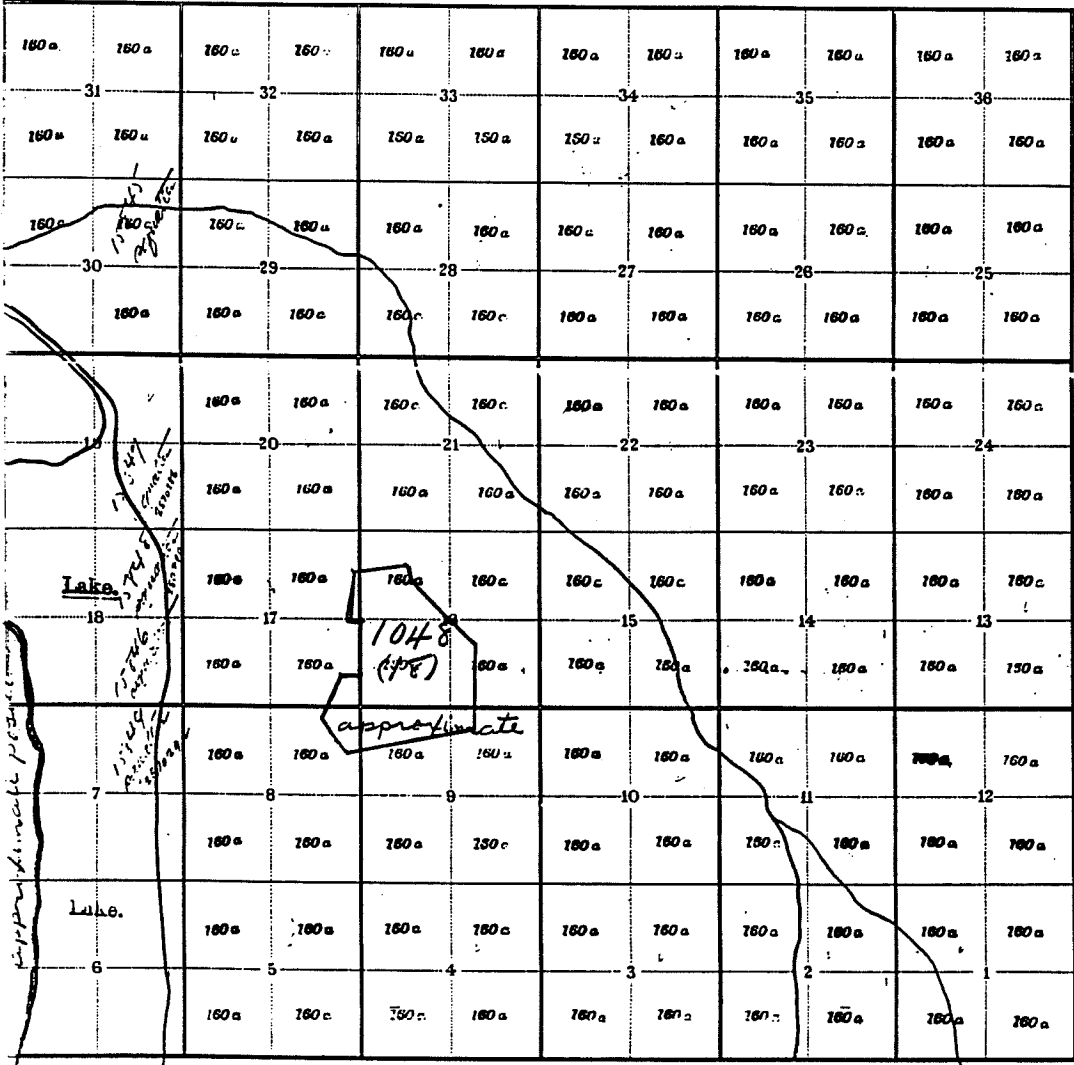
Some two months later, on 4 December, Powell gathered the declarations of eight more land claimants resident in the Green Lake area. All but Teston were Metis. All the claims were to land on the east side of Green Lake and Green River (Fig. 3.2). Five claimants, Antoine and Clement Laliberte, Pierre Laliberte, Louis Morin and Jules Teston were close neighbours. Their houses gathered along the shore of Green Lake in close proximity to the Roman Catholic Church and the HBC property. If the village of Green Lake had a core area in 1911, these five claimants resided there. A sixth claimant, Antoine Kennedy, lived about a kilometre north of the church, where he occupied a river-front area on the east bank of the Green River. This could also be considered part of the core occupational area. Pierre McCallum, on the other hand, claimed residence another couple of kilometres to the northeast. Powell took the eighth claim, that of John Fraser, a day later than the other declarations. Fraser resided some 2 kilometres south of the Church/HBC complex. Eight of the nine Powell declarations were taken in the Green Lake settlement. Teston witnessed all declarations but his own and Beatty's. Teston's further involvement in negotiating the recording of the claims and the gathering of eligible claimants remains a matter of speculation, especially in light of the general lack of detail in the remaining papers of surveyor Powell. The declarations reached the Surveyor General's office on 13 December 1911.

Butt-1

Copy by... *J. J. ...*
Checked by... *W. H. ...*

PRELIMINARY Plan of Township 6 / Range 12 West of the *Third* Meridian

SCALE 40 CHAINS TO AN INCH



NOTE—Positions and extent of lakes, rivers, etc., are uncertain. Areas are subject to change.

Showing surveys performed by
W. H. Powell, D.L.S. up to Nov. 25, 1911.
A. G. C. D.L.S. up to 1902.

Department of the Interior, Ottawa, DEC 26 1911

R. DEVILLE
Surveyor General

Outside T. B. 1048 Blks 12 & 18 (approximate position) township is clear

Sgt W.
3/1/12

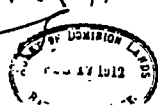


Fig.3.2: Powell Survey preliminary map, 1911.

SAB Map A28/15

The nearest office of the Department of the Interior to Green Lake was that of Battleford Agent of Dominion Lands (ADL), L.P.O. Noel. In what appeared to have been the ordinary course of his duties on 23 February 1912, ADL Noel informed Pierre McCallum:

Township 61-12 . . . is open for homesteading. It has been reported to this office that you have settled and made bona fide improvements upon the North-East quarter of Section thirty in the said township, and I have therefore to inform you that, to secure your right to this land, it is necessary under the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act for you to appear before me and make entry therefor within six months of the date of this notice. Should you fail to make entry within the time specified, any applicant may thereafter, obtain entry for the land in question irrespective of any claim of yours.⁷⁰

Noel sent similar notices to Antoine Laliberte for SE 18-61-12,⁷¹ Jules Teston for NE 18-61-12,⁷² Louis Morin for SE 19-61-12,⁷³ and possibly the other five claimants in the newly surveyed township (61-12). No record of any response to the directive was found.

Apparently when he was preparing the above notices, Noel discovered a discrepancy in the Green Lake claims. The problem was the close proximity of the settlers' homes to each other. Of the nine recorded claimants in the area, six were involved in conflicting claims to quarter-sections. Clement and Antoine Laliberte both claimed an interest in the southeast quarter of section 18 in Township 61, Range 12 (SE 18-61-12). Similarly, Louis Morin and Antoine Kennedy both had an interest in SE 19-61-12, and Pierre Laliberte and Jules Teston had what appeared to be conflicting claims to NE 18-61-12. Because of those conflicts, Noel requested Homestead Inspector George H. Clouston to visit the disputed quarter-sections. Noting that "Township 61, Range 12, West 3rd M will be open to the public on 1st April next," Noel asked Clouston "to come to some arrangement with these . . . Parties. . . . If not you will kindly offer your suggestions." Noel provided a "Copy for Head Office, Ottawa."⁷⁴

Three weeks later, Homestead Inspector Clouston filed the requested reports on Antoine Kennedy,⁷⁵ Antoine Laliberte,⁷⁶ Clement Laliberte,⁷⁷ Pierre Laliberte,⁷⁸ Louis Morin⁷⁹ and Jules Teston.⁸⁰ These reports essentially confirmed the information included in the settlers' respective statutory declarations. In addition, at least two of the reports showed the number of acres "fit for cultivation" on the respective claims.⁸¹ The term "squatter" was handwritten on the top of the report. The appearance of the term in the record as a replacement for Clouston's use of the word "settler" was ominous.

Besides the individual reports, Clouston had also sent a "Homestead Inspector's

Report, Supplementary Form," to accompany the Homestead Inspector's Reports. The supplementary report addressed to "L.P.O. Noel Esq, Agent Dominion Lands" reads:

Sir

I visited these lands S.E. of 18.61.12 W³[,] N.E 18.61.12W³ & S.E19.61.12W³

I Found a few Settlers along the East and West Side of Green Lake[.] These Settlers are all Old Timers and make their living by Hunting and Fur Trading. They were Employed Some years ago by the Hudson Bay Co.. There is a Small Strip of Cleared land along the East and West Side of the Lake. Which has been Cleared of Brush by these Settlers and used for gardens. Behind the Clearing is a dense mass of Willows Poplars (etc) extending for miles. The Soil is of a very light sandy nature and not fit for Agriculture. I met the Rev Father Teston who is in Charge of the R.C. Mission at this point, accompanied by several of the Settlers, and after talking the matter over they made the following proposition:

That The Department have a Survey made along the East and West Side of the Lake, Say 1 1/2 Miles long by 1/2 or 1/4 mile Wide. This Strip would take in the Cleared Land which slopes to the Lake Shore.

They made the proposition that this Strip be divided into plots giving each Settler Say 5-6, or 10 acres each. That is the Head of each Family and they requested that these plots be given as a free grant, and also that they retain the right of Homesteading in Some other district if they desired to do so. I informed them that I would forward their proposition to the Department. This Strip of land is the only clear piece for miles around and is composed of ravines and Hills running to the Lake Shore. I might say these Settlers would be Perfectly Satisfied with these plots, as it has been their Home for 30 or 40 years. I am sure they would consider it a great Hardship if their request was not granted.

There is a large R.C.Church on the East Side of the Lake and the Settlers are all living close to it comprising a Small Settlement with the exception of Five Families on the West Side. I might suggest that these plots if Surveyed be sold to the Settlers for One Dollar or Fifty Cents per acre as it is humanly speaking useless.⁸²

Clouston's account of his meeting with the Green Lake settlers was instructive on many counts. The first is the settlers' insistence on their right to their land as a free grant; that is, they should not have to pay for what was already theirs. Their insistence on retaining additional homestead rights indicated an awareness of existing practice under national policy administration of lands and their potential participation. The antiquity of Metis settlement in Green Lake was evident from Clouston's report that Green Lake "has been their Home for 30 or 40 years." Clouston felt impelled to point out the depth of their attachment to the land, emphasizing the "great Hardship" they would feel at the refusal of their proposition. Later events made it appear likely that Clouston may have averted such feelings of hardship by promising more than he could deliver during the meeting with the settlers. It is worth noting

Clouston's indications that Green Lake was simply a small gathering of mostly aging ex-HBC employees gathered about the church of their confessor. His understatement of the nature of the settlement and his general dismissal of the value of the land seemed meant to encourage acceptance of the agreement by the Department.

Six days after Clouston completed his report, ADL Noel forwarded the report to "The Secretary, Department of the Interior, Ottawa."⁸³ On March 25, Noel sent in the Homestead Inspector Reports on Antoine Kennedy and Louis Morin, both of whom claimed an interest on SE 19-61-12. Noel again included a copy of Clouston's supplementary report of 13 March.⁸⁴ By 6 May 1912, the reports worked their way to the desk of Surveyor General E. Deville. He in turn advised N.B. Sheppard of the Department of Interior that if the department wanted to survey lots in Green Lake, "the surveyor who can make the survey will be on the ground shortly."⁸⁵ The next day N.O. Cote, Chief of the Lands Patent Branch, Department of the Interior, sent W.W. Cory, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, a description of the duplicate claims to quarter-sections in Green Lake and a copy of Clouston's report. Cote concluded:

In view of the inadaptability of the lands for agriculture and also in view of the long occupancy of the plots by the different settlers, I should think it advisable to have a survey made defining all the lands claimed by the different settlers at this point in Green Lake, as has been the practice in similar cases in other localities.⁸⁶

Unfortunately, Cote did not include any further description of "the practice in similar cases" or which cases he viewed as similar. On May 11, the Deputy Minister approved Cote's recommendation of a survey.⁸⁷ Cote then relayed the Deputy Minister's approval of the more detailed survey of lands in township 61-12 back to the Surveyor General.⁸⁸

While the arrangements for the survey were moving up and down the bureaucratic chain of command, the department decided to suspend the opening of homestead applications in the two townships on either side of Green Lake. Assistant Secretary Pereira of the Land Patents Branch wrote C.J. Steers, Survey Records Branch:

I am directed to advise you that it has been decided to make a special survey of the squatters claims at the north end of Green Lake in township 61, ranges 12 and 13, west of the 3rd meridian, under a suggestion made by the homestead inspector in respect of these claims.⁸⁹

Pereira also confirmed to ADL Noel an earlier telegram to ADL Battleford that read: "Do not

grant any entries in township sixty-one, range twelve, west third meridian until further advised." Pereira added " . . . I am directed to advise you that in view of the above report [G.A. Clouston's 23 March Report], it has been decided to make a special survey of the squatter's claims at the north end of Green Lake."⁹⁰ Battlefield ADL Noel subsequently advised "The Secretary, Department of Interior," confirming that " . . . no entries will now be granted in Township 61, Range 12, West 3rd Meridian, until further advised."⁹¹ It is not clear whether they carried out the closure of 62-13 at the Battleford office.

By the end of May the way had been cleared for the settlement survey. On May 28 Surveyor General Deville instructed C.F. Miles, Inspector of Surveys, " . . . to lay out the land occupied by the settlers into settlement lots in such a manner as will best meet their requirements."⁹² As well, Deville instructed Miles: "The extent of the survey is to be determined by the actual requirements of the settlement."⁹³ Miles also received more detailed instructions regarding proposed lot sizes (five to ten acres), road allowances and so forth. Finally, Miles was to " . . . take declarations to show the lot claimed by each settler."⁹⁴ That same day, Deville notified Cote that following Cote's memo of 22 May, he had instructed Miles to do "the survey of settlement lots in township 61, range 12, west of the third meridian."⁹⁵

After reviewing Powell's survey of 1911, Miles moved his camp into Green Lake settlement 30 July 1912.⁹⁶ The next day he began the survey of the settlement lots. He immediately telegraphed Deville to ask after an errant assistant and to enquire " . . . shall I confine survey on west side to the five settlers. . . . ?"⁹⁷ By return telegram, Deville instructed Miles "Lots are to be laid out for all settlers in actual occupation along Green Lake and River. No objection to survey of additional lots if you think they will be required."⁹⁸ Miles later pointed out that he did not receive this directive "until after my party had left Green Lake."⁹⁹ Whether the delay affected his method or the extent of the survey is not known. In the middle of August Miles began the task of taking statutory declarations from the settlers that Powell had not recorded. He collected six more declarations from Metis residents on the west side of the lake on August 16: Celestin Merasti,¹⁰⁰ Jean Baptiste Aubichon,¹⁰¹ Mathias Aubichon,¹⁰² Norbert Fraser,¹⁰³ Francois Laliberte,¹⁰⁴ and Philomen Aubichon.¹⁰⁵ Miles then recorded two additional Metis settlers on the east side: Josette Sinclair on August 17,¹⁰⁶ then

Napolean Girard on August 19.¹⁰⁷

Miles' presence in Green Lake elicited three more claims to land for which he had not taken declarations. As those claims originated outside the two townships closed to entry, their manner of filing and subsequent handling differed from those in the closed townships. On July 15, a time when Miles was likely inspecting the area, Louis Desrocher filed an Application for Entry and an Affidavit in support of his Entry for a Homestead on SE 2-62-13 ". . . by a person who has settled and made improvements upon Land in advance of Survey."¹⁰⁸ The quarter-section claimed by Desrocher contained the point at which the Green River flowed into the Beaver River. Desrocher travelled to Battleford to file his claim and pay his \$10.00 at the Dominion Lands Office.

The claim of Marcel Desrocher followed Louis Desrocher's claim about one month later. Marcel may have been following the example of Louis in filing his Application for Entry and paying his \$10 filing fee in Battleford.¹⁰⁹ He did so by the following undated note:

To the Land Agent, Battleford. Sir. The bearer of this note, Marcel Desrocher, has been living on N.W. quarter. Sec. 1-62-13-3rd for six years, and has one dwelling house and three stables, one hay yard, one pasture and there are about 140 acres of farm land, bluffy, the rest swamp land, surrounded by willows, has 5 head horses, and 5 head cattle[.] he has a wife and two children. his own age is 42 - age of his wife 37. name of his wife, Marie. the one boy is 8 years of age, name Joseph, one girl six years name Anne. There no other improvements on this quarter. I am sending this information as the Bearer talks no english. or french. [signed] Peter Villebrun. P.S. this man was born at Green Lake and always lived there. he is a british Subject. P.V.¹¹⁰

The attempt by Peter Villebrun and Marcel Desrocher to register properly Desrocher's claim indicated local problems with the new way of describing land holdings. The NW quarter of 1-62-13 was actually unoccupied land with no significant features. The SW quarter of that same section, however, contained both the course of the Green River and the original Green Lake Trail heading north to Ile-à-la-Crosse. It also contained the land and buildings described (erroneously) by Marcel Desrocher's note as in the NW quarter. One week after filing his initial claim, Marcel Desrocher (through Villebrun) wrote to the Dominion Land Agent Battleford; his letter described his difficulties with the new system:

This is to say that I was in Battleford on the 20th of August. inst. and entered the North West quarter of Section one. (N.W.S.1.-62-13-3rd) township 62-range 13-West of 3rd M. Since coming back here I find that my house and all my improvement

are on the S.W. quarter Sec. 1 township 62-13-3rd The mistake arose from myself and P. Villebrun not having looked at the posts before going to the land office and it has now become necessary for me to cancel and abandon this N.W. quarter in order to enter and get the S.W. quarter of the same section and township. I shall have to do this for the following reasons - 1 I have lived on the South West quarter for a long time. 2 I have all my improvements in the S.W. quarter. 3 I made entry for the North West quarter by mistake. 4 The N.W. quarter is not good for agricultural Purposes.

And now Sir. as to cancelling and abandoning the N.W. quarter S.1.62-13 and entering the S.W. quarter of the same section.

1st How? am I to proceed about it. Is it necessary for me to go to the land office in person in order to cancel and abandon the N.W. quarter above described? or can I authorize my own son to go and cancel my entry for the N.W. quarter.

2nd And then after my entry for the North West quarter has been abandoned and cancelled how long will it be before I can enter for the South West quarter of the same section

3rd Is there any danger of any person jumping or entering the S.W. quarter. where I have my house and improvements and where I am now living, before I can abandon and cancel my entry for the N.W. quarter.

Praying that you will be kind enough to let me have the information. I so much need and Trusting that you will take this matter into consideration, and thanking you in anticipation. I remain Yours Truly,

Marcel x Desrocher his mark

Witness to his mark Peter Villebrun¹¹¹

Desrocher's letter completed the list of formal applicants for 1911-12. In October of 1912 Edward Beatty filed an Application for Entry at the Battleford Dominion Lands Office, paying a \$10.00 fee for his claim to SE 14-62-13. Beatty built his house on this quarter about the same time.¹¹² Each of these three applicants (Marcel Desrocher, Louis Desrocher and Edward Beatty) filed in township 62-13, which meant that the closure of townships 61-12 and 61-13 did not impede their entry. They also were the only applicants to gain entry to their land successfully. In this sense, these claims served as a reference for comparison with the claims in the reserved townships 61-12 and 61-13. Their disposition occurred earlier and with far greater success than the claims in the closed townships.

By the time Miles filed his report on his survey activity in the Green Lake area, 19 claimants had registered with the new land system. Three townships were involved in the claims. Two had been closed, ostensibly to protect the claims of the settlers already in the townships. Later claims would identify three more settlers in the area in 1912: Narcisse Lafleur, Pierre Aubichon and Josephine Kennedy. Of those 22 claimants, 20 were Metis and two were Euro-Canadian. All but three claimants had settled in the two closed townships.

Notes

¹ Janine Brodie, *The Political Economy of Canadian Regionalism* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990) 112-13.

² Donald V. Smiley, "Canada and the Quest for a National Policy," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 8.1 (March 1975) 43.

³ Brodie 113.

⁴ Brodie 113.

⁵ Brodie 113.

⁶ Brodie 113.

⁷ Brodie 113.

⁸ Smiley 44.

⁹ Denis P. Fitzgerald, "Pioneer Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan," diss., U of Minnesota, 1966, 132.

¹⁰ *Prince Albert Advocate*, December 7, 1897, in Gary Abrams, *Prince Albert: The First Century, 1866-1966* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1966) 109.

¹¹ Abrams 109.

¹² Abrams 110.

¹³ Abrams 111.

¹⁴ Fitzgerald 133.

¹⁵ Fitzgerald 133.

¹⁶ SAB NR 5.1 A.1.a. 1048 (1), Tender.

¹⁷ SAB map B 2032.

¹⁸ Fitzgerald 138.

¹⁹ Fitzgerald 138.

²⁰ Fitzgerald 135.

²¹ A. St. Cyr, "Description of the country adjoining the 16th Base Line," SAB R-183-I-457. 11.

²² SAB NR 5.1 A.1.a. 1048 (1), Timber Inspector report, 09 May 1912.

²³ Fitzgerald 169.

²⁴ Fitzgerald 166.

²⁵ Fitzgerald 170.

²⁶ Fitzgerald 171.

²⁷ Fitzgerald 171.

²⁸ Fitzgerald 173.

²⁹ C.S. Brown, "A Geographic Survey and Analysis of the Buffalo Region of Northern Saskatchewan," unpublished report to the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources, 02 June 1952. 52. SAB R 190.3 6010. This source was made available to me by Laurie Barron.

³⁰ Fitzgerald 112.

³¹ Fitzgerald 112.

³² John Macoun, "Reports and Documents in Reference to the Canadian Pacific Railway, Canada, *Sessional Papers*, No. CXX (i) Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1878), p. 238. Cited in Fitzgerald 112.

³³ Macoun 239, cited in Fitzgerald 113.

³⁴ Fitzgerald 113.

- ³⁵ Fitzgerald 113.
- ³⁶ E.J. Chambers, *The Unexploited West* (Ottawa: Dept. of Interior, 1914) 98.
- ³⁷ Chambers 99.
- ³⁸ Chambers 99.
- ³⁹ Fitzgerald 114.
- ⁴⁰ Fitzgerald 111.
- ⁴¹ Fitzgerald 121.
- ⁴² Bill Waiser, *The New Northwest: The Photographs of the Frank Crean Expedition 1908-1909* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1993) ix.
- ⁴³ Frank Crean, in Chambers 112.
- ⁴⁴ Crean, in Chambers 112-13.
- ⁴⁵ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 9.
- ⁴⁶ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 9.
- ⁴⁷ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 9. Crean also commented on the agricultural potential of Pelican Lake and Lavallee's occupations: trapping, fishing, hunting and working as a trader for Revillon Freres. See further Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan's Playground: A History of Prince Albert National Park* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1989) 14-15.
- ⁴⁸ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 10. St. Cyr noted the name of the lake came "from a band of Stony Indians who had once lived there, before their removal to Manley, their present reserve near the foothills of the Rocky Mountains." Their occupation site had been at the southern edge of the lake, which was described as "level with some open prairie patches."
- ⁴⁹ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line," 10.
- ⁵⁰ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 10.
- ⁵¹ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 11.
- ⁵² St. Cyr, "16th Base Line," 11.
- ⁵³ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 12.
- ⁵⁴ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line" 12.
- ⁵⁵ SAB R-183-I-457, St. Cyr to Deville, August 1909.
- ⁵⁶ SAB R-190.6, St. Cyr, 27 December 1913.
- ⁵⁷ SAB R-190.6, St. Cyr, 20 November 1910.
- ⁵⁸ SAB R-190.6, St. Cyr, 9 January 1911.
- ⁵⁹ SAB R-190.6, St. Cyr, 1 April 1911. No other mention of Major Laliberte was found.
- ⁶⁰ SAB R-190.6, St. Cyr, 1 March 1912. The relationship of Michael Desrocher to the Desrochers resident in Green Lake in 1912 has not been established.
- ⁶¹ SAB R-190.6, St. Cyr, 3 March 1911.
- ⁶² A. St. Cyr, "Description of the country adjoining the Seventeenth Base Line," SAB R-183-I-458, 8.
- ⁶³ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line," 12.
- ⁶⁴ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line," 12.
- ⁶⁵ St. Cyr, "16th Base Line," 13.
- ⁶⁶ A. St. Cyr, "Abstract," SAB R-183-I-458. undated.
- ⁶⁷ St. Cyr, "Abstract," no page.
- ⁶⁸ Maurice Blackburn, *A History of The Green Lake Parish: Centennial of the Arrival of Father Jules Teston, O.M.I. as First Resident Priest* (Edmonton: Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1990) 9.

- ⁶⁹ Waiser 42.
- ⁷⁰ SAB AG11-II NE 30-61-12.
- ⁷¹ SAB AG11-II SE 18-61-12, Report, 12 March 1912.
- ⁷² SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Noel to Teston, 23 February 1912.
- ⁷³ SAB AG11-II SE 19-61-12, Noel to Morin, 23 February 1912.
- ⁷⁴ SAB 2570290, Noel to Clouston, 23 February 1912.
- ⁷⁵ SAB AG11-II SE 19-61-12.
- ⁷⁶ SAB AG11-II SE 18-61-12.
- ⁷⁷ SAB AG11-II SE 18-61-12.
- ⁷⁸ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12.
- ⁷⁹ SAB AG11-II SE 19-61-12.
- ⁸⁰ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12.
- ⁸¹ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12.
- ⁸² SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Homestead Inspector's Report. Supplementary Form, March 13, 1912.
- ⁸³ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, ADL Battleford to Secretary, 19 March 1912.
- ⁸⁴ SAB AG11-II SE 19-61-12, Noel to Secretary, 25 March 1912.
- ⁸⁵ SAB 2665096, Deville to Sheppard, 06 May 1912
- ⁸⁶ SAB 2665096, Cote to Cory, 07 May 1912.
- ⁸⁷ SAB 2665096, Cote to Cory, 10 May 1912.
- ⁸⁸ SAB 2665096, Cote to Deville, 22 May 1912.
- ⁸⁹ SAB 2665096, Pereira to Steers, 23 May 1912.
- ⁹⁰ SAB AG11-II SE 18-61-12, Pereira to ADL Battleford, 23 May 1912.
- ⁹¹ SAB AG11-II SE 18-61-12, Noel to Secretary, 29 May 1912.
- ⁹² SAB 2665096, Deville to Miles, 28 May 1912.
- ⁹³ SAB 2665096, Deville to Miles, 28 May 1912.
- ⁹⁴ SAB 2665096, Deville to Miles, 28 May 1912.
- ⁹⁵ SAB 2665096, Deville to Cote, 28 May 1912.
- ⁹⁶ SAB 2665096, Miles to Deville, [?] 1912.
- ⁹⁷ SAB 2665096, Deville to Miles, 06 August 1912.
- ⁹⁸ SAB 2665096, Deville to Miles, 06 August 1912.
- ⁹⁹ SAB 2665096, Miles to Deville, [?] 1912.
- ¹⁰⁰ SAB 2908950.
- ¹⁰¹ SAB 2908952.
- ¹⁰² SAB 2909027.
- ¹⁰³ SAB 2909029.
- ¹⁰⁴ SAB 2909031.
- ¹⁰⁵ SAB 2909033.
- ¹⁰⁶ SAB 2908946.
- ¹⁰⁷ SAB 2908948.
- ¹⁰⁸ SAB 2728253.
- ¹⁰⁹ SAB 2758485, application No. 42405, 20 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁰ SAB AG11-I NW 1-62-13, P. Villebrun to Battleford Land Agent, undated.
- ¹¹¹ SAB AG11-I NW 1-62-13, Desrocher to Land Agent Battleford, 29 August 1912.
- ¹¹² SAB 2530449, Statement of John Sinclair, 11 December 1916.

CHAPTER FOUR

METIS SETTLEMENT AT GREEN LAKE, 1911-12

The survey of 1912 designated the Metis settlement at Green Lake for inclusion in the territory directly affected by the national policy. Nonetheless, Green Lake remained firmly entrenched in the fur trade economy. As a result, property claims consistent with that economy remained in place in Green Lake. With the survey, the question became how national policy institutions governing land title would recognize those fur trade property relations. Previous practice in similar circumstances suggested a variety of possible answers to that question.

There exists some misconception that the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada meant the end of the fur trade. Even before the transfer, debates existed within the HBC about the future of the trade. After the transfer, however, any decline of the fur trade was at most a relative phenomenon. The absolute volume and value of the trade simply rose and fell with general market conditions. If anything, the market for furs was often better than general economic conditions suggested it should be. Fur markets only partially reflected the general depression that had slowed national policy expansion between 1873 and 1896. Fur-price recovery began in 1881, and as early as 1884 fur sales surpassed those at the beginning of the slump.¹ Once the economies of Europe and North America began expanding after 1896, the fur trade, rather than declining, "boomed."² Prices of luxury furs rose sharply between 1895 and 1911, and "stocks of luxury furs were no longer adequate to meet mushrooming demand."³ As an active participant in the fur trade economy, the settlement at Green Lake could be considered marginalised only with reference to development in the south. In absolute terms, however, the settlement retained its fur trade vigour. Increased traffic after 1870 and increases in fur prices after 1885 supported the long-standing practice of settled occupation of the land around the lake. Data taken from the declarations of the settlers at the time of survey provided a detailed look at the nature of that settlement.

As described in Chapter Three, the surveys identified twenty Metis households and two non-Aboriginal households (Beatty and Teston). Table 4.1 lists the twenty Metis

Table 4.1: Birth and settlement data

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u> and	<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Date settled</u>
Pierre Laliberte	1844	Green Lake	1870
Louis Morin	1845	Isle-à-la Crosse	1866
Antoine Laliberte	1846	Red River	1889
Philomene Aubichon	1849	Red River	1869
Josette Sinclair	1852	Pelican Lake	1872
Napolean Girard	1862	Lake Athabaska	1907
J.B. Aubichon	1869	Green Lake	1888
Francois Laliberte	1870	Portage la Loche	1906
Marcel Desrocher	1870	Green Lake	1900?
Celestin Merasti	1872	Green Lake	1900
Norbert Fraser	1874	Green Lake	1899
Antoine Kennedy	1877	Ile-à-la Crosse	1900
John Fraser	1880	Lac la Biche	1909
Mathias Aubichon	1882	Green Lake	1906
Clement Laliberte	1882	Lac la Biche	1906
Louis Desrocher	1887	?	1911
Pierre McCallum	1888	Green Lake	1911
Narcisse LaFleur	?	?	?
Pierre Aubichon	?	?	?
Josephine Kennedy	?	?	?

households by the surname of the head of family, including the three widowed heads of households. In a few cases research revealed birth names (Jourdian, Collings and Lafond) of spouses of household heads. Those names do not appear to have continued in use in Green Lake in the 1912-1930 period. Research also identified three other surnames (Payette, Roy and Villebrun) in Green Lake circa 1912. As these names did not figure in land claims, little information has been found about them; as a result this analysis did not include them. With the above exceptions the study treats the surname and household lists as exhaustive for the townships surveyed in 1912. Table 4.1 lists household heads according to dates of birth. This arrangement of the data has proven useful in revealing certain characteristics of the Metis population of Green Lake, and subsequent figures maintain that order for ease of comparison.

The birth places of household heads in 1912 reflected the fur trade origins of the community. Of the sixteen known birthplaces, seven household heads were born in Green Lake. Besides Green Lake, household heads reported six other birth places: Ile-à-la-Crosse (two), Red River (two - both in the 1840s), Lac la Biche (two - 1880s), and one each from Lake Athabaska, Portage la Loche and Pelican (Chitek) Lake. Clearly, the kin ties of Green Lake with other communities were predominantly oriented north and west toward the Athabaska fur trade country. The exceptions suggest wider fur trade connections: the first to Red River, and the second to the nearby Cree village at Pelican Lake.

In the post-1912 handling of Green Lake claims, residency before treaty was significant. The land record showed that before 1876 and the signing of Treaty Six, births at Green Lake included five family surnames: Laliberte, Aubichon, Desrocher, Merasti and Fraser. The birth of a McCallum in 1888 added an additional surname recorded in Green Lake before the 1889 adhesion to Treaty Six. In addition, the date of settlement of household heads (Date settled, Table 4.1) revealed that both the Morin and Sinclair surnames were present in Green Lake before treaty in 1876. Those eight surnames represented 16 of the 20 households identified in 1912, the exceptions being the Girard, Kennedy (2) and LaFleur households. Of these last three surnames, both Girard and Kennedy appeared in a list of "Heads of Families and Others, 1888" for Green Lake.⁴ The Green Lake Index to the Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals corroborated and added to the land record.⁵ For example, the church recorded the baptism of a McCallum in 1876, the baptism of a Kennedy

in 1880, and the marriage of a LaFleur in Green Lake in 1885. Overall, then, all of the households in Green Lake in 1912 had probable ancestral ties to Green Lake that predated the Treaty Six Adhesion of 1889, and most predated the 1876 signing of Treaty Six. The origins of the Metis population of Green Lake in 1912 were thus indicative of both the antiquity of Metis settlement at Green Lake and the continuous nature of that settlement.

The settlement dates in Table 4.1 require a further comment, as the determination of these dates may have been conservative. First, the dates may have represented settlement at a specific site rather than in the general locale of the community. Even more conservatively, the date may have represented the occupation of the present structure on a given site; log housing required frequent reconstruction. Finally, the dates cited may have been the dates at which heads of households had established themselves as independent householders. An example would be Mathias Aubichon, born in Green Lake in 1888, but settling there in 1908. The conservative nature of the settlement dates was also evident in the case of Pierre McCallum. His 1888 birth in Green Lake suggested the possibility that he assumed a parental occupational site in 1911, and then used that year as the date of his settlement in Green Lake. Such conservative interpretations of settlement dates would become important in the claims process in later years.

Occupational data (Table 4.2) revealed the multiplicity of tasks undertaken by individual workers in the community. Sixteen individuals reporting occupational information filled forty-one occupational niches. However, the youngest group of workers (age 15 - 25) was generally absent from the list of household heads. Fully three-quarters (twelve of sixteen) of the residents claimed trapping as an occupational activity, the single most widely reported occupation. The continuing importance of the fur trade in the Green Lake economy was also underscored by the presence of three household heads claiming trading activity as an occupation. All but one of the sixteen household heads reporting occupations indicated an economic relationship to the fur trade, and that one household head reported "hunting" as his sole occupation. The second most reported occupational activity was fishing, with ten of sixteen residents reporting such activity. Only four individuals considered hunting as part of their occupation. It is likely more hunting served as an adjunct to the reported activities, but that it was not considered as an occupational activity for the purposes of the declarations.

Table 4.2: Occupational data

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation(s)</u>
Pierre Laliberte	Fisherman, Rancher, Trapper
Louis Morin	Rancher, Trader
Antoine Laliberte	Rancher, Trapper
Philomene Aubichon	?
Josette Sinclair	Farming, HBC Trader, Ranching
Napolean Girard	Fisher, Hunter, Labourer, Trapper
J.B. Aubichon	Fishing, Labourer, Trapping
Francois Laliberte	Trader
Marcel Desrocher	Hunter, Trapper
Celestin Merasti	Fishing, Freighting, Haying, Hunting, Trapping
Norbert Fraser	Fishing, Freighting, Haying, Trapping
Antoine Kennedy	Fisherman, Trapper
John Fraser	Fisherman, Trapper
Mathias Aubichon	Fishing, Freighting, Trapping
Clement Laliberte	Fisherman, Trapper
Louis Desrocher	Hunter
Pierre McCallum	Fisherman, Trapper

Five individuals reported some form of wage labour activity. Employment was apparently evenly divided between the transportation and agricultural sectors. Two workers reported both freighting and haying. One reported freighting and two reported the more generic "labourer" as an occupation. Since the two individuals indicating haying as an occupation owned few cattle or horses of their own, it would appear others employed them for that purpose. Ranching was an occupation of four household heads, and a fifth described farming as an occupation.

Further analysis of the forty-one occupational niches provides another look at the community economy in 1912. Table 4.3 displays economic activity in a given sector expressed as a percentage of the total number of occupational niches reported. Direct fur trade activity predominated, with over one-third of the respondents reporting trading or trapping activity. Fishing and labour activity when combined provided more occupational opportunities, but both were historical adjuncts to the fur trade. Ranching and farming occurred less frequently, but the declarations did not reflect the upkeep of eight of the nine reported gardens. Like hunting, gardening was not considered as an occupational activity for the purposes of the declarations.

Dates of birth appear to have been of some consequence with respect to occupational activity. All of the household heads described as ranchers were born between 1844 and 1852, with an average age in 1912 of sixty-five. Two of the three traders belonged to this age group. Those employed as labourers were, with one exception, between the ages of forty and sixty. The six youngest household heads, all between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-five, displayed the least occupational diversity. Only one worked at freighting, four depended only on fishing and trapping and one hunted as his sole occupation. This narrowing of the range of occupational activity among the younger household heads would be consistent with Dobbin's contention that after 1885 in northern Saskatchewan ". . . the native population became more homogeneous."⁶ Dobbin stated that ". . . the Metis voyageurs and post employees — remnants of the Metis working class — gradually disappeared . . ." into a single class of trapper/hunters.⁷ A generational aspect of that homogenization process may have been at work in Green Lake in 1912. Animal husbandry and agriculture (Table 4.4) concentrated in a manner similar to occupations. The five households headed by those over

Table 4.3: Work-force data

Occupations as Percentage of Total Reported

Trading and Trapping	15/41	37%
Fishing	10/41	24%
Labour	7/41	17%
Ranching/Farming	5/41	12%
Hunting	4/41	10%

Table 4.4: Agricultural/animal husbandry data

<u>Name</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Dog Team</u>
Pierre Laliberte	5	25	6	X
Louis Morin	10	30	6	
Antoine Laliberte	2	12	1	X
Philomene Aubichon	1.5	5	3	
Josette Sinclair	2	8	6	
Napolean Girard	.5	-	-	
J.B. Aubichon	1.5	2	5	
Francois Laliberte	-	-	-	
Marcel Desrocher	?	5	5	
Celestin Merasti	2	3	-	
Norbert Fraser	-	-	-	
Antoine Kennedy	-	-	-	
John Fraser	-	3	-	X
Mathias Aubichon	1	4	2	
Clement Laliberte	-	4	4	
Louis Desrocher	?	?	?	
Pierre McCallum	-	-	-	

sixty owned eighty percent (80 of 101) of the cows, nearly sixty percent (22 of 38) of the horses and two of the three dog teams. The same households owned eighty percent of the land in agricultural production.

Table 4.5 displays the estimated dollar value in 1912 of capital improvements to settlement sites. It confirms the accumulation of local wealth in the names of an aging ownership group. The rancher/trader group again predominated. They owned housing stock that represented more than sixty percent of the total value of housing in Green Lake. The survey valued other structures in the community (excepting those of the church and the HBC) at close to the same value as the housing; nearly ninety percent of the value of those additional buildings belonged to the same five household heads. Similarly, nearly three-quarters of the dollar value of the fencing in the community belonged to the same households. When the total dollar value of such additions to real property is considered, close to three-quarters of the dollar value belonged to the same one-quarter of the households identified.

The concentration of wealth may be partly dependent on the items measured; that is, no dollar evaluation was done on dog team sleds, wagons and sleighs, hand tools for either agricultural or fur trade occupations, boats and canoes, nets and so forth. The items measured were to some extent consistent with the longevity of tenure in a given location. Other things being equal, one could expect that the oldest settlers would have the greatest accumulation of fixed wealth as measured in Table 4.5. The same seems true for ranching activity with respect to the time required to build a herd. As expected in a settled community, a strong relationship existed between age and length of time settled in Green Lake. From that one would expect the relationship between age and the quantity of settlers' effects.

A second factor that contributes to the illusory nature of the data is the lack of information about household size. The fact that Louis Morin had two adult sons living with him (who were not themselves considered as heads of households) might reduce the impression that Louis himself ran the biggest ranching operation in Green Lake. In reverse fashion, Antoine Laliberte filed a separate claim from his son Clement, with whom he shared the same settlement site though each maintained his own household. This lessened the reported wealth of Antoine, which would have been greater had he claimed all the fixed capital and livestock in the manner of Louis Morin. Reconstruction of actual household size

Table 4.5: Fixed capital assets

<u>Name</u>	<u>\$ House</u>	<u>\$ Other</u>	<u>\$ Fencing</u>	<u>\$ Total</u>
Pierre Laliberte	200	400	50	650
Louis Morin	300	500	50	850
Antoine Laliberte	150	300	-	450
Philomene Aubichon	85	18	12	115
Josette Sinclair	200	-	75	275
Napolean Girard	20	-	-	20
J.B. Aubichon	75	48	15	138
Francois Laliberte	90	25	-	115
Marcel Desrocher	?	?	?	¹
Celestin Merasti	45	80	36	161
Norbert Fraser	-	-	-	-
Antoine Kennedy	150	-	-	150
John Fraser	100	-	-	100
Mathias Aubichon	40	20	8	68
Clement Laliberte	100	-	-	100
Louis Desrocher	?	?	?	?
Pierre McCallum	-	-	-	-

¹ Marcel Desrocher had 1 house and 3 stables. No dollar value is available.

in 1912 has not been possible, although the surveys reported on the number of children born to each household head and their age range (Table 4.6).

Despite these two sources of concern about the data, the apparent concentration of wealth suggests a gerontocracy, or perhaps a local petty bourgeoisie. Nicole St-Onge pursued the latter description in her analysis of the Metis village of Pointe a Grouette south of Red River.⁸ St-Onge argued that not only had an elite arisen, but that this "affluent class" was so separated from the hunting/labouring class with which it shared the village that the idea of a nation was not applicable to the Metis. She suggested that the hunting/labouring class was a "people-class" defined as "a social group with a specific economic function."⁹ The elite of "Metis traders and farmers came to identify more with incoming French Canadians . . . ; that they were of mixed-blood ancestry was secondary to . . . their class position."¹⁰ Combining the two disparate groups into one 'nation' (as in Tremauden),¹¹ or 'society' (as in Sprenger),¹² "may not be applicable."¹³ Evidently, the residents of Pointe a Grouette experienced their community as wider than the village itself; that is, the hunter/labourers identified with the larger hunter/labourer group associated with White Horse Plains, while the local "affluent class" identified by St-Onge found its community in its shared class interests with the growing influx of petty bourgeois farmers and merchants in the Red River region. Class interests drowned any sense of community that otherwise might have emanated from either biological or historical commonality of origin.

However, to paraphrase Carol Judd, Green Lake in 1912 was not Pointe a Grouette in the 1870s.¹⁴ Southern Manitoba became the target of large-scale settlement by outsiders, but Green Lake had remained relatively isolated from the settlement program associated with the national policy. The Hudson's Bay Company retained its importance to the economy of Green Lake; staple production may have changed to wheat in the south, but fish and fur continued to be important in the economy of Green Lake. St-Onge found no intermarriage between the two classes she identified in Pointe a Grouette. However, while the community of Pointe a Grouette transformed into the French-Canadian community of St. Agatha, Green Lake strengthened its sense of community because of both relative isolation from the settler society to the south and intermarriage between family units. No evidence has been found of class constraints during community formation in Green Lake; the interweaving of family lines

Table 4.6: Number and ages of children

<u>Name</u>	<u># of children</u>	<u>Ages</u>
Pierre Laliberte	11	10 - 47
Louis Morin	9	15 - 46
Antoine Laliberte	9	6 - 30
Philomene Aubichon	9	24 - 48
Josette Sinclair	14	21 - 40
Napolean Girard	6	1 - 20
J.B. Aubichon	10	1 - 21
Francois Laliberte	4	5 - 24
Marcel Desrocher	2	6 - 8
Celestin Merasti	8	1 - 19
Norbert Fraser	7	?
Antoine Kennedy	5	1 - 11
John Fraser	2	1 - 5
Mathias Aubichon	3	2 - 10
Clement Laliberte	2	?
Louis Desrocher	2	6 - 16
Pierre McCallum	1	2

(see Appendix A) was more suggestive of egalitarianism, as was the presence of offspring across occupational differences and economic specializations. Perhaps because of the attenuated development of class distinctions, community and kin seemed to predominate in the Metis settlement at Green Lake.

The continuation of the fur trade economy in Green Lake ensured the continuation of property relations developed in conjunction with that trade until the 1912 survey. The long-term settlement of the area and the individualized property holdings as revealed in the survey data meant that individual households had developed attachments to specific locations around the north end of the lake. While the data did not always provide a complete historical record of the duration of those attachments in Green Lake, the general nature of the attachment to real property that arose under the fur trade economy was implicit. In the Red River circumstance, Mailhot and Sprague have written of the few Metis who had claims recorded by the HBC land register, but also of "The hundreds of others without official ownership (but with possession no neighbour disputed). . . ." ¹⁵ They go on to record the consistent demands by settlers in 1869-70 "for recognition of the 'usages' that required no written title to guarantee possession of the land." ¹⁶ In Red River, fur trade property relations gave those settlers similar rights to their land as those with formal company sanction: "If nobody objected, they developed their land in the same manner as the recognized settlers." ¹⁷ Sprague has summarized customary land tenure: ". . . Metis land tenure assumes a system of customary demarcation of boundaries and descent of rights by community consent. People allotted what they needed. They owned what they used." ¹⁸ The customary system of land tenure, though replaced by national policy directives in Red River in the 1870s, was still active in Green Lake at the time of the 1912 surveys. The establishment of Roman Catholic Church property provided a specific instance of the customary system of land tenure in the Green Lake settlement. Writing in 1923, Father Jules Teston related:

In the year 1890 in June I was appointed to stay here. Since that year I had trouble to clear up big trees etc. One day the late Pierre Laliberte in 1891 calling to me to show me where I could mak [*sic*] a fence. Well since that time the fence is at the same place south side of the Mission where his son Pierre Laliberte is located actually. Since that time I have always believed bona fide this land belonging to the mission for that side south. If in the past time some one making objection for that, that man is not acting openly with me. Everyone in Green Lake is looking as the Mission land is alright. ¹⁹

Teston's conviction that occupation and community recognition equated with 'bona fide' ownership of the land reflected the continued prevalence of the customary system of land tenure in Green Lake. The supplementary survey ordered in Green Lake in 1912 recognised the need for what Sprague described in Red River as the "transition from the customary to the formal system of land tenures."²⁰ At issue was the question of how to translate adequately a claim to land under the prevailing customary system to a comparable claim to land under the new system. Several significant precedents existed.

The first precedent for recognition of customary land tenure in the new national policy system occurred at Red River. Like Green Lake some 40 years later, a negotiated agreement preceded the Red River transition from fur trade customs to national policy institutions. Those 1870 negotiations spoke to the question of land occupied by settlers before the transfer. Having achieved the objective of responsible government on the first day of negotiations, Ritchot reported on the second day: "We spoke a little of the land question in general and particularly of property held at the present time. It was agreed to leave secure the lands held by Company title and to treat liberally those who were on ungranted lands."²¹ According to Ritchot's journal, the Canadian negotiators expanded upon the intended liberal treatment:

Sir John [A. Macdonald] and Sir George [Cartier] offered the following, that is to say:

.....

3. The same possession (*gratis*) for those who possess lands of the Company without having a contract or a connection with the Company ought to be granted to them - after some objection on the part of the ministers; they agree to that third clause.

After prolonged discussion they grant the same possession *gratis* to all settlers possessing lands outside the lands of the Company.²²

Following the negotiations, the passage of the *Manitoba Act* purported to enshrine the agreement with respect to occupied lands in Section 32 of that legislation. Considerable disagreement followed, first between the negotiators and then between historians, about whether the attempt to carry out the agreement was successful. Fortunately, resolving that debate is not necessary, as it has largely been about implementation rather than policy. Nor is it necessary to rely on advocates of the Metis to find clear statements of the intended policy. Thomas Flanagan and Gerhard Ens, noted opponents of Metis claims, provide adequate statements of policy for the purposes of this thesis.²³

Flanagan is quite adamant with respect to Section 32 of the *Manitoba Act*: "Only in the case of so-called staked claims was there any divergence between what the government did and what the Abbe' Ritchot desired it to do; . . ."24 Flanagan pointed out that although Section 32(4) had only promised a right of pre-emption for those occupying lots outside the settlement belt, Cartier's letter of 23 May 1870 overcame this failing by promising Canada would require no payment under 32(4).25 No matter how heated the dispute between Flanagan and Sprague about the implementation process, both seem to agree that the substance of the policy was that free grants under the new Dominion land system would recognize the customary system of tenure. Ens's support of that same interpretation is implicit in his enthusiastic approval of the government's implementation process:

In the two parishes studied in detail there were very few cases of nonrecognition by surveyors, and no evidence that claims were refused because of lack of evidence about occupancy. All that was necessary to prove occupancy in most cases was the sworn affidavit of a neighbour that the claimant had been the recognized owner of the lot previous to 1870.26

As Flanagan phrased it, "The very fact that patents were issued under the *Manitoba Act* [*sic*] demonstrates that the Dominion government recognized the occupancy of those who had lived on the land prior to 1870."27 It is possible for the moment to join Flanagan and Ens in ignoring whether the right people received the benefit of the grants and yet applaud the principle espoused. Despite the disastrous loss of Metis lands in Manitoba, the principle established, if applied to Metis lands in Green Lake at the time of conversion from customary tenure systems, would have provided free grants to every claimant registered by the surveyors in 1912. Red River thus provided a very attractive precedent, however unlikely it was to be adopted in Green Lake.

In one sense, the Red River precedent was a double one; new settlers received nearly as good treatment as the old settlers were supposed to. J.W. Dafoe described the process following the transfer:

Pending the necessary legislation and the surveying of lands, the Dominion government announced that bona fide settlers would have the rights to their lands recognized upon completion of the survey; which resulted in large amounts of land being taken up by squatters in 1871.28

Even the old settlement belt was not specifically excluded.29 Sprague pointed out that by 1873 delayed implementation meant that no old settler's claim to a river lot had been patented,30

while new settlers enjoyed the protection of having their claims recognized "so long as they filed their claims within three months of being found by the surveyors."³¹

The question of how to deal with settlement in advance of survey had been written into legislation several times between 1870 and 1912. In dealing with new settlers, it generally confirmed the principle of recognition of settlement rights at the time of survey. As early as 1872 legislation had stated that those settling in unsurveyed land had three months ". . . after such land shall have been surveyed . . ." in which to file and thus protect their claims.³² In 1876 legislation changed the deadline for filing to ". . . within three months after due notice has been received at the local office of such land having been surveyed and the survey thereof confirmed."³³ In 1879 the proviso was added that for such settlement before survey ". . . the Government shall not be bound to protect any person found to have settled on land which . . . may be claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company."³⁴ In 1880 a similar proviso was added with respect to ". . . railway land, or for any other special purpose. . . ."³⁵ Legislation passed in 1908 read:

A person who has *bona fide* settled and made improvements on agricultural land before the survey thereof and is in occupation of and ordinarily resident on the land at the time of survey shall, if he is eligible under this Act to make entry for homestead . . . have a prior right to obtain entry for the land so settled on . . .³⁶

Application of this legislation required that the township be open for entry, in which circumstances the settlers at Green Lake would at least have gained entry and the possibility of patent on their lands. Despite its obvious design for new settlers, the legislation might then have been of some use to the original settlers, especially when combined with the free homestead policy in place at the time of survey.

Another set of precedents, this time of practice as much as of policy, was evident in the treatment of claims in the Prince Albert settlement in 1884. Demand for surveys had been ubiquitous in the northwest, generated by a desire for surety of title in the face of new settlement. The government had given priority to the regions along the proposed route of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the increased settlement it was expected to generate.³⁷ The re-routing of the CPR to a more southerly path had put the end to a land boom in Prince Albert that had been largely based on expectation of the railway's arrival. With the resultant delay of surveys, ". . . the mood of the settlers became ugly."³⁸ Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney

warned Prime Minister Macdonald that anger in Prince Albert was due to the inability to get land grants. Macdonald responded by ordering the immediate settlement of the settlers' claims ". . . lest they all become Grits."³⁹ The result was the assignment of William Pearce, the Inspector of Lands Agencies with the Dominion Lands Board, to ". . . settle the land problems as efficiently and as quietly as possible."⁴⁰ Once in Prince Albert, Pearce quickly realized:

. . . land claims in the district were hopelessly confused. Many of the original squatters had sold "their" lands before obtaining title while subsequent "owners" had in turn sold to others. In effect they had sold land belonging to the public domain without title, and legally Pearce was required to seize the land. He realized that such a course of action would be both impractical and contrary to the settlement policies of the government. He decided that because they were all squatters he would treat each of the claimants equally and that he would accept the *status quo* of ownership claims.⁴¹

In effect, Pearce accepted the original squatters' claims as transferable, recognizing the assignment of their rights as valid transfers of interest in the land. He also went further, allowing immediate issue of patent on lots where settlers had made their entry official only at the time of survey. He generally accepted as truthful settlers' evidence about their term of residence and value of improvements, based on the rationale that ". . . it could assist in the settlement of claims[,] particularly as the present allocation of lands seemed to be acceptable to the community as a whole."⁴² Where necessary, Pearce augmented information about claims by ". . . a lot of questioning, comparing of dates and ascertaining of facts from other settlers."⁴³ Pearce predated all claims to the date of actual entry, and applied the terms of settlement in legislation in force at that date.⁴⁴ To meet homestead requirements, he assessed improvement values as they would have been at the 1882 height of the land boom, regardless of when the settlers had made the improvements. Pearce credited settlers for their labour in making improvements, and at the rate prevalent during the boom. Where payment was required for acreage in excess of homestead amounts, it was assessed whenever possible at the earlier rate of \$1.00 per acre rather than the prevailing \$2.00 per acre fee.⁴⁵ His report later ". . . acknowledged that it would be unfair to charge settlers the 1882 price of land when they had settled on it much earlier. . . ." ⁴⁶ Because of Pearce's efforts to be fair to settlers who had occupied land before the survey, ". . . many settlers in Prince Albert district could qualify for patent as soon as they made application. . . . It was on this basis that patents were granted in 1884 as a result of the investigation by William Pearce."⁴⁷ Enthusiasm for Pearce's

leniency was originally tinged by some apprehension over his power to be so generous. However, in April 1884 the Minister of the Interior approved Pearce's resolution of the claims of the English-speaking people in the Prince Albert district.⁴⁸

Unfortunately, Pearce's largesse at Prince Albert was not evident in his cavalier attitude toward the claims of the French-speaking population on the South Saskatchewan. On an earlier trip to the region in 1883, Pearce had reassured settlers in the eight-township tract of the Prince Albert Colonization Company ". . . he would intercede on their behalf and arrange for an exchange of lands when required."⁴⁹ Yet upon completion of the 1884 work in Prince Albert district, Pearce left the South Branch claims in the hands of underlings who lacked his power to adjudicate claims. As a result, ". . . the Metis took his failure to visit them as a slight upon their race and further evidence of government indifference to their plight."⁵⁰ The following year their interpretation of events appeared to have been accurate. The South Branch claims, forwarded to Winnipeg in June of 1884, had been sent to Ottawa in October and then back to the Prince Albert land office in February 1885. In sharp contrast to the quick settlement in Prince Albert, ". . . the question of trespass on the lands of the Prince Albert Colonization Company was unresolved; thirty families were excluded from 'entry' as well as from patents."⁵¹ Added to the "peculiarly provocative" Order in Council of 28 January 1885 that indicated only 200 of 1,300 potential South Branch claimants were eligible, the contrast with the Prince Albert settlement could only fuel Metis outrage.⁵² Constant communication between the settlements made the contrast the more evident.⁵³ Such provocation ignited the Resistance of 1885, requiring the shipment of Middleton's army west to preserve the purposes of the Dominion.

However shabby the treatment of the Metis on the South Branch, after the Resistance Canada extended the liberality of Pearce's treatment of Prince Albert claims to the South Branch. With respect to the families on the Prince Albert Land Colonization Company, Sprague pointed out: "Their claims were taken up in the autumn of 1885, and accorded the same entry privilege as the others."⁵⁴ Overall, given that Metis claims to land in Green Lake predated those in Prince Albert, the liberal recognition given by Pearce to the latter would have seemed to auger well for the Metis settlers at Green Lake in 1912.

Besides Pearce's pragmatic resolution of original settler claims, there existed an Order

in Council that seemingly spoke to the situation. Four days after the first violent confrontation of the 1885 resistance, Order in Council (688) authorized "an issue of scrip" in a belated attempt "to satisfy any claims existing in connection with the extinguishment of the Indian title, preferred by half-breeds resident in the North-West Territories. . . ."55 About three weeks later, Order in Council (688) was amended by Order in Council (821) of 18 April 1885, which provided:

1. That the small water frontages of which Half-breeds are at present in *bona fide* possession, by virtue of residence and cultivation, be sold to them at one dollar per acre, the area in no case to exceed forty acres, and payment therefor to be made within two years.
2. That in satisfaction of their claims as actual settlers [emphasis added] upon these small water frontages which are proposed to be sold to them, they be permitted to select from lands open for homestead and pre-emption entry as nearly as possible in the vicinity of their holdings one quarter section of 160 acres, more or less, the patent for which however, shall not issue until payment has been made in full for the lands of which they are now in occupation as aforesaid.⁵⁶

These two clauses held great promise for the settlers at Green Lake. The explicit differentiation between land due in satisfaction of Aboriginal title in Order in Council (688) and land 'earned' by prior settlement in Order in Council (821) represented a reiteration of the distinction between Section 31 and Section 32 of the *Manitoba Act*. The application of O.C. 821 in Green Lake would have resulted in claimants paying \$1 per acre for their small lots and then claiming an additional free grant of 160 acres in the nearest quarter-section. Acceptance of scrip under O.C. 688 would not have barred such settlement, given the different sources of the claims (i.e., settlement and Indian title). The use of the date of survey (as in the settlement in advance of survey legislation) would have made the claim settlement comprehensive and closer to the settlement negotiated with Clouston.

Department of the Interior officials haphazardly applied other legislation to the Green Lake claims (described in Chapter Six). That legislation was part of a general revision of land law in 1908, and stated the Governor in Council might:

- c) upon the extinguishment of the Indian title in any territory or tract of land, make to persons satisfactorily establishing undisturbed occupation of any lands within the said territory or tract at the date of such extinguishment, by their own residence or that of their servants, tenants or agents, in actual peaceable possession thereof, free grants of the said lands, provided that an area not more than equal to a quarter-section shall be so granted to any one person unless there has been cultivation of more than

that area;⁵⁷

Similar sections had been part of the *Dominion Lands Act* since at least 1879.⁵⁸ The settlement date referred to in 1879 was still the 15 July 1870 date associated with the transfer. That anomaly was corrected in 1899, when legislative change updated the relevant date to 1 January 1899, evidently in keeping with the signing of Treaty Eight.⁵⁹ Although land legislation again changed in 1906, it was not until the 1908 revision that the more generic date of extinguishment of Aboriginal title replaced the specific dates of the previous versions. On the face of it, many Green Lake settlers were eligible for free grants under this legislation despite the retroactive nature of the residency requirement in the Treaty Six area and the fact that the survey followed treaty by more than twenty years.

No shortage of available options hindered settlement of the Green Lake claims in 1912. Besides the various pieces of legislation, the practical accommodation reached in Prince Albert and the Orders in Council reviewed above, the general meeting between Homestead Inspector Clouston and the Green Lake residents appeared to have reached a settlement. Clouston claimed to have only told the residents that he "would forward their proposition to the Department."⁶⁰ One resident would later recall Clouston saying "I will work that proposition for you," interpreting the words to mean agreement with the proposal put forth by the residents.⁶¹ The surveyors apparently confirmed this interpretation in the course of their work.⁶² Both the Homestead Inspector and the surveyors would appear to have had ample precedents for expecting some form of satisfactory settlement for the settlers at Green Lake. Forty-odd years of national policy advancement had generated an array of accommodations to meet land claims coming from property relations extant from the earlier fur trade period. There appeared to be no reason to doubt that less would be done on the current frontier of national policy implementation.

However, things were changing; the national policy had reached its peak, and previous practices faltered along with the failing momentum of national policy expansion.

Notes

¹ Arthur Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 51.

² Ray 50.

³ Ray 50.

⁴ Edmund H. Oliver, "The Beginnings of White Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan (A Study of the Growth of Settlement in the Provisional District of Saskatchewan, 1870-1891)," *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3rd Series, vol. 19, (Ottawa: Jas. Hope & Son, 1925) 121. Oliver wrongly places the Green Lake settlement in "Township 58, range 11, west of the 3rd meridian." One "Girard" named is "Napoleon," the other "Paul." The single Kennedy surname is "Kennedy, G.." The mistaken location is suggestive of inclusion of a larger area than the settlement at the north end of the lake, perhaps indicative of inclusion of settlement at the south end of the lake and/or the Pelican Lake Indian settlement. A similar confusion surrounds the names included in the 1891 and 1901 censuses; the 1911 census is even more confusing, containing a Green Lake settlement in both the Battleford and Prince Albert Districts. Lack of names for the 1911 census precluded further investigation at the time of writing.

⁵ St. Joseph Catholic Church, Ile-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan.

⁶ Murray Dobbin, "Prairie Colonialism: The CCF in Northern Saskatchewan, 1944-1964" *Studies in Political Economy* 16 (1985) 10.

⁷ Dobbin 10.

⁸ Nicole J.M. St-Onge, "The Dissolution of a Metis Community: Pointe a Grouette, 1860-1885" *Studies in Political Economy* 18 (1985) 149-172.

⁹ St-Onge 164

¹⁰ St-Onge 164.

¹¹ A.-H. De Tremaudan, *Hold High Your Heads (History of the Metis Nation in Western Canada)*, trans. Elizabeth Maguet (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1982).

¹² George H. Sprenger, "An Analysis of Selected Aspects of Metis Society, 1810-1870," diss., University of Manitoba, 1972.

¹³ St-Onge 163.

¹⁴ Judd, C.M., "Moose Factory was not Red River: A Comparison of Mixed-Blood Experiences," *Explorations in Canadian Economic History: Essays in Honour of Irene M. Sprye*, ed. D. Cameron (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1985) 251-268.

¹⁵ P.R. Mailhot and D.N. Sprague, "Persistent Settlers: The Dispersal and Resettlement of the Red River Metis, 1870-1885," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 7.2 (1985) 2.

¹⁶ Mailhot and Sprague 3.

¹⁷ D.N. Sprague, "The Manitoba Land Question 1870-1882," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 15.3 (Fall 1980) 80.

¹⁸ D.N. Sprague, "Dispossession vs. Accommodation in Plaintiff vs. Defendant Accounts of Metis Dispersal from Manitoba, 1870-1881," *Prairie Forum* 16.2 (Fall 1991) 143.

¹⁹ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12.

²⁰ Sprague, "Dispossession" 143.

²¹ N.J. Ritchot, "The Journal of Rev. N.-J. Ritchot March 24 to May 28, 1870," *Manitoba: The Birth of a Province* ed. W.L. Morton (Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society, 1965) 139.

- ²² Ritchot 140-41.
- ²³ Flanagan, *Metis Lands in Manitoba* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1991). Gerhard Ens, "Dispossession or Adaptation? Migration and Persistence of the Red River Metis, 1835-1890," Canadian Historical Association, *Papers* (1988): 120-44.
- ²⁴ Flanagan 157.
- ²⁵ Flanagan 161.
- ²⁶ Ens 140-41.
- ²⁷ Flanagan 187.
- ²⁸ J.W. Dafoe, "Economic History of the Prairie Provinces, 1870-1913," *Canada and Its Provinces*, eds. Adam Shortt and A.G. Doughty (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Company, 1914) 288-89.
- ²⁹ Sprague, *Canada and the Metis, 1869-1885* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988) 94.
- ³⁰ Sprague, *Canada and the Metis* 106.
- ³¹ Sprague, *Canada and the Metis* 94.
- ³² S.C. 1872 35 Victoria c.23 s.33-5, reprinted in Kirk N. Lambrecht, *The Administration of Dominion Lands, 1870-1930* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1991) 133.
- ³³ S.C. 1876 39 Victoria c.19 s.6, in Lambrecht 133.
- ³⁴ S.C. 1879 42 Victoria c.31 s.34-5, in Lambrecht 133.
- ³⁵ S.C. 1880 43 Victoria c.26 s.4, in Lambrecht 133-34.
- ³⁶ S.C. 1908 7-8 Edward VII c.20 s.10, in Lambrecht 134.
- ³⁷ E.A. Mitchener, "The North Saskatchewan River Settlement Claims, 1883-1884," *Essays on Western History*, ed. Lewis H. Thomas (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1976) 129.
- ³⁸ Mitchener 130.
- ³⁹ Macdonald to Macpherson, July 7, 1882, *Macdonald Papers* (P.A.C.), as cited in Mitchener 130.
- ⁴⁰ Mitchener 131.
- ⁴¹ Mitchener 133.
- ⁴² Mitchener 133-34.
- ⁴³ Lloyd Rodwell, "Land Claims in the Prince Albert Settlement," *Saskatchewan History* 19.1 (Winter 1966) 19.
- ⁴⁴ Mitchener 134.
- ⁴⁵ Mitchener 134.
- ⁴⁶ Rodwell 19.
- ⁴⁷ Rodwell 18.
- ⁴⁸ Mitchener 134.
- ⁴⁹ Mitchener 131.
- ⁵⁰ Mitchener 135.
- ⁵¹ Sprague, *Canada and the Metis* 171.
- ⁵² Sprague, *Canada and the Metis* 170.
- ⁵³ Rodwell 2.
- ⁵⁴ Sprague, *Canada and the Metis* 171.
- ⁵⁵ Order in Council 30 March 1885 (688), in Lambrecht 227-28.
- ⁵⁶ Lambrecht 228-29.

⁵⁷ S.C. 1908 7-8 Edward VII c.20 s.76(a)-(c), in Lambrecht 213.

⁵⁸ S.C. 1879 42 Victoria C. 31 ss. 125(f), in Lambrecht 210.

⁵⁹ S.C. 1899 62-63 Victoria c. 16 s.4(f2), in Lambrecht 212.

⁶⁰ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Homestead Inspector's Report, 13 March 1912.

⁶¹ SAB 2908948, Annie Girard, 27 Sept 1920.

⁶² SAB 2909027, Mathias Aubichon, 06 Feb 1923.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DECADE OF DELAY, 1912-1922

Between the survey of 1912 and the end of World War I, the Department of the Interior failed to take significant action to recognise the claims of the original settlers in Green Lake. The department had carried out the surveys in Green Lake at the peak of the expansionary forces associated with the national policy. However, as Donald Smiley pointed out, those forces had begun to fade after 1912.¹ To varying degrees, the options that the national policy had developed for the recognition of land claims of original settlers had occurred in the context of expansionary forces. However, as expansion faltered after 1912, the necessity of dealing with original settler claims would fade. No longer did it seem so imperative to clear the land for further settlement. As a result, the Department of the Interior did not attempt to settle the Green Lake claims until after World War I. By that time, the Department developed options for treating the claims based on a new set of circumstances which reduced to insignificance the fur trade claims of the settlers. The options developed during the 1919-1922 period would then strongly influence the actual disposition of the settlers' claims post-1922.

Population data reflected the faltering of expansion on the prairies; the phenomenal growth of the first decade of the new century slowed during the second decade. Gerald Friesen posited "five significant infusions of immigrants. . . . The third infusion of immigrants, and by far the largest, occurred between 1897 and 1913. . . ."2 Kenneth Norrie seconded Friesen's identification of the 1897-1913 era:

Homestead entries began to rise in 1897, falling in only two of the next fifteen years. They jumped from 1,857 in 1896 to 7,426 in 1900 and 44,479 in 1911. The increase in homesteads was matched by a jump in land sales by private companies. By the end of the decade most of the potential agricultural area of the prairies was at least thinly settled. . . .³

While some thinly settled areas might continue to absorb immigration and natural population increases, settlers had occupied most agriculturally suitable land by 1914: "By 1885 only 8.8% of the eventual total net homestead entries had been recorded, and by 1900 only 20%. By 1906, however, the proportion had reached 51.4%, and by the outbreak of World War I

nearly 89%.⁴ New homestead entries would continue, but new failures were assured as well. Most of the best land had been occupied by the time of survey in Green Lake.

The relative decline in the demand for land after 1912 was suggested by a slowing of the growth of the prairie population. For the prairies, the 1901-1911 increase in population was 220.7%, but in 1911-1921 the increase dropped to 47.3%.⁵ The contrast is even greater for Saskatchewan, where the increase in 1901-1911 was a staggering 439.5%, while the commensurate figure for the next decade dropped to 53.8%.⁶ As well, the source of prairie population increases changed after 1911; natural population increases supplanted increases due to immigration.⁷ The change in the source of population growth resulted in changes to the birthplace of the prairie population. In 1911, 29% of prairie residents had been born on the prairies, 48% were foreign-born and 23% had been born elsewhere in Canada. By 1931, 52% of prairie residents had been born on the prairies, 38% were foreign-born and only 10% came from elsewhere in Canada.⁸ The growth of the prairie-born population compared with the foreign and other Canadian-born population showed a decline in the growth of immigration pressures on land. A change in the nature of the immigrant population between 1910 and 1914 accentuated that decline. According to Friesen, railway construction required "unsophisticated labourers," and:

... the result was free entry for 'foreign' navvies in 1910-11. Because Robert Borden's new Conservative government was equally sensitive to the demands of contractors, mine owners, and lumber entrepreneurs, the policy was continued until the outbreak of the war in 1914. Untold thousands of immigrants in this era belonged to this category of foreign navy. . . .⁹

It might be added, that category of new immigrants added little to the demand for new lands for agriculture.

Those immigrants who did want to take up land in the west were likely to be directed toward the dry regions to the south. Friesen pointed out: "The next phase in prairie agricultural history, the decade after 1908, was marked by a great error in Canadian domestic policy," the opening to settlement of "the relatively dry regions of southwest Saskatchewan and southeast Alberta. . . ."¹⁰ Despite the optimism of northern advocates, pressure on land remained primarily a southern phenomenon through the decade of the war. Kenneth Norrie has broadened the national policy discussion by positing a "dry farming hypothesis."¹¹ According to that hypothesis, new techniques of dry farming opened semiarid land after the

mid 1880s. "As wheat prices started rising again after 1896," semiarid land "was rapidly filled in. . . ."12 The new dry farming techniques, rather than the national policy as such, encouraged the settlement boom and projected the pattern of growth onto the southern part of the province rather than north toward Green Lake. To Norrie, " . . . the availability of suitable dry farming techniques meant another once-and-for-all shift in the extensive margin of cultivation, this time a much larger one. . . . the actual margin of cultivation was extended to meet the potentially feasible one."13 The lack of new settlers around Green Lake suggested that the area was at or beyond Norrie's "margin of cultivation" for national policy purposes.

It was not, however, solely a shortage of good land that took the wind out of the sails of the national policy. The "rapid economic growth" of the last decade "peaked in late 1912," followed by the "first major depression" of the twentieth century.¹⁴ "By spring of 1913 the economic downturn was clearly evident across Canada," and the depression would last "until long after the outbreak of war."¹⁵ Heavy infusions of capital had marked the expansive phase, especially for the infrastructure needed to take advantage of the wheat boom. Now, however, "the prime source of much of that capital, the London money market, had dried up."¹⁶ The Canadian market was no longer able to absorb the expanded industrial productivity that the railway and tariff portions of the national policy had created.¹⁷ Prewar Conservative tariff increases " . . . brought scant relief to hard-pressed farmers, who since 1912 had suffered falling agricultural prices, reduced demand and adverse weather conditions which brought some wheat farmers in the west face to face with starvation."¹⁸ Machinery had become a necessary precondition to a thriving western agricultural economy, but lack of access to capital to purchase such machinery constricted the ability of the farmer to produce:

Bankers refused to extend further credit, mortgage companies threatened to foreclose, and a flight from the land, smaller certainly than that in the 1930's, but nonetheless real, began. Farmers, their sons, their tenants and hired men, along with a continuing flood of immigrants - over 400,000 in 1913 - poured into the cities to join the growing ranks of the unemployed in the fruitless search for work if possible, for relief if necessary.¹⁹

In the face of such conditions, the national policy could no longer push settlement onto new lands.

The lack of expansionary pressure meant that there was no longer a perceived need for the Department of the Interior officials in Ottawa to be in any hurry to resolve the issue

of land ownership in Green Lake. No new settlers arrived to demand title, so there was no immediate need to clear the land of Metis claims based on prior settlement. The armed conflict of World War I re-enforced the lack of incentive. The land claims of a few aging HBC employees (as Clouston had described the Green Lake population) troubled few of those engaged in the administration of the country's affairs.

The lack of response: 1912-1919

Father Jules Teston, O.M.I., began to pursue the claim to land under the new land system in December of 1912. Teston wrote to Dominion Lands in Battleford:

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you about a home Stead I will like to have that home Stead just where is built the R.C. Mission. I am living here since 22 years ago and I have work up the place about 15 acres. I have done a very hard work in the forest very bushy. So, I was getting animals and next year I am to buy some ones. I am told that I can get my home Stead just here in the woods. I don't know yet the number but close the H.B. Post more north. There is no body yet asking a home Stead where I like to take it. Please write me as soon you can and according to your letter I will go to your office myself this winter and give you more informations.²⁰

Teston unfortunately does not say who told him he could get a "home Stead." The fact was that he could not. In what may have been the first formal statement by the Department of the Interior with respect to then-current policy, Battleford ADL Noel replied to Teston:

... entries are not being made in Township 61, Range 12, W. 3rd M., at the present time, owing to the squatters claims around the lake, therefore no application can be considered for you on the N.E. 1/4 of 18. The Department are having a fresh survey made of the Township and you will be advised later as to what portion you may enter for. A note is on file to the effect that your improvements including the Church are on the N. 1/2 of the N.E. 1/4, but one Pierre Laliberte claims the S. 1/2 of the same section.²¹

The promise that Teston would be "advised later as to what portion" he could apply for was to be unfulfilled for some ten years. This was not for any lack of Teston's trying to get action. In March of 1914 Teston wrote ADL Battleford that the correct description for the land he settled on was NE 19-61-12, not the west 1/2 as previously suggested.²² A week later ADL Noel confirmed receipt of Teston's letter, saying he would advise "Head Office."²³ Apparently in a continuing response to Teston's original request, Noel again wrote to Teston in July of 1914. He explained that until the 1912 survey was completed "... and the squatter's claims

in the Township disposed of no application can be considered from others."²⁴ Township 61-12 remained closed not only to those who would usurp the claims of the old settlers, but to those 'protected' settlers as well.

Teston may not have succeeded in advancing his claim, but his requests of 1914 prompted some bureaucratic response to the situation. One month after Noel told Teston that he would advise Head Office, N.B. Sheppard of the Land Patents Branch asked Surveyor General Deville if his branch had made the Green Lake survey and when they would issue the preliminary plan ". . . in order that the remaining lands may be made available for entry."²⁵ Deville responded that "the survey of the settlement lots along the east and west shores of Green Lake . . . was made in 1912 by C.F. Miles, D.L.S." and that the new plan would be ". . . issued in about three weeks."²⁶

Evidently working at cross purposes with his departmental superiors, F. Nelson, Assistant Secretary told ADL Battleford on 11 June 1914 that NE 19-61-12 requested by Teston ". . . would appear to be vacant, and therefore as you state the land is under reservation in the above mentioned Township, it will be necessary for you to furnish this office on the first opportunity with particulars of the said reservation."²⁷ ADL Noel seemed unfazed by the lack of understanding of the situation expressed by the Ottawa-based Nelson. On June 18 Noel replied to "The Secretary," referring him to his "letter of 23rd May 1912." In a patient tone, Noel added: "It is assumed the Department wished to sub-divide that portion fronting on the lake, where so many settlers have resided for years."²⁸ Nelson, apparently having familiarized himself with preceding events, on July 13 confirmed Noel's position regarding Teston's inquiry: ". . . the preliminary plan in this Township was recalled by instructions and the lands cannot be thrown open until the survey of the settlers [*sic*] claim around the lake have been completed. Kindly notify the interested parties accordingly."²⁹ One week later Noel relayed that message to Teston as previously cited.

The search for a map initiated by Teston's inquiry appeared to have stalled, for in October of 1915 Sheppard again asked Deville ". . . when the plan of Township 61, Ranges 12 and 13 . . . will be published, as it is desired to issue a patent to the Hudson's Bay Company for their post at this point."³⁰ Perhaps the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company exceeded that of Father Teston, for Deville immediately informed Sheppard that the plan was

"... now with the printers and is expected to issue by the end of this week. It will bear date 12th. October, 1915. . . ." Deville also noted that the map (Fig. 5.1) showed Lot 2 East of the HBC as 98.6 acres.³¹ However, there was no record of the use of a map to examine claims until 1922.

While the original settlers' claims in the closed townships were inactive after Teston's failed attempt to claim a homestead, significant activity occurred in the settlers' claims in open township 62-13. Louis and Marie Desrocher built a new house on their quarter-section (SE 2-62-13) in 1913, and began cultivation of a 2-acre garden.³² However, Louis Desrocher died in 1915 at the age of 28.³³ In 1919, by means of ". . . Letters of Administration of all and singular," the property rights of Louis Desrocher with respect to the quarter-section were ". . . granted . . . to Marie Derocher. . . ."³⁴ Unlike the claims of the residents of the closed townships, the department had recognised Louis Desrocher's claim to land as inheritable ownership rights.

In 1913 Marcel Desrocher again attempted to record correctly the location of the land he lived on (SW 1-62-13). Desrocher requested the cancellation of his entry to NW 1-62-13. He declared:

That I made entry for the N.W. quarter of 1-62-13 by mistake. that my intention was to enter the S.W. quarter of Sec.1.62.13 where I have been living with my family for years. and where I have all my improvements located. since I made entry for the n.w.q. of Sec.1.62-13.3rd I have continually lived in the S.W. quarter. Sec 1.62-13-3rd. I have not put any improvements on the N.W.q.1.62-13-3rd. besides the above reasons, the N.W.q.1.62-13.3rd is entirely unfit for farming owing to the low nature of the land which is subject to spring floods, and, also on account of the heavy timber. my intention is to re-enter the S.W.q.1-62-13-3 as soon as I can get authority from the Dominion Lands office.³⁵

Peter Villebrun witnessed the declaration as Justice of the Peace and Catherine Villebrun as witness to Marcel Desrocher's mark. In November 1913, the Department of the Interior notified Marcel that his entry in NW 1-62-13 "will now be cancelled in accordance with the abandonment you have executed."³⁶ In contrast, it only granted entry to the Desrochers on their actual settlement lands in 1921.³⁷

In addition to the claims of the Desrochers, the third claimant in the open township of 62-13 was Edward Beatty. In 1916 Beatty applied for patent to SE 14-62-13.³⁸ Beatty filed

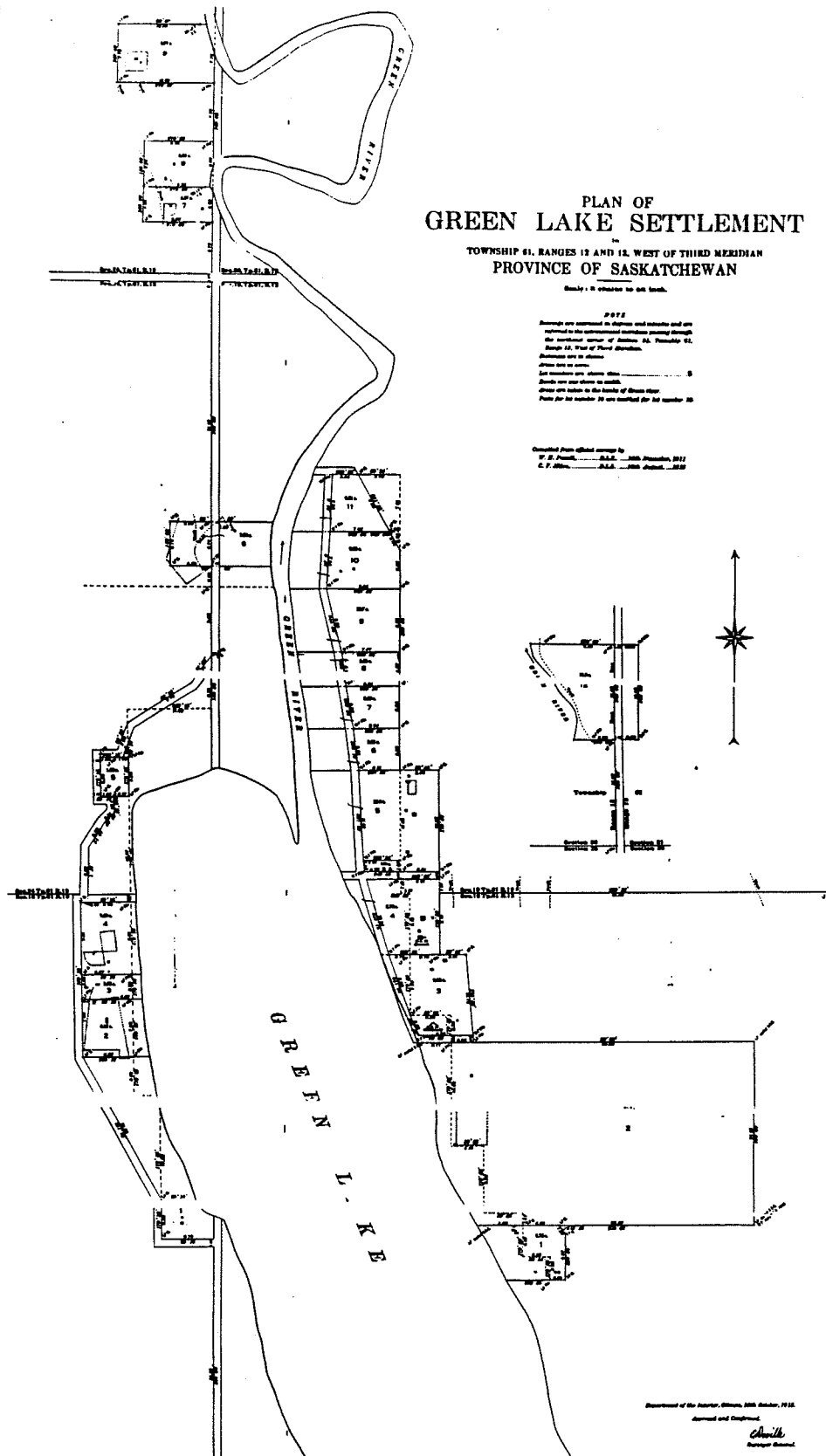


Fig. 5.1: Plan of Green Lake Settlement, 1915

SAB Map A28/8

a sworn statement in support of his application, saying he was a soldier ". . . living where duty called. . . " in the "44th Battery C.F.A. 11th Bgde," but noted "Canadian Address Duck Lake P.O. Sask."³⁹ His wife and five children remained on the homestead. In 1915 he had two acres broken and cropped; as well the family owned twelve cattle and four horses. Although Beatty had six hogs in 1914, he disposed of them before going overseas. The Beatty house was 30x18 with an attached kitchen that measured 15x15. The structure was valued at \$500, while his new stable, outhouses, and so forth were valued at \$200. He gave his half-mile of fencing a value of \$20. At the time of the declaration he was stationed in County of London, England.

The declarations of two other settlers, John Sinclair and Peter Villebrun, supported Beatty's application for homestead patent. They gave John Sinclair's address as "Squatter" on NW 36-61-13,⁴⁰ and Peter Villebrun's address as "Squatter" on SE 36-61-13.⁴¹ The surveyors had not reported either of the two residents, nor was there any record that they filed any further claim of their own for their respective lands. Villebrun appeared to have shared what had been surveyed as Lot 12 East, nominally claimed by Josette Sinclair. John Sinclair may also have shared in that lot. Telling from Mile's survey map which quarters were in fact covered by the Sinclair settlement area was difficult, given that the site straddled the survey line between township 61-12 and township 61-13; four quarter sections were involved.⁴² Given the constraining nature of the surveyed lots in comparison to the quarter-section allocations under the *Dominion Lands Act*, the settlers would have fared better had they filed as homesteaders rather than as original settlers in the 1912 survey plan.

Beatty's 1916 application for patent received further support the next year. In September of 1917 Captain Geo. R. Peterson of the Saskatoon Military Convalescent Hospital wrote that Edward Beatty ". . . has Rheumatism and Hallux Rigidus and in my opinion it will be impossible for him to carry out duties of Homesteading and would recommend that Patent of same be granted him."⁴³ Shortly after that the Department of Interior notified Beatty that in view of his being ". . . incapacitated from performing your homestead duties, . . ." patent for SE 14-62-13 would issue in his name ". . . without calling for the performance of any further settlement duties. . . ."⁴⁴

The open townships saw no further activity until 1919. However, within the closed townships two surprising developments played out despite the closure. Revillon Freres was

the operating name of a fur trading company that had established itself in the HBC's "traditional heartland"; by 1903 the company "... operated twenty-three establishments from coast to coast."⁴⁵ Counter to the usual prairie image of the Metis as residents of road allowances, in Green Lake it was Revillon Freres on the road allowance. Miles had surveyed a small lot, Lot 5A East, evidently to reflect the use of that portion of Lot 5 East by Revillon Freres. However, in 1914 Revillon Freres agent A. McWalton built some additional log buildings on the road allowance between Lot 4 and Lot 5 East; Theodore Morin later reported that in the process McWalton "... had to run a few feet of their building (kitchen) in to Lot 5, although my father [Louis Morin] and I strongly objected to them butting in on our land, but they, Revillon Frere, did not take heed or take notice of our objections, although the ground in question was fenced at the time."⁴⁶ In Green Lake the Metis, as original settlers, endorsed the land survey, and it was the fur trade company that did not comply with the new land-use system. Despite being partially built on road allowance, the holdings of Revillon Freres apparently were saleable; in 1918 they "... passed from Revillon Frere to J.C. Abbey & Son, Merchants."⁴⁷ Then in 1920 "J.C. Abbey & Son sold the lot 5a [East] to A. Bell & Son."⁴⁸ As Theodore Morin put it, "Apparently, no trouble was ever taken by any of the different parties ... as to the actual extent or size of the lot 5a. ..."⁴⁹ In fact, no title issued to Lot 5A until A. Bell purchased the lot from the Crown in 1923.⁵⁰ It was evident from the resulting conflict that Bell believed he had secured the lands that conflicted with the Morin claim, although the department later ruled he had not.⁵¹ The events begged the question of what the vendors sold in the transactions that preceded the 1923 sale.

The government telegraph service generated a second transfer of land in the closed Township. In 1914 Telegraph Agent Robt. P. White requested sale of Lot 6 East. In his request he explained that all other land in township 61-12 was not open for entry and that Lot 6 East was "a vacant piece of land."⁵² In May of 1915, N.O. Cote recommended reservation of fractional legal subdivision 3, SW 19-61-12, containing 25.90 acres to the Department of Public Works, "for telegraph purposes."⁵³ Privy Council 1702 (23 July 1915) announced "His Royal Highness the Governor General in Council, is pleased to set apart, during pleasure, fractional Legal-subdivision 3, of Section 19, Township 61, Range 12, West of the 3rd Meridian ... 25.90 acres ... for the use of the Department of Public Works in connection

with its telegraph services."⁵⁴ Legal subdivision 3 included part of Lot 6 East. The closure of lands to protect Metis claimants apparently did not deter appropriation of lands needed for government purposes.

In 1916 G.M. Regan began residence in Green Lake as the Telegraph Operator.⁵⁵ A second request for telegraph land appeared in July of 1917 when J.D.Noel, "District Supt." of the Government Telegraph Service, requested one acre of NW 18-61-12 where some telegraph buildings were situated. Noel stated "I understand that these lands are still held in the name of the crown."⁵⁶ Battleford ADL (L.P.O.) Noel forwarded J.D. Noel's request to Ottawa, repeating that it was for ". . . one acre each on the North West 1/4 18-61-12 which stands in the name of the Crown."⁵⁷ No mention was made of the reservation of the Township. However, the request came to nought when Cote responded to Noel that a request for telegraph lands would only be considered when the Department of Public Works requested it.⁵⁸ Apparently they did not pursue the matter.

Two events in 1919 presaged the end of the era of relative inactivity with respect to the Green Lake land claims. The first was the coming of new agricultural settlement in the Green Lake area, or at least the first hesitant attempts to establish such settlement. The second event was the July 1919 passage of Privy Council No. 1450, authorizing the Minister of the Interior to dispose of lots in remote settlements without inspection or valuation.

The arrival of new settlers in Green Lake reflected a general increase in immigration and settlement after the end of the war. They represented the beginning of the fourth of Friesen's "five significant infusions of immigrants" to the western interior.⁵⁹ Canada had survived the war ". . . only to return to a severely deflated peacetime economy."⁶⁰ While the end of the war boom ". . . marked the end of the epoch of the First National Policy. . . . the rest of the decade was 'devoted to an attempt to continue that epoch.'"⁶¹ Brodie typified the policymaking of the era as "The Years of Drift."⁶²

Several factors increased the demand for land, some of which also favoured the more northerly areas. The primary factor in the growth of settlement was the policy of trying to place returning soldiers on homestead land. Beginning in 1918, lands were specifically designated as soldier settlement lands after being withdrawn for that purpose by the Soldier Settlement Board.⁶³ In Saskatchewan, most of such lands were set aside in northerly regions,

and as a result ". . . the frontier of population moved northward."⁶⁴ A second factor related to the increase in farm size. By 1921, more than sixty-seven percent of the farms in Saskatchewan contained more than two hundred acres as compared with only thirty-eight percent in 1901.⁶⁵ The ability to pre-empt an adjoining quarter-section was greater in the less settled northern districts. Finally, homestead land, as opposed to land available for purchase, was more prevalent farther north. By 1923, immigrant settlers would find:

Little land remained in the longer-settled areas. Private holdings sold at impossibly high prices for pioneers with little capital. The Hudson [*sic*] Bay Company, for example, charged 15 dollars for an acre, irrespective of its quality. Even the Canadian Pacific Railway, more anxious to settle pioneers and increase its business, offered land at the rate of 8 to 10 dollars an acre.⁶⁶

Again the Department of the Interior would focus its attention northward in response to new settler demand.

A tentative foray into commercial agriculture preceded the 1919 homestead entries in the Green Lake area. In August of 1918, John B. Forster paid ten dollars for a hay permit on SW 18-62-12 ". . . for the purpose of barter or sale." Peter Villebrun witnessed the permit application; by this time he had become Justice of the Peace.⁶⁷ Forster's application for a temporary permit was followed the next year by the homestead entries of Jacob Hiebert (NW 12-62-13),⁶⁸ Fred Paradis (SW 12-62-13),⁶⁹ Henry Zumkehr (SW 12-62-13),⁷⁰ Jacob Peters (NE 14-62-13),⁷¹ Alexander Sinclair (SE 8-62-12),⁷² and Gilbert Roy (SE 17-62-12).⁷³ As well as these homestead entries, two other settlers took up residence in 1919: Alan Richard Abbey settled on NE 2-63-13,⁷⁴ (a township which had recorded no previous entry), and Victor Fulton began to ranch on SW 13-62-13.⁷⁵ All of these entries were made in open townships; no new entries were yet allowed in Townships 61-12 and 61-13. Of those eight entrants, declarations showed that only two (Sinclair and Roy) resided in the Green Lake area. Their applications for entry represented the opening of formal claims to a fourth township (62-12) by Metis residents of Green Lake. The other six represented an in-migration at the time of soldier settlement programs. The contiguity of the quarter sections with each other and the earlier homestead of Edward Beatty (a veteran himself) suggested previous camaraderie. On the other hand, the silence of the record left open the possibility that the chosen area of settlement for these four claims simply reflected what might have appeared as superior agricultural potential in the areas claimed. The claims of Hiebert, Fulton and Peters

all had frontages on the Beaver River, thus supporting the latter thesis and possibly providing a rationale for the "old log shack" and "old log stables" Hiebert found his newly claimed homestead.⁷⁶ At any rate, the new claimants suggested the northwesterly thrust of agricultural settlement.

The new entries were not without their problems. Paradis and Zumkehr evidently chose the same quarter-section. Paradis abandoned his homestead entry almost immediately after attaining it,⁷⁷ and Zumkehr immediately replaced Paradis on the quarter, ostensibly to set up a dairy operation.⁷⁸ The record included some biographical information regarding Jacob Peters. He was an American citizen from Kansas who declared "it is my intention to become a British subject under the laws of Canada."⁷⁹ He was a widower with two children under the age of twelve. His last place of residence was Meadow Lake, and he described himself as a "Rancher."⁸⁰

New administrative policy regarding land claims accompanied the new prospective settlers, though it did not relate specifically to the new settlement. In July of 1919 the Privy Council passed P.C. 1450.⁸¹ The policy order first cited the reports of the Minister of the Interior regarding small lots surveyed over the years ". . . in the northern country, such as Fort Smith, Fort Fitzgerald, Fort Norman, Fort Resolution and other points in the unsurveyed parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories . . . for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the settlers." The order then pointed out that under previous revisions (P.C. 1263, 1918) the sale of such lots required ". . . a valuation . . . placed on the land by a competent officer of the Department of the Interior [*sic*] after a personal inspection thereof." This additional and troublesome requirement superseded P.C. 1263, under which "a sale of the lots might be made to the occupants at a nominal rate per acre in the discretion of the Minister of the Interior." Thus, P.C. 1450 restored the prerogative of the Minister to approve sales, dispensing with "the inspections and valuations." P.C. 1450 added one caveat to the power of the Minister: the disposal of such lots was to be ". . . at a nominal rate but in no case at a less rate than three dollars an acre." Over the next ten years the three-dollar minimum would strongly influence the Department of the Interior's disposal of Metis claims to land in Green Lake. Whether it should have been so used seems doubtful.

Janine Brodie has argued that although the wheat economy and the population of the

western provinces continued to grow after the war, ". . . the most dynamic sources of capitalist accumulation had shifted elsewhere — to the mines, rivers, and forests of the northern frontiers of Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia."⁸² The driving force behind the sale of northern lots may have reflected an interest in settling land titles due to the growth of resource extraction rather than settlement needs. Whatever the motivation for the 1919 Order in Council, its application to the Green Lake settlement was *ultra vires*: P.C. 1450 specifically referred to application only in "the unsurveyed parts" of the provinces and territories. The sectional survey had prompted the lot survey in Green Lake to satisfy original settler claims. The application of P.C. 1450 to the settlement would largely ignore both the previous survey and Metis original settler claims.

Defining the options: the Miles survey claimants, 1920-1922

For the claimants in closed townships 61-12 and 61-13, the new decade began with much the same legal conditions as had characterised the previous several years. In February 1920 John B. Laliberte applied for a grazing lease for the West 1/2 and SE 1/4 of 13-61-12. In support of his application Laliberte listed "Farmer" as his occupation. Laliberte likely intended to use the lease to provide feed for his fifteen cattle and seven horses.⁸³ Two weeks after Laliberte's application, the Battleford ADL acknowledged receipt of his application and \$9.60 remittance, ". . . but as this land is under reservation by the Department, . . ." he returned the check. The ADL further noted that "As soon as this land is thrown open to the public you will be informed of the same." Handwritten on the document was the notation to "Inform Laliberte if land is thrown open."⁸⁴ The land Laliberte was attempting to lease was some five to six miles due east of the HBC/church complex, and was not under any other claim at the time. The closure of the township, ostensibly to protect Metis claims, worked against Metis consolidation of an agricultural land base in the Green Lake area. The land record made no mention how Laliberte fed his cattle during the following months. No doubt remained, however, that 61-12 and 61-13 remained closed for the time being.

The department began preparing the first formal response to the claims of the Metis in 1920. On 4 April 1920, some eight years after the filing of the claims in 1912, V.L. Lawson of the Land Patents Branch of the Department of the Interior requested the departmental files

on the eight claimants whose declarations the Miles survey had collected in 1912. Lawson was evidently under the illusion that those claimants comprised the total of the Green Lake claimants; his request listed the claims by lot numbers in sequential order, but without reference to their location east or west of the lake. The list showed Lot 2 as patented, evidently referring to the HBC title to Lot 2 East, which had been patented in 1915.⁸⁵ It also showed Lot 6 and Lots 11-14 as vacant without reference to location east or west of the lake. The heading at the top of the document, however, claimed reference to both township 61-12 (east of the lake) and 61-13 (west of the lake). Evidently working from Lawson's incomplete list, Glidden, the acting Controller, Land Patents Branch, recommended to the Deputy Minister of the Department of Interior, W.W. Cory:

Under the provisions of the Order in Council passed on the 14th July, 1919, the Minister was authorized to dispose of the lots in the different northern settlements to the respective applicants therefor without such lots having been previously inspected and valued, at a rate not less than \$3.00 an acre, and I beg to recommend that Mr. Jean Baptiste Aubichon be permitted to purchase the said Lot 3, comprising 2.58 acres, at this rate. As the sale in this case will amount to less than \$20.00 the usual fee of \$10.00 for patent would be required.⁸⁶

Glidden made essentially the same recommendation with respect to the other seven claimants involved in the Miles survey: Napoleon Girard, Philomen Aubichon, Josette Sinclair, Norbert Fraser, Mathias Aubichon, Celestin Merasti and Francois Laliberte. Four days later, letters began going out to the claimants to notify them:

Respecting your claim to the above mentioned lot . . . it has been decided to allow you to purchase the same . . . at the rate of \$3.00 per acre. . . . The whole of the purchase price . . . should be transmitted to the Agent of Dominion Lands at Battleford on or before the 1st December next.⁸⁷

The department sent similar notices to each of the eight claimants Lawson had identified.

The first response from the Metis claimants looked promising for the Department's action. Jean Baptiste Aubichon immediately sent in a payment of \$18.00, and became the first of the Metis claimants to register ownership under the new land system: patent to Lot 3 West issued in his name December 6, 1920.⁸⁸ The second response to the "permission" granted to the Metis to buy the land they claimed was far less amicable. With the help of Teston, in whose handwriting the letter was written, Annie Girard attempted to set the record straight:

Green Lake Settlement, Sask, N.W.T.
September the 27th 1920

Dear Sir,

Referring to your letter, file No. 2908948 for a lot of land 8 Pt. Sec. 19-61-12-W. 3rd Meridian, addressed to my late husband Napoleon Ge'rard who died about 6 years ago. Now, I am a widow assisted by the government for rations every week to myself and two of my young sons. The lot of land comprises 5.25 acres in a place not cultivable. There is my shack only on that piece of land. When, my late husband was living, having by nature only one arm, I heard him talking in this way: "This piece of land is given to my[sic] as I was present when a gentleman coming from the land office of Battleford asking to the people by meeting said How you people of Green Lake you like to agree yourselves? You are close to the lake of Green Lake and too near each others to take homesteads, and what you think to do for the little places where stand your houses? [underline in original] Well the place is no good for homesteads too bushy around. Well there were about 20 men in that meeting. One of them purposing[sic] this. Well to accommodate everybody I suggest this proposition. "The first settlers established having a lot of land but the others having nothing." Yes, everybody approving this proposition, and they asked this. If so, the government must give that piece of land to everyone and after asking more land arround[sic] their lots to buy it from the government at 3 dollars or more an acre. So, this gentleman said: "I will work that proposition for you." Then, I tell you what my husband heard being himself in that meeting.

Well, I ask you? how a poor widow as I am can pay the \$15.75 asked from me? I am too old and no body helps me. The principle has been agreed by all and I was thinking to be not troubled by no body in my lot of land.

What I tell you is the truth and I hope to receive an answer from you later on.

Yours truly a.

her

Annie X Girard

mark

Note She had one of her sons died in France and an other one was a soldier too. She is the mother of two soldiers for the Canada.⁸⁹

When Girard's letter reached Lawson, he passed the matter onto his superior N.B. Sheppard, who in turn requested the Surveyor General E. Deville ". . . to furnish me with a copy of the instructions issued to Mr. C.F. Miles, D.L.S."⁹⁰ Deville sent to Sheppard the Surveyor General's 1912 instructions to Miles, Mile's general report and the Girard file 290894.⁹¹ Sheppard then initialled a letter from the Acting Controller of the Lands Patent Branch W.S. Glidden, in which Glidden asked of J.D. McLean of the Department of Indian Affairs:

Will you kindly advise me if you have any information to show that this woman is an Indian, treaty or non-treaty, as if such is the case the land may be reserved for her during her occupancy of the same under the agreement arrived at between the Deputy Minister of the Interior and the Deputy Superintendent General of the Department of Indian Affairs.⁹²

McLean responded that after a careful examination of ". . . the pay-list of Indian Bands residing in the vicinity of Green Lake Settlement. . . . The name of Girard has not been found. . . ." ⁹³ He then offered to search further if he were ". . . furnished with the name of the official from whom this woman received rations." ⁹⁴ Sheppard acted on McLean's suggestion by initialling a letter from the new Controller of the Land Patents Branch, N.O. Cote, to Annie Girard. Cote told Girard ". . . if you will furnish this Department with the name of the official from whom you receive rations the matter of the sale to you of this lot will receive further considerations." ⁹⁵ Apparently no response came from Annie Girard.

By March of 1921 only two of the eight claimants from the Miles survey, Jean Baptist Aubichon and Annie Girard, had replied to the September 1920 notices. The Land Patents Branch sent a second notice to the six claimants who had not replied. Cote's letter to Philomen Aubichon was typical:

I beg to call your attention to my letter of 1st of September last, wherein you were permitted to purchase Lot 4, Green Lake Settlement, containing 7.06 acres at the rate of \$3.00 an acre, and as no payment has been received to request you to kindly advise the Department at your early convenience of your intentions in the matter. ⁹⁶

Four of the six claimants notified this second time responded: Philomen Aubichon, Norbert Fraser, Francois Laliberte and Celestin Merasti. ⁹⁷ All four indicated the same general information and intent; they wished to keep their lots, but were unable to make the required payment at the time because of a lack of funds. Philomen Aubichon wrote that she would "try and purchase this lot in about 2 months." ⁹⁸ She was the only one of the four to suggest a date for payment; Norbert Fraser wrote that he would ". . . pay for it as soon as I get the money." ⁹⁹ Francois Laliberte requested that Cote wait until ". . . later on when I will have some money." ¹⁰⁰ Celestin Merasti requested delay of payment until a time ". . . when thinks[sic] are brighter and I can make the amount required." ¹⁰¹

The department countered by asking Norbert Fraser ". . . to kindly advise the Department of the date when you expect to be in a position to make payment therefor." ¹⁰² However, the response to Philomen Aubichon's request differed in one respect. Apparently because she promised a more specific date for payment, someone attached her letter to an internal memorandum sent to W.S. Glidden, now Assistant Controller under Cote of the Land Patents Branch. The memo told Glidden of Philomen Aubichon's letter and that she would

"not be able to remit the purchase price before two months' time."¹⁰³ It then asked Glidden to "kindly state whether this will be satisfactory to the Department."¹⁰⁴ Four days later the department sent a letter to Philomen Aubichon advising her ". . . that it will be satisfactory to the Department if payment in connection with the permission granted you to purchase Lot 4, Green Lake Settlement, is made on or before the 1st July next."¹⁰⁵ Only Philomen Aubichon's claim appears to have been placed before the Assistant Controller and therefore to have received departmental approval. Like that of Norbert Fraser, Francois Laliberte's request of 5 June drew the response that ". . . if you will advise the Department of the date when you expect to be in a position to make payment for the land above described, the question of granting you an extension of the time will be given consideration."¹⁰⁶ Celestin Merasti's request, made one day later than Francois Laliberte's, drew a new variation to the policy: under circumstances of illness, the department could delay the payment. However, but interest would be added to the purchase price from 1 December 1920, three months after the original permission to buy.¹⁰⁷ The addition of interest to the original charges first appeared in the correspondence with that letter.

Between September 1921 and May 1922 the department sent a series of letters to the four claimants, first requesting ". . . if you are now in a position to make payment"¹⁰⁸ and ". . . if it is your intention to make payment,"¹⁰⁹ then noting that ". . . payment has not yet been received",¹¹⁰ then later ones added the ominous request to ". . . advise the Department at your earliest convenience if you are still desirous of obtaining the same."¹¹¹ Apparently, none of the four replied. In an attempt to circumvent the lack of response, on 22 May 1922, Cote asked the Agent of Dominion Lands at Battleford "to ascertain what are Mr. Fraser's intentions in regard to making payment for this Lot."¹¹² ADL Rose wrote to Fraser 7 June 1922, adding his own twist to matters: ". . . notify this office within thirty days whether you still intend to purchase this lot, otherwise your application will be cancelled."¹¹³ The new threat of cancellation was no more effective than Cote's earlier attempts; Fraser did not reply within the thirty days. The department took similar actions with respect to the remaining two claimants who had never responded to Cote's notices. It sent Josette Sinclair a letter directly on 31 May 1922.¹¹⁴ Cote sought to reach Mathias Aubichon through the Battleford Land Office, where Acting ADL Charles H. Price, acting on Cote's instructions, wrote to Mathias

Aubichon 13 June 1922.¹¹⁵ Apparently neither claimant responded.

By May 1922, of the eight claimants registered by Miles in 1912, one claimant, Jean Baptist Aubichon, had purchased a lot. A search had been initiated as to the identity of a second claimant, Annie Girard. Of the remaining six, four had suggested a willingness to purchase but an inability to pay, and then had not responded to further inquiries. Two claimants had simply not responded to departmental letters at all.

It is not clear why, but an additional option for settlement of the Green Lake claims developed in May of 1922. On May 20 L.B. Taylor initialled a memorandum to Cote suggesting the possibility of a free grant of land to Josette Sinclair:

Re Lot 10 Green Lake Settlement . . .

Mrs Josette Sinclair, made a statutory declaration, dated 17th August 1912, before C.F. Miles, D.L.S., in which she stated that she had settled or made improvements on this lot 40 years before, that is in 1872, also that she had gone into bona fide residence thereon 22 years previous to the date of this declaration that is in 1890.

The extinguishment of the Indian treaty in this locality was completed in 1876. Kindly inform me as to whether Mrs. Josette Sin[*sic*] Sinclair may be considered to have established her claim to a free grant under Sub. sec. (c) Sec. 76 D.L.A.¹¹⁶

Section 76 (c) of the *Dominion Land Act* recognised the property rights of those who were in possession of land at the time of the relevant treaty. Treaty Six of 1876 included the lands west of Green Lake, while an adhesion to Treaty Six in 1889 covered those lands on the east side of the lake. Cote evidently replied negatively with respect to Josette Sinclair's eligibility for a free grant under Section 76: at the end of May, Taylor, Sheppard and Cote all initialled a letter from Cote to Sinclair noting the lack of payment and requesting her to ". . . express your intentions in regard to making payment."¹¹⁷ No record was found of the basis for Cote's denial of Josette Sinclair's eligibility for a free grant, but it appeared that the date of "bona fide residence" contributed to the denial.

The claim of Philomen Aubichon also came under the scrutiny of Taylor with respect to Section 76. On 29 May 1922, Taylor initialled a memorandum from Sheppard to Cote that recounted the granting of permission to buy, her reply that she was unable to pay, and her failure to respond to further requests for payment. The memorandum then continued:

A statutory declaration . . . shows she had performed residence on this Lot for 40 years previous to the date of this declaration, that is since 1872. The extinguishment of Indian title in this locality was completed in September 1876. It

appears therefore that Mrs. P. Aubichon is entitled to a free grant of this Lot in virtue of her occupancy thereof at the date of extinguishment of the Indian title in this locality under the provisions of Section 76, of the Dominion Lands Act. (Treaty No. 6, 1876.)

Therefore I beg to recommend that the authority of the Governor in Council be obtained sanctioning a free grant of Lot No. 4 to Mrs. Philomen Aubichon, and for the issue of a patent for the same.¹¹⁸

The memorandum was annotated "Recommended N O Cote" and "Approved [initials not decipherable] M.I." (Minister of the Interior) and "Noted in reg'r LBT 6/6/22." On 17 June 1922, Cote recommended the free grant to W.W. Cory, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, and appended a letter (initialled by Taylor and Sheppard) for the Minister of the Interior to sign; it requested the approval of the Governor General in Council for the free grant.¹¹⁹ On 29 June, P.C. 1348, ". . . on the recommendation of the Minister of the Interior and under the provisions of Section 76 of the Dominion Lands Act, . . ." authorized the free grant.¹²⁰ One month later, Cote wrote Philomen Aubichon:

With reference to the permission granted to you to purchase the above mentioned Lot, I beg to inform you that after further consideration it has been decided to make a free grant of this Lot to you as you were in occupancy of the same at the time of the Indian Treaty in 1876, therefore it will not be necessary for you to remit any payment for this lot.¹²¹

Patent for Lot 4 West of Green Lake issued to Philomen Aubichon on 26 September 1922. Her grant of slightly more than seven acres was the first recognition by free grant of the title to land claimed by the Metis of Green Lake nearly eleven years earlier.¹²²

Shortly after he had initiated action with respect to Philomen Aubichon's claim, L.B. Taylor renewed the pursuit of Celestin Merasti. On 7 June 1922, he initialled a Cote memorandum to the ADL at Battleford, enlisting his help in reaching Merasti.¹²³ Acting ADL Charles H. Price had dutifully written to Merasti (and also Norbert Fraser and Mathias Aubichon), asking ". . . what your intentions are in regard to making payment for this lot."¹²⁴ Evidently this letter reached Merasti, for on 7 August 1922, Battleford ADL D.J. Rose wrote to Merasti regarding Lot 9: "I am in receipt of your remittance of \$10.00 being part payment in connection with [Lot 9]."¹²⁵ The copy of the letter in the file was annotated "Time Sale 11354," the first indication in the files of this method of sale to the claimants. Time sales were registered at Land Titles, showing partial payment with further payments scheduled.

In July 1922, L.B. Taylor initialled a letter from Cote to Annie Girard, whom they had

not heard from since the futile effort to decide her status in 1920. Cote asked Girard ". . . whether you still desire to acquire this lot."¹²⁶ The department sent a copy of the letter to the ADL at Battleford as a request for ". . . a full report by a Homestead Inspector."¹²⁷ The ADL duly requested Homestead Inspector Dan Anderson to visit Green Lake and report ". . . whether Mrs. Girard's application should be accepted, and . . . when she will be in a position to make payment."¹²⁸ Before Anderson could visit Green Lake, Girard responded to Cote: "Your letter July 29th File 2908948 reference Lot 8 Green Lake Sask. I still desire to acquire this lot."¹²⁹ Again the letter appears to be in Teston's handwriting, with Annie Girard's mark. It was December before Anderson inspected. He reported that Annie Girard was in fact still living on Lot 8 East, as she had for "about 25 or 30 years."¹³⁰ Anderson valued her log home at twenty-five dollars, adding:

I beg to report that I have inspected above lot - found improvements as stated above. Mrs. Girard is a Half Breed. She receives Destitute Rations about \$15.00 Per Month from Dept Public Health Regina. She has one boy depending on her 12 years old going to school at Green Lake. She says she didn't make application to buy this lot as she thought the lot was given to her husband at time of survey. I would recommend allowing her to keep this lot but as to paying for it she has no means of raising any money and it is very doubtful if she ever will have.¹³¹

The Battleford ADL sent Anderson's report to Ottawa, where the Registration Branch received it 19 December 1922, and the Land Patents Branch received it 3 January 1923.

As the new year began, matters stood as follows: the department had identified eight claimants from the Miles survey. It had defined three options for disposal of the Metis settlers' claims: One (Jean Baptiste Aubichon) had bought a lot under P.C. 1450, one (Philomen Aubichon) had received a free grant, and the department had registered one (Celestin Merasti) as a Time Sale. The attempt to decide the status of a fourth settler (Annie Girard) had delayed action for the last year and a half. Girard had also been the subject of a Homestead Inspector's report, but her claim still awaited disposition. Disposition had also been delayed for four other settlers. Josette Sinclair, Norbert Fraser and Francois Laliberte had confirmed that they wanted their land, but each had put off payment until a later date. Mathias Aubichon had simply not responded to any of the departmental correspondence directed to him.

Notes

¹ Donald V. Smiley, "Canada and the Quest for a National Policy," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 8.1 (March 1975) 40-62. 44.

² Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) 244-45.

³ K.H. Norrie, "The Rate of Settlement of the Canadian Prairies, 1870-1911," *Perspectives on Canadian Economic History*, ed. Douglas McCalla (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1984) 168-181. 168.

⁴ Kenneth H. Norrie, "The National policy and the Rate of Prairie Settlement: A Review," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 14.3 (Fall 1979) 63-76. 65.

⁵ Canada, *Census of Canada, 1901-1971*, reprinted in W. Peter Ward, "Population Growth in Western Canada, 1901-71," *The Developing West: Essays on Canadian History in Honor of Lewis H. Thomas*, ed. John E. Foster (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1983) 159.

⁶ Ward 159.

⁷ David C. Corbett, *Canada's Immigration policy: A Critique* (Toronto 1957) 121. reprinted in Friesen 248.

⁸ Ward 161.

⁹ Friesen 247.

¹⁰ Friesen 328.

¹¹ Norrie "National Policy" 68

¹² Norrie "National Policy" 67.

¹³ Norrie "National Policy" 69.

¹⁴ David Leadbeater, "An Outline of Capitalist Development in Alberta," *Essays on the Political Economy of Alberta*, ed. David Leadbeater (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1984) 1-76. 27.

¹⁵ Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974) 198.

¹⁶ Brown and Cook 199.

¹⁷ Brown and Cook 199.

¹⁸ Paul Craven and Tom Traves, "The Class Politics of the National Policy, 1872-1933," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 14.3 (Fall 1979) 14-38. 29.

¹⁹ Brown and Cook 199.

²⁰ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Teston to Interior, 02 December 1912.

²¹ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Noel to Teston, 13 December 1912.

²² SAB AG11-II NE 19-61-12, Teston to Noel, 16 March 1914.

²³ SAB AG11-II NE 19-61-12, Noel to Teston, 23 March 1914.

²⁴ SAB AG11-II NE 19-61-12, Noel to Teston, 21 July 1914.

²⁵ SAB 2665096, Sheppard to Deville, 27 May 1914.

²⁶ SAB 2665096, Deville to Sheppard, 30 May 1914.

²⁷ SAB AG11-II NE 19-61-12, Nelson to ADL Battleford, 11 June 1914.

²⁸ SAB AG11-II NE 19-61-12, Noel to Nelson, 18 June 1914.

²⁹ SAB AG11-II NE 19-61-12, Nelson to ADL Battleford, 13 July 1914.

- ³⁰ SAB 2665096, Sheppard to Deville, 15 October 1915.
- ³¹ SAB 2665096, Deville to Sheppard, 21 October 1915.
- ³² SAB 2758485, declaration of Alexander Sinclair, 14 Oct. 1924.
- ³³ SAB 2728253. It may be that he was one of the victims of WWI from Green Lake.
- ³⁴ SAB 2758485, Court Decree, 27 August 1919.
- ³⁵ SAB 2758485, Declaration of Abandonment, 12 September 1913.
- ³⁶ SAB 2758485, Interior Form 215 aa., 06 November, 1913.
- ³⁷ SAB AG11-I SW 1-62-13.
- ³⁸ SAB 2530449, 11 December 1916.
- ³⁹ SAB 2530449, Sworn Statement, 12 July 1916.
- ⁴⁰ SAB 2530449, Statement of John Sinclair, 11 December 1916.
- ⁴¹ SAB 2530449, Statement of Peter Villebrun, 11 December 1916.
- ⁴² SAB Map 28/14.
- ⁴³ SAB 2530449, Letter, 04 September 1917.
- ⁴⁴ SAB 2530449, Nelson to Beatty, 06 October 1917.
- ⁴⁵ Arthur Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 92-93.
- ⁴⁶ SAB 4802969, T. Morin to Lands Patent Branch, 30 October 1924.
- ⁴⁷ SAB 4802969, T. Morin to Land Patents Branch, 30 October 1924.
- ⁴⁸ SAB 4802969, T. Morin to Land Patents Branch, 30 October 1924.
- ⁴⁹ SAB 4802969, T. Morin to Land Patents Branch, 30 October 1924.
- ⁵⁰ Title, Lot 5A East, Battleford Lands Office.
- ⁵¹ SAB 2665096, Cote to Bell, 07 Feb 1925.
- ⁵² SAB 3176560, Declaration, 04 April 1914.
- ⁵³ SAB 3176560, Cote to Deputy Minister W.W. Cory, 03 May 1915.
- ⁵⁴ SAB 3176560, P.C. 1702, 23 July 1915.
- ⁵⁵ SAB AG11-I NW 12-62-13, Statement of G.W. Regan, 27 November 1931.
- ⁵⁶ SAB AG11-II NW 18-61-12, J.D. Noel to L.P.O. Noel, 20 July 1917.
- ⁵⁷ SAB AG11-II NW 18-61-12, Noel to [Cote?], 24 July 1917.
- ⁵⁸ SAB AG11-II NW 18-61-12, Cote to Noel, 11 September 1917.
- ⁵⁹ Friesen 244-45.
- ⁶⁰ Janine Brodie, *The Political Economy of Canadian Regionalism* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990) 136.
- ⁶¹ Brodie 136, quoting W.L. Morton, "The 1920s," in J.M. Careless and R.C. Brown, eds., *The Canadians, 1867-1967* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1967) 235.
- ⁶² Brodie 136.
- ⁶³ Denis P. Fitzgerald, *Pioneer Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan*, diss. University of Minnesota, 1966. 195.
- ⁶⁴ Fitzgerald 202.
- ⁶⁵ Chester Martin, *"Dominion Lands" Policy* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973) 165.
- ⁶⁶ Fitzgerald 227-30.
- ⁶⁷ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Application, 29 August 1918.
- ⁶⁸ SAB AG11-II NW 12-62-13.
- ⁶⁹ SAB AG11-I SW 12-62-13

- ⁷⁰ SAB AG11-I SW 12-62-13
- ⁷¹ SAB 4237019.
- ⁷² SAB 4241533.
- ⁷³ SAB AG11-I SE 17-62-12, Application, 25 August 1919.
- ⁷⁴ SAB AG11-I NE 2-63-13.
- ⁷⁵ SAB AG11-I NW 12-62-13, Homestead Inspector's Report, 27 November 1931.
- ⁷⁶ SAB AG11-II NW 12-62-13.
- ⁷⁷ SAB AG11-I SW 12-62-13
- ⁷⁸ SAB AG11-I SW 12-62-13
- ⁷⁹ SAB 4237019.
- ⁸⁰ SAB 4237019.
- ⁸¹ SAB 2665096.
- ⁸² Brodie 137, citing V. Fowke, "The National Policy — Old and New," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* (August 1952) 278.
- ⁸³ SAB AG11-II 585-T, Application, 03 February 1920.
- ⁸⁴ SAB AG11-II 585-T, ADL to Laliberte, 14 February 1920.
- ⁸⁵ Title, Lot 2 East, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ⁸⁶ SAB 2908952, Glidden to Cory, 27 August 1920.
- ⁸⁷ SAB 2908952, Controller to Jean Baptiste Aubichon, 1 September 1920.
- ⁸⁸ SAB 2908952.
- ⁸⁹ SAB 2908948.
- ⁹⁰ SAB 2555096, 11 October 1920.
- ⁹¹ SAB 2665096, 20 October 1920.
- ⁹² SAB 22908948, 11 November 1920
- ⁹³ SAB 2908948, 22 November 1920.
- ⁹⁴ SAB 2908948, 22 November 1920.
- ⁹⁵ SAB 2908948, 3 December 1920.
- ⁹⁶ SAB 2909033, 30 March 1921. The notice was stamped N.O. Cote.
- ⁹⁷ There may have been some mutual discussion of the notices in Green Lake, as three of the four who answered the second notice appeared to have used stationary from the same pad of paper, probably that of Teston.
- ⁹⁸ SAB 2909033, 14 April 1921.
- ⁹⁹ SAB 2909029, 11 April 1921.
- ¹⁰⁰ SAB 2909031, 5 June 1921.
- ¹⁰¹ SAB 2908950, 6 June 1921.
- ¹⁰² SAB 2909029, 30 April 1921.
- ¹⁰³ SAB 2909033, 10 May 1921.
- ¹⁰⁴ SAB 2909033, 10 May 1921. Glidden annotated the memo "yes" with his initials over the date "10/5/21," the same day the memo was first written.
- ¹⁰⁵ SAB 2909033, 14 May 1921.
- ¹⁰⁶ SAB 2909031, 21 June 1921.
- ¹⁰⁷ SAB 2908950, 20 July 1921.
- ¹⁰⁸ SAB 2909033, Cote to Aubichon, 08 September 1921.
- ¹⁰⁹ SAB 2909029, Cote to Fraser, 11 October 1921.
- ¹¹⁰ SAB 2908950, Cote to Merasti, 21 January 1922.

- 111 SAB 2909031, Cote to Laliberte, 15 May 1922.
- 112 SAB 2909029, 22 May 1922.
- 113 SAB 2909029, 7 June 1922.
- 114 SAB 2908946.
- 115 SAB 2909027.
- 116 SAB 2665096, 20 May 1922.
- 117 SAB 2908946, 31 May 1922.
- 118 SAB 2909033, 29 May 1922.
- 119 SAB 2909033, 17 June 1922.
- 120 SAB 2909033, 29 June 1922.
- 121 SAB 2909033, 29 July 1922.
- 122 SAB 2909033, 26 September 1922.
- 123 SAB 2908950, 7 June 1922.
- 124 SAB 2908950, 13 June 1922.
- 125 SAB 2908950, 7 August 1922.
- 126 SAB 2908948, 29 July 1922.
- 127 SAB 2908948, 29 July 1922.
- 128 SAB 2908948, 5 August 1922.
- 129 SAB 2908948, 1 September 1922.
- 130 SAB 2908948, Homestead Inspector's Report, 6 December 1922.
- 131 SAB 2908948, Homestead Inspector's Report, 6 December 1922.

CHAPTER SIX

DISPOSITION OF METIS LAND CLAIMS: 1923-1930

The Department of the Interior's activity between 1919-1923 had been haphazard and sporadic with respect to the settlement of land claims in Green Lake. However, in 1923 the personnel of the department began a systematic disposition of the claims, during which they restricted themselves to the options developed during the earlier period. The original settlers could buy their land, either immediately or over time; they might receive a free grant under the 1908 legislation; or they could do nothing and run the risk of having someone else claim their land. Between 1923 and 1930 the department relentlessly pursued those options with respect to the twenty claims dating from the 1912 survey.

Preparing for the disposition

Ottawa civil servant L.B. Taylor had begun work on the Green Lake claims as early as January 1921, when he requested the files of Annie Girard and Josette Sinclair. In June 1921, he had sent second notices to several Miles claimants, and it was Taylor who had sent the memorandum to Cote requesting Cote's opinion about Josette Sinclair's eligibility for a free grant. He then wrote the notice for payment to Sinclair that signalled Cote's negative response to Taylor's request about Sinclair. Taylor also wrote the memorandum sent by Cote to the Deputy Minister recommending the Order in Council regarding the free grant to Philomen Aubichon. From 1922 on, L.B. Taylor administered departmental policy toward the Green Lake claimants; he initialled (as the author) practically every departmental document concerning Green Lake until the transfer of resources to the provinces in 1930. From 1922 to 1930, then, it was Taylor's responsibility to apply departmental policy to the Green Lake claims.

Taylor intensified his attention to the claims in 1923. Having received the homestead inspector's report on Annie Girard, on 10 January 1923, Taylor sought more information about the Green Lake Settlement from the Topographical Surveys Branch. He specifically asked about both the Miles and the Powell survey reports, as "the plan of this settlement

shows improvements on many of these lots" and the reports "may show what improvements were located on each lot and the names of the claimants thereof."¹ On 19 February 1923, the Surveys Branch responded that the reports did not give the names of the claimants of lots in Green Lake, adding: "Mr. Miles' returns of survey however, contain some information which . . . has been added in red to the enclosed copy of the plan."² (See Fig. 6.1) The next day Taylor (over the signature of N.B. Sheppard) sent the settlement map to Cote, adding "I have plotted on the plan the lots which have been patented." Taylor then requested authorization of a Homestead Inspector's report on "each of the lots which has not been disposed of." Cote approved the request.³

Early in March 1923, the department reminded ADL Battleford of the 1912 closure of township 61-12 and instructed: "no entries are to be granted for any of the lands lying outside of Green Lake Settlement in this township until you are further advised."⁴ Battleford ADL Rose immediately responded, perhaps with some sense of irony: ". . . the whole of this Township is reserved in accordance with instructions from the Secretary, under three letters dated 23rd May, 1912, files 2570288 - 2570286 and 2570290, also a telegram of the same date."⁵ Without doubt, the township was reserved.

On 22 May 1923, Taylor (over Cote's stamped signature) requested the ADL Battleford to ". . . detail a Homestead Inspector to visit this settlement, when convenient, and make a full report on each of the lots mentioned below. If any of these lots are occupied by Indians, this fact should be reported also."⁶ He listed Lots 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8 West, and Lots 1 and 3 - 12 East, and included an updated map to help the homestead inspector. Battleford ADL Rose immediately requested Homestead Inspector D. Anderson to do the inspection.⁷

The claimants had little reason to be optimistic about the success of their claims despite the call for another homestead inspector's report. Annie Girard's letter may have been eloquent enough to spur the department into belated action in the form of Taylor's exploratory activity, but there was no sign of anyone in the department taking her version of events seriously. The addition of corroborative stories from fellow Green Lake settlers had little apparent effect. In January of 1923, Father Teston had sent two letters to the department detailing his residence there.⁸ Teston related how Pierre Laliberte had located the land for the church in 1891. He added: "Now when Mr. C.F. Miles came to survey the lots of land[, he]

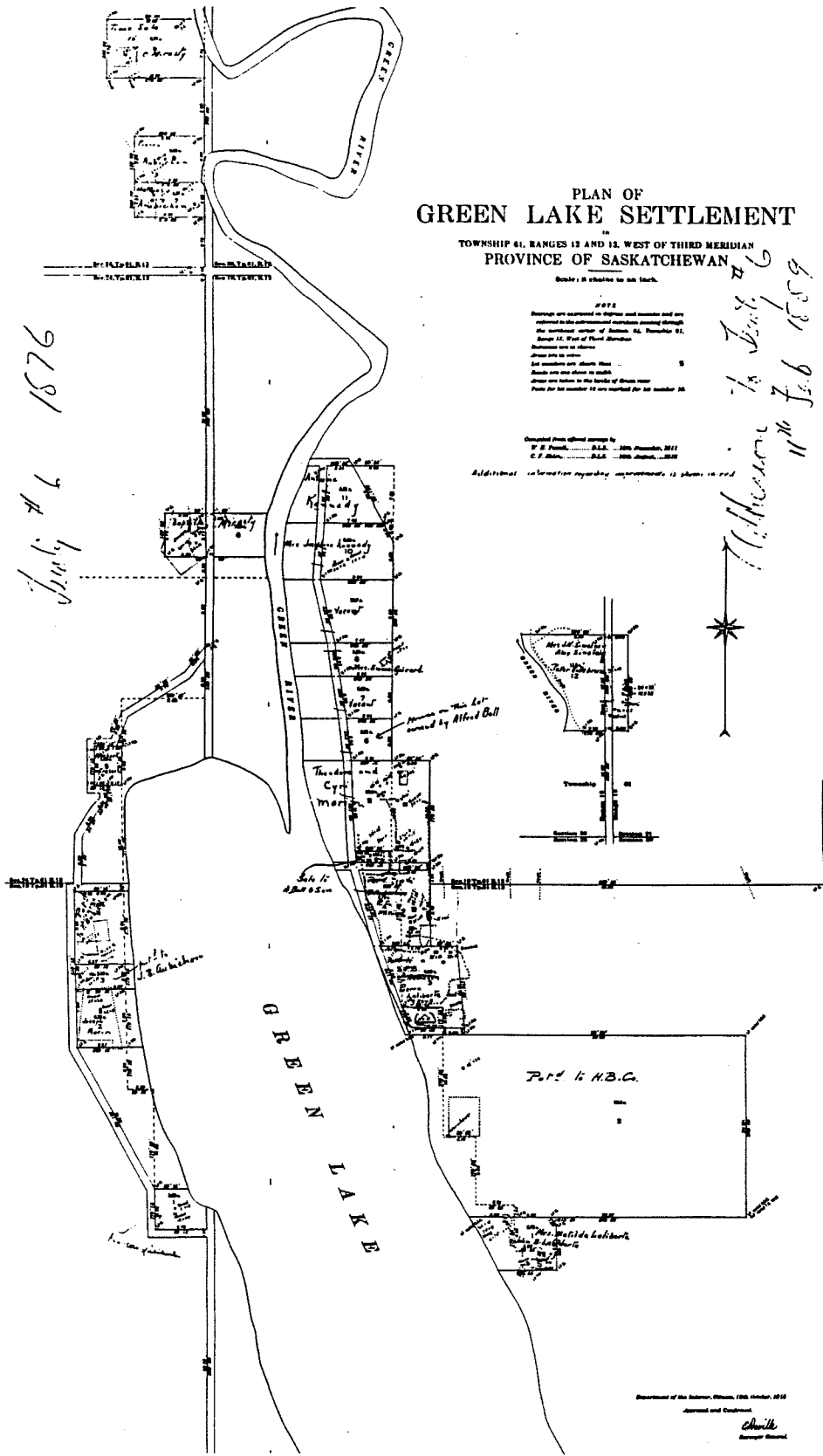


Fig. 6.1: Annotated plan of Green Lake Settlement, 1923

SAB Map A28/14

was told how things have happened in the passed [*sic*]." Teston appealed to the community recognition of property rights: "Since [1891] I have always believed bona fide this land belonging to the mission for that side south. If in the past time some one making objection for that, that man is not acting openly with me. Everyone in Green Lake is looking as the Mission land is alright."⁹ Like Girard, Teston evidently believed that ownership of the settlement lands had been secured at the time of survey.

Girard and Teston received further support from the community in February when Mathias Aubichon finally responded to the department's request for payment for his land:

In regard to lot 7 amounting 4.27 acres Asking for the payment for same. I must say that the man who surveyed the lot told me that the lot was given to me by the government. Therefore in this case I have no intentions of paying for same. I have been living on this same lot for the last Eighteen years.¹⁰

Aubichon's letter was referred by memorandum to Cote, with an added comment:

It is improbable that the surveyor told him he would get a free grant of this lot; it is quite probable that he may have informed him that he was surveying the lot for him. In any event, he is not entitled to a free grant as the Indian Treaty in this district was concluded in 1876 and I presume that he should be so informed, and further that if he does not pay for it the Department would be at liberty to dispose of the same to any future applicant therefor.¹¹

Cote annotated the memorandum: "Explain situation to him." Evidently having replaced Taylor for this task, N.B. Sheppard (over Cote's stamped signature) wrote to Mathias Aubichon to "explain situation to him." Because of the clarity of Sheppard's statement of departmental policy, his letter to Aubichon is repeated here in its entirety:

Referring to your letter of 6th February last in which you state that the man who surveyed the lot above mentioned told you that the lot was given to you by the Government, I beg to say that it is thought in this Department that you could not clearly have understood his statement. The facts are that the survey was made to meet the requirements of the settlers at this point but the fact of such survey did not imply that a free grant would be made in each case.

The only case where a free grant might be made is where a squatter was on the land at the time of the extinguishment of the Indian Title thereto, and as you did not go into occupation of the lot until the year 1906 and the Indian Title to the land was extinguished in 1876, you have no claim to a free grant of this lot and therefore if you still desire to acquire it you must acquire it by purchase as set forth in the Departmental letter to you of the 1st September, 1920, namely, at the rate of \$3.00 per acre together with the usual patent fee in such cases, of \$10.00, which total amount of \$22.81 should be transmitted to the Agent of Dominion Lands at Battleford as soon as possible.¹²

On 12 June 1923, Homestead Inspector Anderson reported on his latest trip to Green Lake to provide the information requested by Taylor. He summarized the results of his inspection of the settlement:

I have recommended the sale of those Lots to the old Settlers that was on the Lots before the Survey at \$3.00 Per acre, as some of those Lots has been sold to the old Settlers at that Price & I don't think it would be fair to Raise the Price. From interviews I had with the Settlers it seems that they understood from the surveyors that those Lots was a Free Grant and that is the reason they have not made any effort to Pay for them. I suggest the Department writing each of them a good short letter & I think they will come through with Payments.¹³

The department received Anderson's reports in Ottawa on June 25, 1923. Where the townships had been originally closed for the ostensible purpose of protecting Metis claims, the disposition of lots at \$3.00 per acre was now to proceed in the name of fairness to those who had already purchased their lots under departmental proposals. In fact, the only sale had been to J.B. Aubichon in 1920.

So it was that by June of 1923 Taylor at last had at his disposal both the policy guidelines and the information about the various claimants that he needed to 'settle' the claims in Green Lake. The bureaucratic process of the disposition of the claims began in earnest.

The disposition of the claims

The following discussion of the individual claims returns to the sequence of the heads of households in Chapter Four. Table 6.1 summarizes the original claimants, their respective sites, the Department of the Interior's disposition of the claims and the first recorded entry at the Land Titles Office for each site. The remainder of this chapter follows each claim through to its final status under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.

Early in June of 1923, L.B. Taylor prepared a memorandum that recommended (over Sheppard's signature) that Pierre Laliberte be given "a free grant of Lot No. 3 . . . and for the issue of letters patent for the same."¹⁴ The memo first recounted Pierre Laliberte's 1912 declaration and the Homestead Inspector's Report corroborating it, ADL Battleford's notification to Laliberte of the need to "appear before him and make entry for the land," and that Laliberte "apparently did not take advantage of the opportunity to secure entry for the land he claimed."¹⁵ The memo then recounted the recent 1923 Homestead Inspector's Report

Table 6.1: Summary of dispositions of Metis claims

<u>Name</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Interior</u>	<u>Land Titles</u>
Pierre Laliberte	Lot 3 E	Free Grant (1923)	Special Grant
Louis Morin	Lot 5 E	Purchased (1925)	Sale
Antoine Laliberte	Lot 1 E	Purchased (1933)	Sale
Philomen Aubichon	Lot 4 W	Free Grant (1922)	Special Grant
Josette Sinclair	Lot 12 E	Time Sale (1925)	Unpatented/*
Napoleon Girard	Lot 8 E	"reserved" (1925)	Unpatented/*
J.B. Aubichon	Lot 3 W	Purchased (1920)	Sale
Francois Laliberte	Lot 1 W	Time Sale (1927)	Unpatented/*
Marcel Desrocher	SW 1-62-1	Homestead Entry	Unpatented
Celestin Merasti	Lot 9 W	Time Sale (1922)	Unpatented/*
Norbert Fraser	Lot 5 W	Permission to buy	Unpatented
Antoine Kennedy	Lot 11 E	Purchased (1924)	Sale
John Fraser	NE 7-61-12	?	Unpatented
Mathias Aubichon	Lot 7 W	Permission to buy	Unpatented
Clement Laliberte	Lot 1 E	See Antoine Laliberte (above)	
Louis Desrocher	SE-2-62-13	Homestead Entry	Patent (1926)
Pierre McCallum	NE 30-61-12	?	Unpatented
Narcisse Lafleur	NW 21-61-12	?	Patent (1942)
Pierre Aubichon	Lot 8 W	Permission to buy	Unpatented
Josephine Kennedy	Lot 10 E	Time Sale (1927)	Unpatented/*

* denotes cancellation

recommending sale of Lot 3 East to Laliberte and the suggestion that it would be paid for by "his three sons, Able, Emilien and Norbert . . . \$15.00 November 1st, 1923 - balance 1924."

The memo concluded:

The extinguishment of the Indian Title is [*sic*] this locality was completed in the year 1889.

It would appear that Mr. Pierre Laliberte is entitled to a free grant of this land which he has occupied since 1880, under the provisions of Section 76 of the Dominion Lands Act by virtue of occupation at the date of extinguishment of the Indian Title in 1889 (adhesion to Treaty No. 6). Therefore, I beg to recommend that the authority of the Governor in Council be obtained sanctioning a free grant of Lot No. 3 . . . to Mr. Pierre Laliberte and for the issue of letters patent for the same.¹⁶

Sheppard signed the memo. N.O. Cote annotated the memo "Free grant recommended." It was then stamped "Approved, D.M." and signed by the acting Deputy Minister. On July 27 Taylor prepared a memorandum "To His Excellency The Governor General in Council" recommending the free grant.¹⁷ Evidently an Order in Council resulted, as Patent issued in the name of Pierre Laliberte on 2 October 1923.¹⁸

Taylor had asked ADL Battleford for a report on Lot 6 East, the 1912 home of Louis Morin. Anderson reported that Lot 5 East was now (1923) "occupied by Theodore and Cyril Morin, sons of late Louis Morin," who had "lived thereon from about 1900."¹⁹ Theodore was now about 33 years of age, having been baptised in Green Lake in 1890.²⁰ Anderson reported being unable to see the Morins "as they were not at home."²¹ He recommended the sale of Lot 5 East to the Morins at \$3.00 per acre. Taylor wrote an initial letter to the Morins on 6 July 1923 (not found). There was no response. A year later, Taylor again wrote to both Cyril and Theodore Morin. The letter to Cyril said in part:

A letter of even date has been forwarded to your brother . . . in which has been enclosed a plan showing Lot 5 referred to above outlined in red and on which he has been requested to indicate the portion of this lot which he desires to acquire. Will you be good enough to reach an agreement in this matter with your brother and mark on this plan also the portion of this lot which you desire to acquire.²²

No mention was made of the 1911 claim to the lot by Louis Morin or his eligibility for a free grant based on his 1866 settlement on the lot. However, an additional claim to Lot 5 East was under consideration by Taylor. In May of 1923 A. Bell had applied to purchase Lot 5 A East and reported:

... we have been looking up the lines and corner posts and find that the main part of our buildings, our store, pool room and dwelling house are on Lot 5. We would be very glad to have Lot 5 A extended or we would take the patent for Lot 5 at once [underline in original].²³

The department agreed to the sale of Lot 5A to Bell. Homestead Inspector Anderson reported that the Bell buildings were worth \$1400, though he did not decide whether they were on Lot 5 or Lot 5A. In August of 1924, Bell repeated his offer to buy all of Lot 5. That led Taylor to conclude his second letter to the Morins:

Another application to purchase Lot 5 or a southerly portion thereof has been received.

If a reply is not received from you within a reasonable time, it may be presumed by the Department that you have abandoned any claim you may have to a portion of this Lot and the lot may be disposed of to the applicant therefor referred to above.²⁴

The same day, Taylor wrote to Bell that his application for Lot 5 East was "... receiving attention by this Department."²⁵ On August 25, Taylor reported to Cote:

As no reply has been received from the Messrs. Morin I would recommend the sale to Messrs. A. Bell & Sons of that portion of Lot 5 applied for. . . . The question of selling them the remainder of Lot 5 might be held in abeyance until more definite information is received from the Messrs. Morin. . . .²⁶

Before the department could put Taylor's recommendations into action, Theodore Morin's August 01 response to Taylor's letter forced Taylor to reconsider. Theodore Morin noted that Cyril Morin "resigned and relinquished" all claim to Lot 5, and that he (Theodore) wished to buy the lot.²⁷ Taylor, evidently with the Bell request in mind, responded by asking Morin whether he had any improvements on the section of Lot 5 wanted by Bell and whether Morin had "any objection to a sale of this parcel . . . being made to other applicants therefor, namely, - Messrs. A. Bell and Sons . . ." ²⁸

Morin did object, both immediately and with clarity and detail.²⁹ He recounted the survey in 1912, the intrusive building of Revillon Frere Agent McWalton, and the continuous occupancy and use of all of Lot 5 by first Louis Morin and than Louis' sons. He concluded his letter:

Apparently, no trouble was ever taken, by any of the different parties who have one after another been the owners of lot 5a as to the actual extent or size of the lot 5a, and I maintain that concerning this lot 5 and lot 5a in the Green Lake Settlement A. Bell & Sons does not rightly know, just where their log buildings stand,

whereas I, the undersigned applicant for the lot 5 above mentioned, was born right on this ground. The same ground has been home to me all my life. The ground has always been properly fenced, and it is so fenced at the present time, by a suitable fence wire on tamarac posts. The portion of lot 5 fenced is the portion I have marked in black on the enclosed plan of the Green Lake settlement, and I naturally strongly object to your department making a sale to A. Bell & Sons of any portion of lot 5, for, and on account of the reasons stated above.

And I trust your department will now issue patent in my favor for that portion of lot 5 for which I have applied, without any more delay.³⁰

The same day, in a separate letter, Morin sent \$15.00 and asked that the Department bill him for the balance of the cost of Lot 5 as described.³¹ After a further three months of indecision, the department finally conceded to Morin's request in February 1925. They informed Morin that he could purchase the desired portion of Lot 5 at a further cost of \$23.40.³² The same day, they informed Bell of the decision and told him that if he still wanted to buy the land and secure his buildings ". . . it will be necessary for you to deal with Mr. Morin after he has received his patent therefor."³³ Despite further protests from Bell,³⁴ the departmental decision remained unaltered,³⁵ and patent for Lot 5 East was issued to Theodore Morin on May 09, 1925.³⁶

Any sense of justice having been accomplished by the success of Theodore Morin in protecting the family claim to Lot 5 must be tempered by the realisation that such purchase should not have been necessary. Louis Morin had at least an equal claim with Pierre Laliberte to a free grant, even under the most restrictive interpretations applied by the Ottawa bureaucracy. The only feature that distinguished the two claims was the fact that Pierre Laliberte lived to be an octogenarian and Louis Morin did not. This would be a strange criterion for the recognition of one claim and the denial of another; however, it was a *de facto* criterion applied to other claimants by departmental delay and the inadequate records used in the departmental decision-making process.

Early in July of 1923 L.B. Taylor prepared a memorandum describing the claims to Lot 1 East, the 1912 home of Antoine Laliberte. Taylor reiterated the history of the 1912 survey, and then wrongly dated the Treaty Six adhesion as occurring in 1888 (rather than 1889). He then recounted the report of Homestead Inspector Anderson who had reported that the claimant was now Matilda Laliberte, the widow of Antoine, who had died in 1919. Anderson had further reported:

Mrs. M. Laliberte is an old woman, has no other place to live and no way of paying for this lot, but as her son, John B. Laliberte, also lives on same lot and he and his mother are both agreeable that he will pay for the lot and have the patent made out jointly to him and his mother, I would recommend same at \$3.00 per acre, which I think is a fair price for all those lots, especially to these old timers.³⁷

Taylor then seconded Anderson's recommendation for the sale of the lot. However, in July 27 Taylor amended his memo by adding a particularly tenuous statement:

... it would appear that Mrs. Matilda Laliberte lived on this Lot in the year 1889, but occupancy of this lot by her at the date of the Indian Treaty, 11th February, 1889, has not been established by evidence furnished to the Department.³⁸

Taylor repeated his recommendation that "John B. Laliberte might be granted permission to purchase this lot" for \$3.00 per acre.³⁹ He then notified Laliberte of this decision (over Cote's stamp).⁴⁰ There was no reply despite a second letter from Taylor at the end of November.⁴¹

However, in February of 1924, Matilda Laliberte wrote:

... I have a place at Green Lake south of the Hudson's Bay Co. where I have lived for the last forty years, and this same place had all very heavy timber and it took my deceased husband months of very hard work to grub the place to be fit for a small garden only. I am now a widow and can't hardly do any work for I am disabled. I therefore beg of you to inform the government and see if he would give me a free grant on the place I am living on now. It would be impossible for me to pay even if it was a very small amount.⁴²

"The government," however, was adamant; they amended the previous Taylor memo in response to Laliberte's letter:

Although Mrs. Matilda Laliberte may have been living on this lot at the date of the Indian Treaty (11th February, 1889) no evidence has been furnished the Department to establish her claim to a free grant in virtue of her occupation thereof at the date of the extinguishment of the Indian title thereto.⁴³

The letter took no notice of Matilda's claim to residency since 1884. Instead, a fallback position was determined: "that a division of this lot could be made between Mrs. Laliberte and her son should such a course be considered desirable."⁴⁴ It was not clear whether the latter alternative was a means to diminish the claim or a response to Mrs. Laliberte's plight. Whatever the intent, the department sent an even more dubious pair of nearly identical letters to Matilda on 2 May 1924. Both denied the request for a free grant because "... no evidence has been provided the Department that your husband occupied the lot at the time of the extinguishment of the Indian title in 1899 [*sic*]."⁴⁵ Despite the patent falsity of that statement

of the situation, the conclusion of the letter could only have increased the affront:

It may be pointed out, however, that in the event of the claim to a free grant of this lot being entertained, it would be necessary for you, before the patent therefor could be issued, to obtain letters of administration of your late husband's estate, and the cost to procure the same would probably be greater than to acquire the land by purchase. As you are no doubt aware, your son, John B. Laliberte, has already been permitted to purchase this lot at \$3.00 per acre, amounting to \$20.34.⁴⁶

One week later, a letter to John B. pointed out that the department had not yet received payment. The treatment accorded to his mother must have had an element of *deja-vu* for John B. Laliberte, who had applied in 1920 for a grazing lease on a separate quarter-section in closed township 61-12 (as described in the previous chapter). When finally notified in 1923 of the opening of the township, as a veteran of World War I he had asked ADL Battleford if the land was open for homestead as "I would like to file on this land as I am entitled to file on 160 acres under the Soldier Settlement Board, and also 160 acres as a civilian."⁴⁷ The ADL's reply apparently deterred him from his intended course of action:

Before you could obtain a Soldier Grant entry it would be necessary for you to get in touch with the Soldier Settlement Board and obtain an Attestation Certificate. This certificate must be surrendered when you make an application for Soldier Grant entry.⁴⁸

Not surprisingly, neither the "permission to purchase" Lot 1 East nor the Soldier Grant was pursued by the Laliberte's during the administration of the Department of the Interior. John B. Laliberte did, however, eventually purchase Lot 1 East from the province in 1933.⁴⁹

Chapter Five described the claim of Philomen Aubichon and its disposal: L.B. Taylor had reported her claim to the department as part of his effort to resolve the claims identified by the Miles survey. Philomen Aubichon received a free grant to Lot 3 West, and received title on September 26, 1922.⁵⁰ Had Taylor known of the Louis Morin claim in 1922 and had he applied the same test to the Morin claim as to the Aubichon claim, the department would have made a free grant to Louis Morin. Both claims qualified, even using the earlier date of Treaty 6 (1876) applicable to Aubichon: they would have applied the adhesion date (1889) to the Morin claim because of its location east of the lake.

L.B. Taylor clearly applied the same test to the claim of another Miles survey claimant, Josette Sinclair. Josette had failed the test for a free grant because of her 1912 declaration. To the question "When did you first settle or make improvements on what you

now claim as homestead?" Josette had replied "40 years ago."⁵¹ This would have meant she had settled in 1872, and would have meant eligibility for a free grant vis-a-vis the applicable treaty date (1889). However, to the question "What date did you first go into *bona fide* residence upon it, meaning making it your home and living on it?" Josette had replied "22 years ago."⁵² The date of 1890 was then used as the date of settlement for determining eligibility for a free grant — and led to the denial of the free grant as described in Chapter Four.⁵³

In 1923 Homestead Inspector Anderson reported that Josette continued to live on Lot 12 East with her son Alex. Peter Villebrun, her son-in-law, also resided and owned buildings on the lot, but he disclaimed any interest in the purchase of any part of the lot. Anderson again recommended sale to Josette Sinclair at \$3.00 per acre.⁵⁴ Taylor sent a couple of letters requesting payment, but when he had received no reply by May of 1925, he included Josette's name on a list of settlers for the homestead inspector to revisit.⁵⁵ When visited by the inspector, Josette paid \$15.00 "being part payment of the above lot."⁵⁶ It turned out to be a very small part of the payment: they allocated the \$15.00 as \$2.84 against the principal and \$12.16 against interest, "leaving a balance of \$32.86 (principal) Time Sale No 11791."⁵⁷ Sinclair made no further payments, and in 1930 the department sent a couple of threatening letters to Sinclair to no effect; by that time the amount owing had grown to \$42.82.⁵⁸ Lot 12 East remained unpatented and Josette Sinclair's interest in the title was cancelled in 1939.⁵⁹

As related in Chapter Five, the search for more information about Annie Girard had aided in Taylor's identification of the size of the claim in Green Lake. At the end of May 1923, Taylor prepared a memorandum to Cote reciting the history of Napoleon Girard's 1912 claim, the 1920 permission to purchase Lot 8 East, Annie's letter to the department describing the promise of free grants, the search to establish her identity, and the Homestead Inspector's Report of 6 December 1922. Taylor then drew two conclusions. The first was:

... Annie Girard is not entitled to a free grant on account of occupancy of the lot at the time of extinguishment of the Indian Title in this district, as the first residence by her or her late husband does not appear to have taken place before 1892, whereas the Indian Title was extinguished in 1888.⁶⁰

Sheppard's second conclusion was less rigid. As a homestead inspection of seventeen other lots in Green Lake was to occur soon, "Further consideration of this claim to Lot 8 might be

withheld until the report requested has been received."⁶¹ The last recommendation was annotated "Yes noc" — N.O. Cote.

Anderson's second report on June of 1923 was of little assistance. Anderson repeated the details of the previous report, and then remarked "I was unable to see Mrs. Girard as she was not at home. I would recommend selling to her at \$3.00 Per acre but I expect it will be very hard to collect - living [off?] Charity."⁶² On receipt of Anderson's report, Taylor revised the memo to Cote by adding the June report. He then concluded: "I beg to recommend that Mrs. Annie Girard be granted permission to purchase this lot at the rate of \$3.00 per acre as the purchase money will amount to less than \$20.00, a patent fee of \$10.00 will be required in addition."⁶³ However, even in the remote offices of the bureaucracy this must have seemed a bit callous. For whatever reason, the last paragraph of Taylor's memo was scratched through later. The Land Patents Branch sent a handwritten note to the Registration Branch in May of 1925 amending Taylor's earlier recommendation:

In view of the indigent circumstances of this woman I would recommend that she be allowed to purchase this lot comprising 5.25 acres at the rate \$3.00 per acre without any charge for a patent fee and further that she be allowed to make payments as follows:

1/4 of the purchase price on or before the 1st Nov. next and the balance in 3 equal annual instalments with interest thereon at the rate of 6% per annum.

In view of the very indigent circumstances of this woman it appears to me that the Dept might reserve this lot for her during her occupancy thereof the same as we do for individual Treaty and Non Treaty Indians and if at a later date she is in a position to pay for the land the question of giving her title thereto might be considered.⁶⁴

It is not clear who struck off the last paragraph of Taylor's memo and wrote the handwritten directions reversing it. The handwritten note is the last document on file with respect to the 1912 claim by Napoleon Girard. No patent ever issued on Lot 8 East. Annie Girard's interest in the lot was cancelled in 1968 when title transferred to the Department of Municipal Affairs "for the purposes set out in Order in Council 803/48" [May 07, 1948] by means of O.C. 827/68, May 08, 1968.⁶⁵

Jean Baptiste Aubichon purchased Lot 3 West as described in Chapter Five. Patent was issued on 6 December 1920.⁶⁶

Francois Laliberte continued his refusal to respond to the requests of the department for payment. He told Homestead Inspector Anderson in 1923 ". . . so far he has not been able

to pay anything but as soon as trapping starts next fall he will try and make a payment."⁶⁷ A homestead inspector in 1925 reported: "The occupant of this lot [Lot 1 West] was away trapping. I left word for him to remit his outstanding dues on his return."⁶⁸ Letters sent by Taylor in April and August of 1925 remained unanswered, with no further entries in Laliberte's file. A title search showed that Lot 1 West remained unpatented and, although the file had not shown any payment, the "Time Sale of Francois Laliberte, Dec'd. [deceased]" was cancelled on 7 March 1941.

Marcel Desrocher may have successfully registered his entry to SW 1-62-13 as described in Chapter Five, but a title search revealed that the quarter-section was never patented. No cancellation was discovered.

The Time Sale to Celestin Merasti described at the end of Chapter Five did not go well. The department sent letters requesting further payments to Merasti in 1924 and 1925. The letters contained a payment schedule that included projected interest on the amount owing. In 1926 the department gave Merasti ". . . a period of sixty days from the date of this letter . . . to state your intentions . . . failure on your part to do so will in all probability result in the summary cancellation of the sale in question."⁶⁹ Apparently there was no response. In August 1927 an interdepartmental memo recommended ". . . that the sale be cancelled."⁷⁰ Instead, the department made a request to Teston for further information. No reply was found. When continued attempts to establish contact failed, a 1929 letter to Merasti gave him thirty days to respond.⁷¹ Early in 1930, the department gave him another thirty-day warning, without success.⁷² By March of 1930, the last document in the file noted that the addition of interest had raised the amount owing to \$34.47 with "further interest at 7% on 22.41 from 1/5/30 to date of payment."⁷³ A title search on Lot 9 West revealed that the lot remained unpatented. The Time Sale to Celestin Merasti was cancelled November 1939.⁷⁴

Norbert Fraser's claim to Lot 5 West (on behalf of Margaret Aubichon) was equally unsuccessful. Homestead Inspector Anderson's 1923 report stated "I was not able to see Mr. Fraser as he was away from home but he is still in residence and evidently is desirous of purchasing this lot."⁷⁵ In February 1924 Fraser wrote to Cote:

Your letter of the 16th ult. received regarding Lot 5 Green Lake Settlement West of Green Lake. Area 1.98 acres. I am sorry to inform you that I do not really know what to make out of the lot. In the Spring and throughout the summer the water is rather

high in the hay meadow, and there is about one acre that's any good, that is where my house is located. The road also passes through my lot, which is rather inconvenient, and I have to leave it open, on account of my neighbors using it as a traffic road. I cannot also make a fence around the lot, and very little is open for gardening. Would like that this be attended to as soon as possible. Will make payment when this is straightened.⁷⁶

Taylor responded that the map showed that the road did not cross the lot and that the entire 1.98 acres could be fenced.⁷⁷ Again there was no response. A 1925 homestead inspector's report stated: "The occupant of this lot is a trapper and has promised to remit half of the amount due by the 1st January next and the balance as soon as he can."⁷⁸ The file ended at this point. A title search revealed that no entry was ever granted on Lot 5 West; no cancellation was found.

Homestead Inspector Anderson reported on Antoine Kennedy's claim to Lot 11 East in 1923: "Mr. Kennedy lived on this lot from 1911 to 1917. He then moved to Meadow Lake . . . I would recommend selling to him at \$3.00 per acre."⁷⁹ The department informed Kennedy of his "permission to purchase,"⁸⁰ and he wrote from Meadow Lake that he wished to purchase the lot.⁸¹ He paid \$28.63 to the ADL Prince Albert,⁸² and patent was issued on January 18, 1924.⁸³

Although the department asked Homestead Inspector Anderson to report on the claim of John Fraser to NE 7-61-12,⁸⁴ no report was found. No further documents regarding either Fraser or the quarter-section were found. A title search on NE 7-61-12 revealed only that the quarter-section was never patented; no entry or cancellation took place.

Homestead Inspector Anderson in June of 1923 reported on Lot 7 West: "Mr. [Mathias] Aubichon states that he thought this lot was a free grant — but he wants this lot and is willing to pay & will make a payment Nov. 1923. I would recommend selling at 3.00 per acre."⁸⁵ The department sent letters to Aubichon requesting payment in December of 1923 and April of 1924.⁸⁶ Aubichon returned the 1924 letter with a handwritten message across the bottom: "Cher Monsieur[:] Pour repondre a cette lettre je dois vous dire que dis que je serai capable j'ai l'intention de vous payer."⁸⁷ Aubichon signed the letter. Responding to Taylor's 1925 request for an inspection of Lot 7 West, Inspector Fred McKenzie wrote: "The occupant of this lot is north trapping. I left word for him to remit his dues on his return."⁸⁸ The final document in the file was a May 1926 letter to Aubichon requesting payment. A title

search revealed that the lot remained unpatented.

Clement Laliberte's name disappeared from the record after his 1912 declaration. The department subsumed his claim to Lot 1 East under the claim of his mother, Matilda Laliberte, as described above.

As described in Chapter Four, Louis Desrocher's wife inherited his claim to SE 2-62-12 in 1919. In 1922 Mrs. Marie Durocher broke 15 acres and cropped a total of 17 acres while keeping five cattle and four horses.⁸⁹ She applied for patent in 1924, supported by statements from Peter Villebrun and Alexander Sinclair.⁹⁰ In April 1926 patent was issued to Mrs. Marie Laboucan, Meadow Lake, "as personal representative of the late Louis Derocher [sic]."⁹¹ A title search confirmed a patent date of April 19, 1926.

Although the department asked Homestead Inspector Anderson to report on the claim of Pierre McCallum to NE 30-61-12, no further documents have been found.⁹² A title search confirmed that the quarter-section remained unpatented.

Narcisse Lafleur remained 'undiscovered' at his home on NW 21-61-12 by the Department of the Interior and no documentation for the pre-1930 period was found. He first appeared in the provincial files in 1933, when District Ranger J. Kinnear stated: "Mr. Lafleur has resided on the above quarter since 1906" and then described his holdings.⁹³ As part of an attempt to resolve a conflict of claims, Kinnear further stated:

If Mr. Lafleur was a squatter on this land before the survey, he should have been notified to file when the land was thrown open after the survey. If he was notified the record should be on file.⁹⁴

Kinnear may have been the only one in Green Lake with that kind of confidence in the abilities of the Department of the Interior. Nevertheless, Lafleur persisted in his claim. He was granted homestead entry in November of 1933 and received patent in 1942.⁹⁵ A title search confirmed the issuance of patent.

Homestead Inspector Anderson reported in 1923 that Pierre Aubichon had resided on Lot 8 East "for a period of two or three years about eight years ago."⁹⁶ As mentioned in Chapter Three, the land records of Pierre Aubichon have not been found, so confirming his Green Lake origins has not been possible. However, Anderson also said: "The buildings which were located on this land at the time of survey in 1912 have been torn down,"⁹⁷ suggesting occupation of the site by Pierre or possibly his parents. In 1923 Pierre had instructed his

brother (Mathias?) that "he was very desirous of purchasing this lot and would pay when requested."⁹⁸ The inspector and Taylor both recommended sale of the lot for \$3.00 per acre.⁹⁹ Taylor notified Aubichon by letter that he could purchase the lot for \$16.68 plus a \$10.00 service charge because the purchase charge was less than \$20.00.¹⁰⁰ When Aubichon did not reply by the end of 1923, the department sent a second letter.¹⁰¹ In May of 1925 Taylor requested a homestead inspector report on Pierre, but no record of that report has been found.¹⁰² A title search revealed that Lot 8 West remained unpatented to the present.

Homestead Inspector Anderson reported in 1923 that Josephine Kennedy had resided on Lot 10 East since 1903.¹⁰³ He further reported:

Mrs. Kennedy is very desirous of buying this lot, but as her only income is \$15.00 per month which she receives from Prov. Gov. she states she will pay \$2.00 per month payable quarterly commencing July 1st 1923. I would recommend selling at \$3.00 per acre.¹⁰⁴

Taylor supported Anderson's recommendation, adding:

In view of her circumstances, I think we might fix the date for payment of the first instalment (\$7.39) [pencilled in above the line at this point] of one-quarter of the purchase price, namely \$29.55, at four months from the 1st July, 1923, that is to say, on the 1st November next, and the balance on the usual terms.¹⁰⁵

Cote annotated the memo: "Recommended, N.O. Cote," and Taylor relayed the disposition to Josephine Kennedy.¹⁰⁶ The department established a Time Sale account at the Prince Albert Dominion Lands Office as of 1 November 1923, and interest on unpaid charges began on that date. The department recorded a payment of \$7.50 on 13 November 1923, but no further payment was recorded. By 1926 the interest charges had exceeded the original down-payment.¹⁰⁷ In December of 1929 the ADL Prince Albert gave Kennedy 30 days to pay up or state her intentions,¹⁰⁸ and in January extended the deadline another 30 days.¹⁰⁹ There was no response. ADL Prince Albert ordered a homestead inspection March of 1930, but no report has been found. On 30 April 1930 the Commissioner of the Dominion Lands Administration of the Department of the Interior advised ADL Prince Albert: ". . . unless a satisfactory explanation is made to the Department as to his [*sic*] inability to pay, it is probable that the Department will proceed with cancellation of the sale without further advice to the purchaser."¹¹⁰ The same letter has a postscript: "N.B. The Department requires that all arrears on time sale accounts be paid off as soon as possible . . . and it is expected you will follow up

all accounts in arrears until paid in full or recommended for cancellation."¹¹¹ The postscript suggested the transfer of resources to the Provinces. However, as it was on the last document in the file, it was not possible to tell if the recommendation to cancel came from the Department of Interior. The Time Sale of Lot 10 East to Josephine Kennedy was, however, cancelled by the Department of Natural Resources of the Province of Saskatchewan in September of 1934.¹¹² Lot 10 East has since remained unpatented.

Of the twenty cases studied, the department granted two special grants based on occupancy at the time of treaty. They recorded four completed sales, although one was completed after the period under study. Two successful homestead patents were recorded, although one occurred well after the tenure of the Department of the Interior. Eleven sites were never patented. One claim was co-terminus with that of another family member and not pursued. Claims arising from partial payment (Time Sales) and the unique reservation accorded Annie Girard were all subsequently formally cancelled.

Notes

- ¹ SAB 2665096, 10 Jan 1923.
- ² SAB 2665096, 19 Feb 1923. The plan referred to is SAB map A 28\14.
- ³ SAB 2665096, 20 Feb 1923.
- ⁴ SAB 2665096, 08 Mar 1923.
- ⁵ SAB 2665096, 13 Mar 1923.
- ⁶ SAB 2665096, 22 May 1923.
- ⁷ SAB 2665096, 28 May 1923.
- ⁸ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, 02 Jan 1923 and 22 Jan 1923.
- ⁹ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12.
- ¹⁰ SAB 2909027, 06 Feb 1923.
- ¹¹ SAB 2909027, 09 Mar 1923.
- ¹² SAB 2909027, 11 April 1923.
- ¹³ SAB 2665096, 12 Jun 1923.
- ¹⁴ SAB 4803232, 07 July 1923.
- ¹⁵ SAB 4803232, 07 July 1923.
- ¹⁶ SAB 4803232, 07 July 1923.
- ¹⁷ SAB 2665096.
- ¹⁸ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ¹⁹ SAB 2665096, 23 August 1924.
- ²⁰ Green Lake Index to the Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan.
- ²¹ SAB 2665096, 23 August 1924.
- ²² SAB 2665096, 06 July 1923.
- ²³ SAB 2665096, 23 Aug 1924.
- ²⁴ SAB 2665096, 22 July 1924.
- ²⁵ SAB 2665096, 22 July 1924.
- ²⁶ SAB 2665096, 25 Aug 1924.
- ²⁷ SAB 2665096, 24 Dec 1924.
- ²⁸ SAB 2665096, 26 Sept 1924.
- ²⁹ SAB 4802969, 30 Oct 1924.
- ³⁰ SAB 4802969, 30 Oct 1924.
- ³¹ SAB 4802969, 30 Oct 1924. SAB Map A 28/11 was from this file, and was annotated to show area claimed. Morin does not treat the lot as a river lot, foregoing access to the river by writing "do not want this piece - useless bog" on the portion of lot 5 between the north/south road allowance and the river. Within the area outlined in black on the plan, Morin wrote, "This is the parcel I want and will pay for. T.M."
- ³² SAB 2665096, 07 Feb 1925.
- ³³ SAB 2665096, 07 Feb 1925.
- ³⁴ SAB 2665096, 17 Mar 1925.
- ³⁵ SAB 2665096, 20 Mar 1925.
- ³⁶ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ³⁷ SAB 2665096, 06 July 1923.

- ³⁸ SAB 2665096, 27 July 1923.
- ³⁹ SAB 2665096, 27 July 1923.
- ⁴⁰ SAB 2665096, 01 Aug 1923.
- ⁴¹ SAB 2665096, 28 Nov 1923.
- ⁴² SAB 2665096, 25 Apr 1925.
- ⁴³ SAB 2665096, 25 Apr 1925.
- ⁴⁴ SAB 2665096, 25 Apr 1925.
- ⁴⁵ SAB 2665096, 02 May 1924.
- ⁴⁶ SAB 2665096, 02 May 1924.
- ⁴⁷ SAB AG11-II 585-T.
- ⁴⁸ SAB AG11-II 585-T, 09 Aug 1923.
- ⁴⁹ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ⁵⁰ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ⁵¹ SAB 2908946, Declaration, 17 Aug 1912.
- ⁵² SAB 2908946, Declaration, 17 Aug 1912.
- ⁵³ Annotated calculations on both the declaration of 1912 and the file copy of a letter dated 31 May 1922 support this conclusion. The annotations appear to be in the handwriting of L.B. Taylor.
- ⁵⁴ SAB 2908946, 13 June 1923.
- ⁵⁵ SAB 2908946, 13 May 1925.
- ⁵⁶ SAB 2908946, 31 Dec 1925.
- ⁵⁷ SAB 2908946, 21 Jan 1926.
- ⁵⁸ SAB 2908946, 28 Mar 1930. This balance may well have been reached in error, as the numbers on this document do not add to the suggested total.
- ⁵⁹ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office, Cancellation Ay 7415.
- ⁶⁰ SAB 2908948, 30 May 1923.
- ⁶¹ SAB 2908948, 30 May 1923.
- ⁶² SAB 2908948, Homestead Inspector's Report, 12 June 1923.
- ⁶³ SAB 2908948, 5 July 1923.
- ⁶⁴ SAB 2908948, 14 May 1925.
- ⁶⁵ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ⁶⁶ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- ⁶⁷ SAB 2909031, 13 June 1923.
- ⁶⁸ SAB 2909031, 11 Dec 1925.
- ⁶⁹ SAB 2908950, 13 Apr 1926.
- ⁷⁰ SAB 2908950, 31 Aug 1927.
- ⁷¹ SAB 2908950, 23 Aug 1929.
- ⁷² SAB 2908950, 28 Jan 1930.
- ⁷³ SAB 2908950, 28 Mar 1930.
- ⁷⁴ Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office, Cancellation Ay 6723.
- ⁷⁵ SAB 2909029, 13 June 1923.
- ⁷⁶ SAB 2909029, 06 Feb 1924.
- ⁷⁷ SAB 2909029, 10 Mar 1924.
- ⁷⁸ SAB 2909029, 12 Nov 1925.
- ⁷⁹ SAB 2665096, 16 Aug 1923.

- 80 SAB 2665096, 25 Aug 1923.
- 81 SAB 4802947, 23 July 1923.
- 82 SAB 4802947, 15 Oct 1923.
- 83 SAB 4802947, 23 Jan 1924. Confirmed by title search, Battleford Land Titles Office.
- 84 SAB 2570292, 07 June 1923.
- 85 SAB 2909027, 13 June 1923.
- 86 SAB 2909027, 10 Dec 1923, 29 Apr 1924.
- 87 SAB 2909027, date stamped 15 May 1925.
- 88 SAB 2909027, 11 Dec 1925.
- 89 SAB 2728253, 20 Mar 1926.
- 90 SAB 2728253.
- 91 SAB 2728253, 22 Apr 1926.
- 92 SAB 2570280, 06 June 1923.
- 93 SAB AG11-I NW 21-61-12, 03 Mar 1933.
- 94 SAB AG11-I NW 21-61-12, 03 Mar 1933.
- 95 SAB AG11-I NW 21-61-12, 25 Nov 1933, 03 Feb 1942.
- 96 SAB 2665096, 30 June 1923.
- 97 SAB 2665096, 30 June 1923.
- 98 SAB 2665096, 30 June 1923.
- 99 SAB 2665096, 16 July 1923.
- 100 SAB 2665096, 16 July 1923.
- 101 SAB 2665096, 11 January 1924.
- 102 SAB 2665096, 13 May 1925.
- 103 SAB 4802945, 12 June 1923.
- 104 SAB 4802945, 12 June 1923.
- 105 SAB 4802945, 06 July 1923.
- 106 SAB 4802945, 16 July 1923.
- 107 SAB 4802945, ledger page to 01 Nov 1926.
- 108 SAB 4802945, 03 Dec 1929.
- 109 SAB 4802945, 28 Jan 1930.
- 110 SAB 4802945, 30 April 1930.
- 111 SAB 4802945, 30 April 1930.
- 112 Title search, Battleford Land Titles Office, cancellation Au 481.

CONCLUSIONS

After at least a century of continuous Metis occupation of the settlement site at the north end of Green Lake, the Department of the Interior had recognized only two small lots, some 16 acres of land, as belonging to the original settlers. Other than those two exceptional lots, the department put the claims of the original settlers on a par with those of any new resident; that is, it offered the choice between immediate purchase and the threat of dispossession by others. This thesis has identified the primary contextual factor leading to such a resolution (or lack of it) as the national policy and its shifting requirements for land. Fundamentally, the question of title to land in Green Lake did not turn on the legitimacy of prior ownership but on the demands of policies established far from the settlement.

The overwhelming weight of policy considerations was evident in the surveys used as the basis of personal declarations. The department geared the language of survey declarations to estimating agricultural occupation. It ordered township surveys for the specific purpose of "clearing" land for the settlement of more immigrant agriculturalists. The preference for imported agriculturalists may at times have been justified by the mystical notion of racial and/or cultural attributes of Aboriginal peoples, but, as Fowke pointed out, the commerce in the movement of immigrant peoples provided a far more lucrative reason for such a preference. Refusing all original settler claims was never necessary, but limiting them to as few claims and as few acres as possible was advantageous.

The linkage of policy to practice was abundantly evident in the administration of Green Lake land. The restrictive nature of land administration provided *prima facie* evidence of the national policy bias in the administration of lands. Not one incident in the entire examined record could lead one to claim that an interpretive error or bias worked in favour of an original settler claimant. Never was Green Lake land mistakenly granted to an undeserving original settler. Every questionable departmental decision favoured access to land by outsiders rather than recognition of the legitimacy of the claims of old-timers.

An ardent government apologist might suggest that the closure of the townships

represented a protection of the rights of the early settlers. That is clearly how the settlers themselves first interpreted the action. The reasonable grounds on which they made that assumption were those of agency and those of timing. Agents of the government conveyed assurances to the settlers regarding their claims. Clouston rather ingenuously told his superiors "I informed [the settlers] that I would forward their proposition to the Department." Napoleon Girard, on the other hand, told his wife that Clouston had said "I will work that proposition for you." The survey followed, marking out the claimants' lands on the apparent basis of that agreement. Mathias Aubichon reported one surveyor as having confirmed that purpose of the survey. The survey instructions stated that the surveyors were to lay out the lots to meet the needs of the settlers. The department's later denial of the agreement must have appeared as truly preposterous to a community familiar with the survey. The settlement could only have taken the delay in the denial of the claims as confirmation of the agreement. There were sufficient grounds for any reasonable person to assume that what appeared to have happened (continued ownership of land) actually had happened.

There had been troubling incidents. Early letters from the Department of the Interior had implied some further government interest in ownership questions, but no follow-up had ever occurred. Revillon Freres, it appeared, could flout the new land ownership laws without recrimination. The local priest could not expand his holdings to the adjoining quarter-section, but Teston may or may not have relayed such information to his parishioners. The department rebuffed attempts to expand land holdings by a newly returned Metis veteran of WWI, possibly simply confirming what other settlers already knew or accepted. Even outside the closed townships, it took Marcel Desrocher nearly a decade to get his revised claim to his land confirmed. Overall, absence marked Canadian jurisdiction over land more than any confirmation or denial of title. In that absence, the community carried on its activities as if the ownership agreement of 1912 prevailed. That agreement formalised its predecessor, the consensual mode of ownership that the Metis had developed to meet the needs of the fur trade economy.

When the Department finally acted on the Green Lake claims, its administrative *modus operandi* was clearly inadequate to the task of protection of Metis claims. The problems began with the use of the 1919 Order in Council, but also included the application of the 1908

legislation, the failure to take heed of settler complaints and a general bureaucratic amnesia regarding earlier precedents for assessing and recognizing original settler status as it applied to the Metis.

The use of the 1919 Order in Council was fatally flawed from the beginning, in that it was clearly not intended for use in the circumstances prevalent in Green Lake. Unlike the villages specified as typical of the region intended for application of the legislation, the department had surveyed Green Lake for inclusion in agricultural production. The exact force behind the introduction of the 1919 legislation has not been identified, though it was contemporaneous with the northward expansion of forest and mineral development. However, the Order in Council specifically stated the exclusion of surveyed areas, and as a result its use in Green Lake was clearly *ultra vires*.

Besides wrongly using the 1919 legislation to clear the townships around Green Lake, departmental personnel acted in apparent ignorance of any previous relationship between the settlers and the department. The piecemeal attention to only the Miles survey claimants circa 1920-22 showed ignorance of local conditions, and arguably resulted in a premature restriction on the options for recognition of legitimate claims. Had the department treated the claims from the beginning as a larger package of claims, consideration of more applicable alternatives might have developed before application of the 'right to purchase' option. As well, cognizance of previous activity by departmental agents should have led to consideration of the import of the commitments made by such agents. Again, ignorance of that activity would appear to have strongly influenced the failure to consider adequately the claims of the original settlers and the resultant narrowness of settlement options.

The use of the 1908 legislation, despite its favourable impact on two of the twenty claims examined, invited criticism. Again, the larger purposes of that legislation were not explicitly obvious. However, legislative intention for its use in the Green Lake circumstance was dubious. Canada brought several additional areas into treaty in the first decade of the twentieth century. Treaty Ten in northern Saskatchewan (1906) had followed Treaty Nine in northwestern Ontario (1905), and large adhesions to Treaty Five in northern Manitoba began in 1908. That year also saw the amendment of the legislation in question to apply the relevant treaty date for settlement of original settler claims. Application of section 76(c) to recent

treaty areas could have been both equitable and sensible. Both of those rationales for the administration of 76(c) greatly diminished with respect to the Treaty Eight (1899) area, and become increasingly problematic when applied to the Adhesion to Treaty Six of 1889. The retroactive nature of the use of that section becomes repugnant to principles of fair play with respect to Treaty Six, signed some thirty years earlier. Legislative intent for that usage would appear unlikely.

The 1908 legislation posed further problems for the settlement of original settler claims. The use of the date of treaty as the date of claims recognition was inappropriate when applied to Metis original settlers. Original settler claims were not based on Aboriginal title and are outside the realm of treaty-making. The difficulty of the Canadian state recognizing claims to land in non-treaty areas had been resolved in the Red River negotiations by the Canadian promise to recognise such claims after the making of the relevant treaty. The actual question became when after treaty the government would effectively recognise such claims to land. To suggest today that the Canadian state could not recognise land titles in non-treaty areas would create legal havoc in most of British Columbia. In those circumstances, any insistency on the relevance of the treaty date for the settlement of original settler claims would appear more arbitrary than appropriate.

A major peculiarity of the retroactive application of the treaty date to the Green Lake situation was the creation of a right of ownership based on personal longevity. The result, as pointed out in the text, was that those who lived to an old age were rewarded with title. However, for those like Louis Morin who died before the Department of the Interior discovered the possibilities of the use of the 1908 legislation, there would be no free title. The absurd situation arises where Louis Morin could not pass on any title rights to his sons; like any other would-be claimants, they could use their residency (on the soil they were born on!) as a basis for only a right of first refusal. Had they instead immigrated to Green Lake from Great Britain just before the survey, they would have had the same right to purchase open land they had occupied.

Even if one were to accept the selection of the date of treaty as the benchmark date for recognition of original settler claims, the actions of the department bear further scrutiny. Returning to the Red River negotiations highlights the difficulty of determining what usages

would be recognized as sufficient. Despite Flanagan's and Ens' assurances of the ease of such recognition, the complaints of Father Ritchot about implementation must be kept in mind, especially his remonstrances that the agreement he negotiated had not required agricultural settlement like that which government officials eventually insisted on.

In Green Lake, the question of which usages the department would recognize for claims was framed as *bona fide* settlement. Although Josette Sinclair had lived in Green Lake as early as 1872, her declaration claimed *bona fide* residence only in about 1890. The department took the latter declaration to mean that she was ineligible for a free grant by virtue of settlement before treaty. Given the long residence of the Sinclairs at Green Lake, the point at issue was what the question had been that had elicited Josette's answer of "22 years ago" as the date of her *bona fide* settlement. We cannot adequately answer that question at this late date. Yet, because of that question and its answer, the department denied another Metis claim to land in Green Lake.

The nature of the denial of the Sinclair claim raised a further question about the source of such decision-making ability. No evidence in the Department files suggested reference of the Sinclair decision to other persons or indicated any appeal process available to the Green Lake residents. Access to relevant political representatives was at best remote for Green Lake applicants. Even had there been far better communication between the claimants and the department, the lack of representation, either legal or political, placed the claimants at an insurmountable disadvantage. In effect, they were the captives of a remote bureaucratic elite carrying out policies well outside local cognizance. Perhaps no better example of bureaucratic indifference was evident than that displayed toward Mathilda Laliberte. The suggestion that pursuit of her rights would cost her more than simple compliance showed the basic nature of the relationship between claimant and bureaucrat.

The burden of proof for claims recognition rested entirely on the claimant. The treatment of the Mathilda Laliberte claim amply evidenced that fact, but so also did the general refusal of the department to do any research of its own into the question of whether individual claimants had legitimate claims. The single instance of departmental reference to local sources of information was the attempt to reach a claimant through Father Teston. There evidently was no recourse to the records of the church for information on claimants.

Yet the record of baptisms, weddings and funerals of the Ile-à-la-Crosse/Green Lake Catholic Churches would have provided evidence of occupation and settlement. Teston himself could have added greatly to an understanding of the longevity of settlement, and the residents would have verified for other claimants their term of residency. Furthermore, the department apparently did not examine its own scrip records. In fact, the department carried out no research beyond the homestead inspections. The burden of proof conveniently worked to the advantage of the policy directives of the department and against the interests of the original settlers.

The department not only refused to research original settler claims, but also it actively denied evidence presented by residents. Annie Girard's spirited defense of her right to her land may have elicited a search for her possible benefactors, but then only in the hope of the temporary quieting of her claim. Teston's protestations for his church appeared to get ignored, and the department treated Mathias Aubichon's version of events as the obvious mistake of an incompetent observer with perhaps the bias of self-interest. Overall, we can say that the department ignored or at least fail to take seriously settler information about claims born of long settlement and/or prior agreements.

Considering the general tenor of departmental activity, it was not surprising that the department would ignore precedents favourable to original settlers. The Red River claims agreement had been reached under duress, and the Pearce treatment of the Prince Albert claims served similar political purposes. Those events and the circumstances that surrounded them had passed into historical obscurity, at least for the department. The longer the time that passed, the less likelihood of the recurrence of similar pressures. The further those events receded into the past, the less relevant the economic and social reality that had underwritten the resistance appeared in the remote offices of the Ottawa bureaucracy. Fur trade claims to land were mere anachronisms, deserving of little consideration beyond the narrow confines of laws written for other purposes but occasionally impinging on departmental action.

In effect, by 1923 the Department of the Interior had placed original settler claims on a par with the claim of any new settler who occupied land before departmental action. Riel's last memoir summed up the inadequacy of the Department of the Interior's disposition of the Green Lake claims as well as if he had written it about Green Lake itself:

The lands that they owned and which belonged to them once, by the Indian title, twice for having defended them with their blood, and thrice for having built and lived on them, cultivated, fenced, and worked on them, were returned to them for a consideration of [three] dollars an acre.

Because of the slowness of the advance of the national policy northward and the resultant uneven development of north and south, Green Lake hung in the balance between increasingly disparate realities for a half-century. Like the Metis of Red River, the Metis of Green Lake faced restrictive criteria in the attempt to establish their claims. Unlike Red River, no second generation of settlers came to Green Lake to lay claim to the land. Green Lake remained a Metis settlement, though it did so without formal title.

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Primary Sources

Sources located in the Saskatchewan Archives Board have been identified by the abbreviation SAB. Three significant sets of land records have been used. Files originally created by the Department of the Interior and not subsequently renumbered by the provincial Department of Agriculture are identified by the Department of the Interior's numerical name, as '2908946'. A second set of files has been identified within the files of the Department of Agriculture; these have been identified by 'AG11-I' followed by the legal description of the site in question. A third set of files had been created by the Department of Agriculture to specifically deal with administration of the Green Lake Settlement. That set of files has been identified with 'AG11-II' followed by the relevant legal description.

Occasional references to following have been made:

Green Lake Index to the Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Ile-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan.

RG 15, Volume 1515, Department of the Interior Index to North West Half-Breed Claims

APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, 1912

These sketches introduce some of the people who lived around Green Lake in 1912. The 1912 perspective is supplied primarily from the records of the Department of the Interior, which surveyed selected aspects of individual and community life in the settlement that year. Occasionally, the land record from later dates contained historical material regarding 1912, and these sketches include that information. Genealogical materials collected in 1990 for the Green Lake Home Care Board augment the descriptions gleaned from the land record.¹ As well, occasional reference has been made to the Index of the Register of the Births, Marriages and Funerals of the Catholic Church in Green Lake.² Some limited use has also been made of scrip records.³ Further examination of the latter two sources would interest those wishing to find additional genealogical information.

Table A-1 is a tentative and somewhat arbitrary outline of surname groupings in Green Lake in 1912. Its purpose is to help reduce the large number of individuals resident in Green Lake into comprehensible units. Where information about family relationship was incomplete, the location of an individual's home occasionally augmented the analysis. Although the outline format of Table A.1 depicts generations where possible, inclusion of a person under a family "head" does not necessarily depict ancestral lineage. For example, it is not known if Antoine Laliberte was the son of Pierre and therefore the brother of Pierre the younger. However, as they had the same surname and were of the same general age, the table treats them as the same generation in the outline format. Similar inconsistencies apply to other family headings; the text details those instances. The individual biographical sketches follow the order of Table A-1. Both Table A-1 and the text use underlining to identify individuals claiming land in 1912.

The Laliberte family

The oldest Metis in the land record was 'old' Pierre Laliberte, who died in 1903 at the age of 87 years.⁴ Because the Department of the Interior did not establish the land records for Green Lake until 1911, no direct record recorded the land rights of old Pierre. The land

Table A.1: Tentative family groupings, 1912

- I. Pierre Laliberte (deceased)
 - A. Pierre Laliberte
 - B. Antoine Laliberte and Mathilda
 - 1. Clement Laliberte and Aldina Morin
 - 2. John B. Laliberte
 - 3. Francois Laliberte and Couronne Soskwatcap

- II. Louis Morin and Margaret Jourdian
 - A. Theodore Morin
 - B. Cyril Morin
 - C. Pelagie Morin and Celestine Merasty
 - D. Joseph Morin
 - E. J.B. Morin

- III. Philomene Aubichon and Baptiste Aubichon (deceased)
 - A. Jean Baptiste Aubichon
 - B. Margaret Aubichon and Norbert Fraser
 - C. Mathias Aubichon
 - D. Pierre Aubichon and Philomene McCallum
 - E. Theophile Aubichon
 - F. John Fraser
 - G. Pierre McCallum

- IV. Josette Sinclair and James Nicol Sinclair, (deceased)
 - A. Alexander Sinclair
 - B. John Sinclair
 - C. Flora Sinclair and Gilbert Roy
 - D. Mrs. V. Roy
 - E. Peter and(?) Catherine Villebrun.

- V. De[s]rocher
 - A. Marcel De[s]rocher and Marie
 - B. Louis Derocher and Marie

- VI. Kennedy
 - A. Antoine Kennedy
 - B. Josephine Kennedy

- VII. Napoleon Girard and Annie Girard

- VIII. Baptiste Merasti
 - A. Narcisse Lafleur and Flora Merasti

record does however, contain evidence of his exercise of jurisdiction over land in Green Lake. Father Jules Teston wrote in 1923: "The Missionaries my predecessors having told me that piece of land was given by the late old Pierre Laliberte for a future mission as a donation to the church."⁵ Teston, in charge of the mission since 1886, said that old Pierre Laliberte had donated the land to the Church sometime before the construction of a chapel "in the summer time before the Rebellion," the summer of 1884.⁶ The title to church land was formalized by the registration of Green Lake Lot 4 East to the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Keewatin in 1923.⁷

The land record provided evidence that old Pierre Laliberte lived in Green Lake in 1844, as his son, Pierre Laliberte, was born there at that time.⁸ The younger Pierre was in fact himself an old man of sixty-seven by the time of the survey in 1912. The younger Pierre Laliberte (from now on simply Pierre) was himself the father of eleven children by 1912. Pierre's oldest child was forty-seven years old at the time of survey, although his youngest was still only ten years old then.⁹

The Pierre Laliberte family occupied three houses in Green Lake in 1912. They operated two stables in the management of their thirty cattle and ten horses. The location of the family just north of the Hudson's Bay Company suggested the family's historical relationship to the fur trade.¹⁰ Pierre Laliberte began residency about 1872, when he "was working for [the] H.B. Company."¹¹ In 1912 he testified that he had settled for good in Green Lake in 1880.¹² He would have been about thirty-five years old in 1880, and his claim to settlement in that year may have simply been the description of a time in his life when he became established in his own right on land historically occupied by his parental family. The land record provides no other commentary on whether he had lived elsewhere between his birth and his eventual settlement in Green Lake in 1880. However, since 1880 the Pierre Laliberte family had maintained the cattle and horse operation and since 1890 had cropped a five-acre vegetable and root garden.¹³ The ownership of a train of dogs suggested significant winter travel.¹⁴ Laliberte described himself as a "Trapper, fisherman and rancher."¹⁵ In 1912, the homestead inspector described Pierre as "a Fur Trader."¹⁶

The Antoine Laliberte family resided just south of the HBC. In 1912, at sixty-five years of age, Antoine was two years younger than Pierre. Antoine had been born in Red River

in 1847.¹⁷ Antoine was married to Mathilda,¹⁸ and together they had nine children between the ages of six and thirty years old.¹⁹ The Antoine Laliberte family lived in two houses, with the smaller of the two housing the family of Clement Laliberte, the thirty-year-old son of Antoine and Mathilda.²⁰ The Antoine Lalibertes claimed permanent residence just south of the HBC in 1889.²¹ They had broken a two-acre garden in 1890 and had cropped it each year since.²² By 1912, three stables provided shelter for five horses and sixteen cattle.²³ Antoine described himself as a "Rancher and Trapper," and, like Pierre, kept a train of dogs.²⁴

Antoine and Mathilda's son Clement Laliberte had been born in Lac-La-Biche in 1882.²⁵ Clement evidently moved into the second house in 1906.²⁶ By 1912, he and his wife, Aldina Morin, had two young children.²⁷ Clement described himself as a "Trapper and Fisherman," although he also owned four horses and four cattle in the family ranching operation.²⁸

The land record names a second son of Antoine and Mathilda, John B. Laliberte, in conjunction with Mathilda's effort to retain title to the family's land.²⁹ No other personal information about John B. is available through the land record, although he later gains title to the land originally claimed by Antoine.

The Laliberte name is associated with a third landholding in Green Lake, this one directly west across the lake from the HBC and the other two Laliberte sites. The recorded landholder, Francois Laliberte, was forty-two years old in 1912,³⁰ he may be a son of Pierre Laliberte, whose oldest child in 1912 was forty-seven years of age.

Francois was married to Couronne Soskwatcap.³¹ They had four children between the ages of five and twenty-four, and had permanently resided on the site since 1906.³² Besides their log home, the family had constructed one additional outbuilding.³³ Francois claimed "Trading only" as his occupation.³⁴ He owned three horses, but they recorded no cultivation of the site.³⁵

The Morin family

The eldest Morin in the land record is Louis Morin, who at the age of sixty-six (in 1912) was clearly a contemporary of Pierre Laliberte, age sixty-seven, and Antoine Laliberte, sixty-five.³⁶ Louis Morin's land lay directly north of that of Pierre Laliberte,³⁷ and had been

in the Morin family since at least 1866, when Louis had begun permanent residency.³⁸ Louis had been born in Ile-à-la-Crosse.³⁹ His permanent residency in Green Lake in 1866 coincided with the birth of his oldest child, who was forty-six years old in 1912.⁴⁰ During their residency in Green Lake, Louis and his wife, Margaret Jourdian,⁴¹ had nine children, the youngest of whom was fifteen years old in 1912.⁴²

The land record verified continuous land occupancy by two sons of Louis Morin, Theodore and Cyril Morin.⁴³ These two brothers occupied the Morin land from "about 1900."⁴⁴ Again, it is likely that this date is more representative of increased ownership and operation of the Morin holdings by the brothers rather than movement to Green Lake from another community.

The Morin family holdings in Green Lake were extensive. The family occupied four houses, including a substantial one-and-a-half-story main dwelling and three smaller single-story houses.⁴⁵ The Morin livestock operation incorporated five log stables and considerable fencing; In 1912, the family owned six horses and thirty cattle.⁴⁶ Since first starting to work the land in 1866, the Morins had broken a little more ground each year; By 1912, they were cropping ten acres.⁴⁷ Louis Morin described himself as a "Rancher and Trader."⁴⁸

Louis Morin's daughter Pelagie was the wife of Celestin Merasty.⁴⁹ Pelagie and Celestin had probably grown up together in Green Lake, and had settled together on the west bank of the Green River, about one mile north of the lake.⁵⁰ Celestin had been born in Green Lake in 1872, suggesting earlier parental residency.⁵¹ Celestin and Pelagie had settled on their residency in 1900, at a time when their oldest child was seven years old.⁵² By 1912, they had eight children ranging from a newborn of two months to the oldest who had reached the age of nineteen.⁵³ The family lived only "around the place of Green Lake."⁵⁴

Celestin Mirasty exemplifies the range of labouring activities of the men of Green Lake. He reported occupational activity in "Hunting, Fishing, Freighting[,] trapping and cutting of hay."⁵⁵ In addition, two acres of broken land had provided crops for Celestin and Pelagie for the last ten years.⁵⁶ The family kept three head of cattle.⁵⁷ Besides their log house, the Merasty's maintained a log stable and some fencing.⁵⁸

Two more references to the Morin surname occur in Green Lake in 1912. In that year, Joseph Morin built (but reportedly never lived in) a large house on the West side of the lake,

almost directly across from the HBC warehouse.⁵⁹ The land record does not tell of Joseph's relationship, if any, to Louis Morin.

The record does, however, repeatedly contain the signature of "J.B Morin J.P.," who witnessed many 1912 documents in the record, evidently in his role as a Justice of the Peace. Several contemporary Green Lake residents show descent from potential candidates likely to have been alive circa 1912, but the evidence in the land record regarding further identification of this Morin remains inconclusive.⁶⁰

The Aubichon family

The oldest living member of the Aubichon family in Green Lake in 1912 was Philomen Aubichon, widow of Baptiste Aubichon. Philomen was sixty-three years old in 1912, making her and her deceased husband contemporaries of Pierre Laliberte, Antoine Laliberte and Louis Morin (66).⁶¹ Philomen and at least one son maintained homes on the west shore of Green Lake, directly across from the Roman Catholic Mission and the HBC.⁶² Philomen's daughter, Margaret, lived on the Northwest corner of Green Lake, directly north of her parental home.⁶³ Two Aubichons, Pierre and Mathias, had established homes about one mile north of Green Lake, on the western shoreline of Green River as it flowed north to meet the Beaver River.⁶⁴

Philomen had been born in Red River in 1849, and had first settled with Baptiste on the western shore of Green Lake in about 1872.⁶⁵ Philomen had given birth to twelve children; in 1912 the oldest was forty-eight, the youngest was twenty-four.⁶⁶ In her forty-some years of living in Green Lake, Philomen lived only there, "going only around Green Lake."⁶⁷

About 1892 the Aubichons had broken one and one-half acres of land, which had since been cropped regularly, yielding "about 40 bushels of potatoes" each year.⁶⁸ In addition, Philomen said she had done "any kind of works but not one well determined."⁶⁹ In 1912, Philomen continued to live in a log house and kept three horses and five head of cattle in a single stable.⁷⁰ She had several acres of her site fenced to retain the livestock and protect the cropped area.⁷¹

Of the children of Baptiste and Philomen Aubichon, Jean Baptiste Aubichon resided the closest to Philomen's home. Settled south of his mother's house, Jean Baptiste lived approximately halfway between her and the house that Joseph Morin built in 1912.⁷² Jean

Baptiste was forty-three years old in 1912; his birth in Green Lake in 1869 seems to suggest that Baptiste and Philomen had resided in Green Lake before the 1872 date that Philomen recorded as the date of their permanent settlement there.⁷³

Jean Baptiste claimed to have taken up permanent residence in 1888.⁷⁴ He was married to Suzanne Merasti,⁷⁵ and since settling they had remained "around the place of Green Lake."⁷⁶ By 1912 they had ten children of their own, with the oldest being twenty-one years of age and the youngest only eleven months old.⁷⁷ The record did not show how many Aubichon children continued to reside with the couple in 1912, although by that time they had constructed a small second house, a stable and some fencing.⁷⁸ The stable housed the Aubichon's five horses and two cows.⁷⁹ Jean Baptiste cited fishing and trapping as his major occupations, although he also did "labour works" which involved his absence from Green Lake.⁸⁰

Philomen and Baptiste's daughter Margaret was thirty-nine years old in 1912.⁸¹ Born in Green Lake in 1873, by 1912 Margaret was married to Norbert Fraser and had two children by him.⁸² In addition Margaret ". . . had five children by a previous marriage,"⁸³ to Baptiste Morin.⁸⁴

Margaret Aubichon and Norbert Fraser lived on the northwest corner of the lake, a couple of hundred yards directly north of Margaret's mother Philomen.⁸⁵ It is not known whether this site represented an extension of traditional Aubichon lands or the site of Norbert Fraser's parental settlement. The fact of Norbert's birth in Green Lake in 1874 enhances the latter possibility.⁸⁶ Norbert had first made improvements of his own to the site in 1899, at the age of twenty-five.⁸⁷ He had taken up residence there, either on his own or with Margaret, in 1906.⁸⁸ The land he and Margaret claimed had "been cleared, but [was now] overgrown with brush and scrub. [The] House [had] burned down."⁸⁹ In the last several years before 1912, Fraser had lived "Only around here, Green Lake."⁹⁰

Norbert's occupation while living on his land in Green Lake was fishing, but when not living on his land he was "Fishing, freighting, trapping [and] cleaking hay."⁹¹ The meaning of the latter occupational description was not evident on first reading. However, subsequent consideration has suggested that the word cleaking is, in fact, to be pronounced 'clekking' and is a phonetic rendering of 'collecting' hay. This interpretation would fit well with reliance on

naturally occurring marsh grasses for the purposes of livestock fodder.

The land record does not specifically identify either Mathias Aubichon or Pierre Aubichon as brother to Margaret and Jean Baptiste. However, Mathias's birth in Green Lake in 1882 would be consistent with the ages of the children of Baptiste and Philomen Aubichon.⁹² As well, Mathias and Pierre lived close to one another; their homes were situated about one mile north of the lakeshore ancestral home of the Aubichons.⁹³ Unfortunately, the land file of Pierre Aubichon was not found.⁹⁴ As a result, we know little more than his residence next to that of Mathias. His wife's birth name was Philomene McCallum.⁹⁵

Mathias Aubichon was thirty years old in 1912, having been born in Green Lake in 1882.⁹⁶ He was married, with three children; the oldest was ten and the youngest was two years.⁹⁷ He had first settled on the piece of land he now claimed as his own in 1906.⁹⁸ He had maintained that home, meanwhile "Going only around Green Lake 15 - 20 - 40 miles distance."⁹⁹

The Mathias Aubichon's lived in a small log house.¹⁰⁰ Their stable housed their two horses and four head of cattle.¹⁰¹ They had built some fencing and a small warehouse.¹⁰² Mathias worked at trapping, freighting and fishing.¹⁰³ In addition, the family had broken and now cropped a one acre plot that provided "Only a few potatoes[,] 3 or 4 Bu[shels]."¹⁰⁴

The land record identifies Theophile Aubichon as the son of Philomen, and so a brother to Margaret and Jean Baptiste.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately, the only other information in the land record about Theophile is that he resided with Philomen in 1912 and spoke for her claim to the land on which they resided.¹⁰⁶

Adding to the probability of an earlier Fraser presence in Green Lake was the 1912 residence of a second Fraser, John, in Green Lake. The land record is not helpful with respect to the relationship, if any, between John and Norbert. John was six years younger than Norbert, having been born in 1880 in Lac la Biche.¹⁰⁷ However, when one recalls the birth of Clement Laliberte in Lac-la-Biche in 1882, Norbert's birth at that location suggested some common pattern of work and residence between the Laliberte and Fraser families rather than a lack of familial relationship between John and Norbert.

John's most recent settlement in Green Lake in 1909 had occurred ten years later than had Norbert's.¹⁰⁸ His taking up of more permanent settlement at the age of twenty-nine seems

consistent with the pattern of male settlement displayed by other residents at that age. Again there is the possibility of the taking up of parental lands, although John and his wife and their children (ages one and five) had settled some distance from Green Lake.¹⁰⁹

Pierre McCallum was twenty-four years old in 1912, having been born in Green Lake in 1888. Pierre was married and had a two-and-one-half-year-old daughter. Pierre had settled on NE 30-61-12 in May of 1911, and as yet had not made any improvements on that piece of land. A "Trapper and Fisherman," Pierre had no stock, cultivation or buildings to report. When not living on their land, the McCallums resided on SW 25-61-13.¹¹⁰ We should note that this is the same quarter-section as Celestine Merasty, Pierre Aubichon and Mathias Aubichon. Pierre or his wife may have been related to one of those settler families; for example, Philomene, wife of Pierre Aubichon, may have been Pierre McCallum's sister.

The Sinclair family

Josette Sinclair was sixty years old in 1912, having been born Josephette Durocher in the Pelican Lake Indian Settlement in 1852.¹¹¹ In 1872, at the age of twenty, she had taken up residence in Green Lake with her husband, James Nicol Sinclair.¹¹² By 1912, James was dead. Josette and James had fourteen children, eight girls and six boys, the oldest of whom was forty years old and the youngest twenty-one.¹¹³

The Sinclairs' operation had combined "Farming [and] raising a few head of cattle."¹¹⁴ Josette and probably Nicholas worked outside their own land as well, doing what Josette described as "labour works."¹¹⁵ On their own land, they had broken two acres in 1897, and cropped them since.¹¹⁶ Josette Sinclair's stable in 1912 provided shelter for her six horses and eight head of cattle.¹¹⁷ When asked in 1912 if she had lived anywhere else since taking up residence, she replied "Going only around Green Lake."¹¹⁸ Josette resided in one of the largest houses in Green Lake, a thirty-five by twenty-five foot, one-and-a-half story, log home.¹¹⁹ The relatively low value ascribed to the house (relative, for example to the smaller Morin house) suggested a decline in the Sinclair family's material wealth following the death of James.¹²⁰ Nonetheless, they still maintained considerable fencing at the time of survey.¹²¹

Several other people appeared sporadically in the land record concerning the Sinclair subdivision. We know that her son Alexander shared the house with Mrs. Sinclair.¹²² Alexander Sinclair was twenty-three years old and single in 1912; in 1919 he would describe

himself as a farmer, but no record was made of his occupation in 1912.¹²³ John Sinclair was born in Green Lake and resided there continuously.¹²⁴ He was thirty-one years old in 1912 and was ranching on NW 36-61-13 in 1912.¹²⁵ Gilbert Roy was thirty-one years old in 1912. His wife, Flora Sinclair, was also thirty-one years old. Their oldest daughter was age ten, while two boys were ages nine and seven. The Roys may also have had younger children. Gilbert listed his occupation as "Trapper" in 1919.¹²⁶ On an application for transfer (1926), a Mrs. V. Roy claimed 1910 residence on SE 30-61-12.¹²⁷ Peter Villebrun, who aided several claimants to pursue title, took up residence on Lot 12 East in 1912.¹²⁸ Catherine Villebrun witnessed the signature of Marcel Desrocher in 1913.¹²⁹ The pursuit of the land claim in the sole name of Josette Sinclair after 1912 resulted in there being little further information about family or friends associated with the Sinclair site.

The De(s)rocher Family¹³⁰

Marcel Derocher was born in Green Lake in 1870, and "always lived there."¹³¹ At the age of forty-two, Marcel applied for entry as a homesteader in Green Lake in 1912, although he had been living there with his family "for years."¹³² Marcel was the husband of Marie, age thirty-seven.¹³³ Their son Joseph was age eight in 1912, and their daughter Anne was six.¹³⁴ They owned five horses and five head of cattle.¹³⁵ They had "one dwelling house and three stables, one hay yard one Pasture and there are about 140 acres of farm land, bluffy, the rest swamp land surrounded by willows."¹³⁶ Derocher described himself as a "Hunter and Trapper."¹³⁷

Louis Derocher was twenty-five years old in 1912. His wife was also named Marie,¹³⁸ and she was the same age as he was.¹³⁹ They had one child age six and a sixteen-year-old female living with them.¹⁴⁰ They "became . . . resident upon and began to cultivate the said land before the same was surveyed" in 1912.¹⁴¹ Louis listed his previous occupation as "Hunter."¹⁴²

Annie and Napoleon Girard

Napoleon Girard was fifty years old in 1912, married to Annie and the father of six children between the ages of one and twenty years.¹⁴³ Napoleon had been born (with only one arm)¹⁴⁴ at Lake Athabaska in 1862.¹⁴⁵ Napoleon had begun residence in Green Lake in about

1907¹⁴⁶, and since then had lived "only at Green Lake."¹⁴⁷ The Girards lived in a small log house and had no other buildings.¹⁴⁸

Napoleon supported the family through hunting, fishing and trapping.¹⁴⁹ In addition, the Girards had "cleared a few acres" and maintained a small potato patch.¹⁵⁰ They kept no livestock.¹⁵¹

The Kennedy family

Antoine Kennedy was thirty-five years old in 1912.¹⁵² He was married, with five children between the ages of one and eleven.¹⁵³ He had been born in Il-a-la-Crosse in 1877, and had settled in Green Lake in 1900.¹⁵⁴ He had been a continuous resident there since then, working as a trapper and a fisherman.¹⁵⁵ The Kennedy family lived in a sixteen-by-eighteen-foot house valued at \$150.¹⁵⁶

Josephine Kennedy settled in Green Lake at about the same time as Antoine and lived nearby.¹⁵⁷ It is suspected that Josephine was the mother of Antoine.

The Merasti and Lafleur families

In 1912 Baptiste Merasti camped on the west side of Green Lake "when at Green Lake for a few days at a time."¹⁵⁸ He also for some time had a ranch at Sled Lake,¹⁵⁹ although it is not certain that he did so in 1912.

Narcisse Lafleur was married to Flora Merasti, the daughter of Baptiste Merasti.¹⁶⁰ The Lafleurs settled on their land in 1906,¹⁶¹ building their first house upon it in June of 1907.¹⁶² They built their home some two miles to the east of Green Lake; a more detailed description of their holdings is not available.

Non-Aboriginal residents

The non-Aboriginal population of Green Lake was clearly a small minority in 1912. The following list is fairly complete, but the possibility of Revillon Freres and HBC personnel living on their respective lots could change that assumption.

Edward Beatty was forty-two years old in 1912. He had been born in Lakefield, Ontario in 1870, and had left Peterborough, Ontario to go northwest at the age of sixteen. His

occupations after coming to the northwest included those of "Fur trader, trapper etc." He had started building on his present land in May 1911 and took up residence in September of that year. He was married and had four children between the ages of one and six years of age.

In 1912 Beatty reported employment as a Dominion Forest Fire Ranger when not living at home. The Beatty home was a thirty-by-sixteen-foot structure worth an estimated \$350. Although Beatty had not yet broken any land, he stated "will fence 1/2 of 1/4 sect: next spring and will break up as much as possible clearing gradually[,] will file as soon as land is open for entry."¹⁶³ Beatty owned one horse.¹⁶⁴ He claimed "Farmer" as his occupation when applying for Entry.¹⁶⁵

Florence B. Beatty corroborated the statement of Edward Beatty.¹⁶⁶ If, as seems likely, she was the wife of Edward, she was twenty-nine years old in 1912.¹⁶⁷

The residency of Jules Emile Teston, O.M.I., has been described above in the corroboration of information concerning "old" Pierre Laliberte.

Robert P. White began residing in Green Lake "Nov. 1912 as Govt. Telegraph agent."¹⁶⁸ No further record of White was found.

Notes

¹ *Tapitow-ka Kiskisinow: We'll Always Remember*, ed. Jane Regan (Green Lake: Challenge SEED Student Program and Green Lake Home Care Board, 1990).

² Green Lake Index to the Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Ile-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan. Sister Sheila Whelan provided me with a copy of this document.

³ Department of the Interior Index to North West Half-Breed Claims (RG 15, Volume 1515). Clem Chartier provided me with a copy of the "Evidence taken at Ile-à-la-Crosse" in 1906. Ken Hatt reviewed the 1889 distribution of scrip at Green Lake in "Scrip, Lots and Leases: The Administration of Land and Metis Land Claims at Green Lake," a report commissioned by the Native Council of Canada, 31 March 1980.

⁴ SAB Ag11-II, NE 18-61-12, Teston to ?, 22 January 1923.

⁵ SAB Ag11-II, NE 18-61-12, Teston to ?, 22 January 1923.

⁶ SAB Ag11-II, NE 18-61-12, Teston to ?, 22 January 1923.

⁷ SAB 4802965, Patent, 1923-11-17.

⁸ SAB 2570290, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

⁹ SAB 2570290, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

¹⁰ SAB Map A28\8. Circumstantial evidence for the common ancestral origins of Pierre and Antoine Laliberte can be found in their respective residential locations, with the Pierre Laliberte family directly north of the HBC and the Antoine Laliberte family to the south.

¹¹ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Homestead Inspector's Report, 12 March 1912.

¹² SAB 2570290, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

¹³ SAB 2570290, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

¹⁴ SAB 2570290, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

¹⁵ SAB 2570290, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

¹⁶ SAB AG11-II NE 18-61-12, Homestead Inspector's Report, 12 March 1912.

¹⁷ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

¹⁸ *Tapitow-ka kiskisinow*, Victoria Sinclair. Mathilda's surname is listed as Collings on the marriage certificate of Clement Laliberte. However, scrip index (RG 15, Volume 1515, Applications 244 and 246) suggests the surnames Fraser and/or Clement for Mathilda Laliberte.

¹⁹ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁰ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²¹ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²² SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²³ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁴ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁵ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁶ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁷ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁸ SAB 2570288, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

²⁹ SAB 2665096, Cote Memorandum, 6 July 1923.

³⁰ SAB 2909031, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.

³¹ Green Lake Index, 1886.

- ³² SAB 2909031, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ³³ SAB 2909031, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ³⁴ SAB 2909031, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ³⁵ SAB 2909031, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ³⁶ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ³⁷ SAB Map A28\14.
- ³⁸ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ³⁹ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴⁰ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴¹ *Tapitow-ka kiskisinow*, Norbert Merasty, Ernestine Laliberte.
- ⁴² SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴³ SAB 4802969, Letter from Theodore Morin to Department of the Interior, 30 October 1924.
- ⁴⁴ SAB 2665096, Cote Memorandum, 23 August 1924, quoting Homestead Inspector's Report, 12 June 1923.
- ⁴⁵ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴⁶ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴⁷ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴⁸ SAB 2571286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ⁴⁹ *Tapitow-ka Kiskisinow*: Mary Fulton, Norbert Merasty.
- ⁵⁰ SAB Map A28/12.
- ⁵¹ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵² SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵³ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵⁴ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵⁵ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵⁶ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵⁷ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵⁸ SAB 2908950, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁵⁹ SAB 2665096, Homestead Inspector's Report, 13 June 1923, as cited in Cote Memorandum, 11 July 1923. Note that the 1923 Report goes on to say that Joseph Morin "lives at Island Hill about half way between Green Lake and Meadow Lake."
- ⁶⁰ *Tapitow-ka Kiskisinow*, Cecilia Aubichon and Eva Durocher: (J.B Morin, married to Philomene Morin). The church index recorded the marriage of Jean Baptiste Morin to Philomene Merastie in 1886. But see also Harry Gardiner (Jean Baptiste Morin married to Margaret Aubichon) and Abraham Laliberte (John Baptiste Morin married to Margaret Aubichon); the church index recorded the marriage of Baptiste Morin to Marguerite Aubichon in 1890.
- ⁶¹ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁶² SAB Map A28/14.
- ⁶³ SAB Map A28/14.
- ⁶⁴ SAB Map A28/14.
- ⁶⁵ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁶⁶ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁶⁷ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.

- ⁶⁸ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁶⁹ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷⁰ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷¹ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷² SAB Map A28/14.
- ⁷³ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷⁴ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷⁵ Green Lake Index, Jean-Baptiste Aubichon to Suzanne Merasti in 1889; see further *Tapitow-ka Kiskisinow*, Delphine Laliberte and Mary Jane Regan.
- ⁷⁶ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷⁷ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷⁸ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁷⁹ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁸⁰ SAB 2908952, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁸¹ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration (Norbert Fraser), 16 August 1912.
- ⁸² SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration (Norbert Fraser), 16 August 1912.
- ⁸³ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration (Norbert Fraser), 16 August 1912.
- ⁸⁴ See also *Tapitow-ka Kiskisinow*, Catherine Gardiner.
- ⁸⁵ SAB Map A28/14.
- ⁸⁶ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁸⁷ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁸⁸ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁸⁹ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹⁰ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹¹ SAB 2909029, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹² SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹³ SAB Map A28/14.
- ⁹⁴ Should be Department of the Interior homestead file 4802961.
- ⁹⁵ *Tapitow-ka Kiskisinow*, Marie McCallum; Green Lake Index, 1883.
- ⁹⁶ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹⁷ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹⁸ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ⁹⁹ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰⁰ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰¹ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰² SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰³ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰⁴ SAB 2909027, Statutory Declaration, 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰⁵ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration (Philomen Aubichon), 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰⁶ SAB 2909033, Statutory Declaration (Philomen Aubichon), 16 August 1912.
- ¹⁰⁷ SAB 2570292, Statutory Declaration, 5 December 1911.
- ¹⁰⁸ SAB 2570292, Statutory Declaration, 5 December 1911.
- ¹⁰⁹ SAB 2570292, Statutory Declaration, 5 December 1911.
- ¹¹⁰ SAB 2570280, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.

- ¹¹¹ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912. Birth name from Green Lake Index.
- ¹¹² SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹³ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁴ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁵ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁶ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁷ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁸ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹¹⁹ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹²⁰ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹²¹ SAB 2908946, Statutory Declaration, 17 August 1912.
- ¹²² SAB 2908946, Homestead Inspector's Report, June 13, 1923.
- ¹²³ SAB 4245035, Application for Entry, 12 August 1919.
- ¹²⁴ SAB Ag11-I NW 12-62-13, Homestead Inspector's Report, November 27, 1931.
- ¹²⁵ SAB 2530449, Statement, 11 December 1916.
- ¹²⁶ SAB 4245035, Application for Entry, 14 August 1919.
- ¹²⁷ SAB Ag11-I SW 13-62-13, Application for transfer.
- ¹²⁸ SAB 2908946, Homestead Inspector's Report, June 13, 1923.
- ¹²⁹ SAB 2758485, Declaration of Abandonment, 12 September 1913.
- ¹³⁰ Derocher, Desrocher and Durocher appear to be written variants of the same name. The current spelling in the 1990 genealogy appears to be Durocher.
- ¹³¹ SAB Ag11-I NW 1-62-13, Peter Villebrun "To the Land Agent, Battlefords," undated, but likely 1912 to accompany letter of Marcel Desrocher to Dominion Lands Agent, Battleford, same file, 29 August 1912.
- ¹³² SAB 2758485, Declaration of Abandonment, 12 September 1913.
- ¹³³ SAB Ag11-I NW 1-62-13, Peter Villebrun to Land Agent, Battlefords, undated (1912).
- ¹³⁴ SAB Ag11-I NW 1-62-13, Peter Villebrun to Land Agent, Battlefords, undated (1912).
- ¹³⁵ SAB Ag11-I NW 1-62-13, Peter Villebrun to Land Agent, Battlefords, undated (1912).
- ¹³⁶ SAB Ag11-I NW 1-62-13, Peter Villebrun to Land Agent, Battlefords, undated (1912).
- ¹³⁷ 2758485, Application for Entry, 12 August 1912.
- ¹³⁸ 2728253, Grant, 27 August 1919.
- ¹³⁹ 2728253, Affidavit, 12 July 1912.
- ¹⁴⁰ 2728253, Affidavit, 15 July 1912.
- ¹⁴¹ 2728253, Affidavit, 15 July 1912.
- ¹⁴² 2728253, Affidavit, 15 July 1912.
- ¹⁴³ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.
- ¹⁴⁴ SAB 2908948, Letter from A. Girard to Department of Interior, 27 September 1920.
- ¹⁴⁵ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.
- ¹⁴⁶ But note that in 1922 Annie Girard claimed 25 or 30 years residence in Green lake. SAB 2908948, Homestead Inspector's Report, 6 December 1922.
- ¹⁴⁷ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.
- ¹⁴⁸ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.
- ¹⁴⁹ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.
- ¹⁵⁰ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.

- ¹⁵¹ SAB 2908948, Statutory Declaration, 19 August 1912.
- ¹⁵² SAB 2570286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ¹⁵³ SAB 2570286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ¹⁵⁴ SAB 2570286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ¹⁵⁵ SAB 2570286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ¹⁵⁶ SAB 2570286, Statutory Declaration, 4 December 1911.
- ¹⁵⁷ SAB 4802945, Homestead Inspector's Report, 12 June 1923.
- ¹⁵⁸ SAB 4802957, Sheppard to Cote, 3 July 1923. Note also ". . . my correct name is Baptiste Merasti . . ." Letter from B. Merasti to N.O. Cote, 8 August 1923.
- ¹⁵⁹ SAB 4802957, Sheppard to Cote, 3 July, 1923.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Tapitow-Ka Kiskisnow*, George Lafleur.
- ¹⁶¹ SAB Ag11-I NW 21-61-12, Kinnear to Director of Lands, 3 March 1933.
- ¹⁶² SAB Ag11-I NW 21-61-12, Application, 5 September 1940.
- ¹⁶³ SAB 2530449, Application for Entry, 4 October 1912.
- ¹⁶⁴ SAB 2530449, Statutory Declaration, 25 September 1911.
- ¹⁶⁵ SAB 2530449, Application for Entry, 4 October 1912.
- ¹⁶⁶ SAB 2530449, Statutory Declaration, 25 September, 1911.
- ¹⁶⁷ SAB 2530449, Application for Entry (Edward Beatty), 4 October 1912.
- ¹⁶⁸ SAB 3176560, Declaration, 4 April 1914.