

THE PUGET'S SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY
ON VANCOUVER ISLAND: 1847 - 1857

by

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PROBLEMS OF THE PUGET'S SOUND AGRICULTURAL COMPANY ON VANCOUVER
ISLAND 1847-1857

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ABSTRACT

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, a subsidiary of the Hudson's Bay Company, undertook to develop several large farms on Vancouver Island. There were several reasons for this decision. The Hudson's Bay Company was retreating from the Oregon country, recently conceded to the United States, and Vancouver Island was the closest British-held region from which the Company could continue to carry on its various operations. The desirability of establishing farms had been made evident to the London directors by the profitable results of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's farms at Cowlitz and Nisqually in what is now the state of Washington. The advent of the gold rush to California heightened the expectations of profit as the directors anticipated a rise in the demand for food. Finally, the directors believed that they could fulfill the terms of the grant of 1849 which gave the Hudson's Bay Company control over Vancouver Island. These terms obligated the Company to promote systematic settlement of the island.

None of these hopes for the farms were realized. Commercially they were a disaster, running ever more deeply into debt until the Hudson's Bay Company, the major creditor of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, had to assume all of the subsidiary firm's assets. While conditions along the west coast were not particularly favorable to large-scale farming, because of high wages and a shortage of labour, the thesis addresses itself mainly to the internal causes of failure which were numerous.

Although the same men were directing the affairs of both the parent Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, the administration of the latter left a great deal to be desired. The entire venture on Vancouver Island was ill-conceived and badly executed. The

directors exhibited a nonchalant attitude which originated from an unfounded optimism about the agricultural potential of the island. Why they entertained such a view remains a mystery, because they were given several negative reports of the island and were counselled on many occasions not to attempt large-scale farming there. The directors' optimism was matched by a negligence which resulted in a contradictory and self-defeating system of administration. The administrative structure created numerous problems for the bailiffs who managed the farms, as well as for the agent who was supposed to co-ordinate their activities. Progress was impeded by the conflicts which arose between the agent and the bailiffs, conflicts which were built into the structure itself. Moreover, the directors had a knack of appointing men unsuited to the task of managing the farms, and the antagonisms that arose were intensified by the personal clashes between the principal characters. The end result was near-chaos.

The labour problems which the Company encountered can also be laid at the directors' door. Although they were forewarned about the critical labour shortage prevalent along the west coast, a consequence of the gold rush, and about the astronomical rise in wages, the directors failed to adjust the Company's wage scale to meet that of the free labourers. It did not take long for the Company's workers to appraise the situation and to act accordingly, The Company was quickly placed in a dilemma because if the directors were to raise the wage scale, profits would be sharply reduced. But to refuse to do so would encourage desertions and thus threaten to undermine the entire venture. Basically, then, the Company was the author of its own misfortunes.

To my wife, Sheilah,
who encouraged me throughout my endeavors.

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INTRODUCTION

From its establishment in 1838 the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was intimately connected with the Hudson's Bay Company. One of the manifestations of this close relationship was the manner of raising capital for the agricultural firm. Only the stockholders and officers of the Hudson's Bay Company were permitted to buy stock in the new company, and the amount each person could own was directly proportionate to the amount of fur trade stock he possessed. Additional factors which accounted for the slow sale of stock were the cost of share lots, £100, and the lack of knowledge about the country where the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's farms were to be established.¹ At the end of 1853 there were still 866 of the original 2000 shares unsold.²

The ambitions of the Hudson's Bay Company with respect to the Oregon Country were responsible for the formation of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. Hoping to preserve a buffer territory between the fur-bearing lands of New Caledonia and the southern portion of Oregon, the Hudson's Bay Company expended a considerable amount of time and energy in promoting the Columbia River as the boundary between the American and British claims in the region. Almost until the end of the 1820s the Company argued its proposal on the bases that its employees were the only white inhabitants in the entire Oregon country, and that the Columbia River was essential to the fur trade of the lands west of the Rocky Mountains. When boundary discussions between Great Britain and the United States broke down in 1827, the Company made a feeble attempt to extend its presence south of the Columbia in the expectation that actual occupancy would establish a claim to the land, and that the claim could then be used as a bargaining lever at any future negotiations. But the Company's

most successful tactic was the one used in other parts of North America wherever the Company had encountered threats to its monopolistic influence and control over the fur trade. The tactic was the exclusion of all competitors through rendering the fur trade unprofitable to them. The Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company assumed that American settlers would follow close behind American fur traders. By keeping out the rival traders, they reasoned, American settlement of Oregon would be delayed. By the mid-1830s there were increasing signs that the Governor and Committee were mistaken. They revised their Oregon policy; the only way to impede the American occupation of Oregon was to counteract it with British immigration. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was created as a major component of this policy.

In the Hudson's Bay Company's scheme for settling Oregon, it was necessary to establish a flourishing agricultural development before any immigrants could be permitted to enter the territory. One reason was that settlers would have to be maintained until they could support themselves. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company founded two farming centres, one at Cowlitz Portage (near present day Toledo, Washington) and the other at Fort Nisqually (near Dupont, Washington).³ By 1841 both locations were showing promising results. Cowlitz Farm was producing several thousand bushels each of wheat and oats, as well as considerable quantities of other crops. Nisqually concentrated on livestock and by the same year it had extensive herds of cattle and large flocks of sheep.

Settlement had not only to be British, but the Hudson's Bay Company had to keep immigration subject to its control. Thus, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was intended to have a relationship with immigrants which would last beyond supporting them in their first few years. John Pelly, Andrew Colville and George Simpson, the directors of the agricul-

tural firm, conceived a plan to attract "respectable farming families" from Great Britain. Each family was to be accompanied by two or three labourers, and to be supplied by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company with one hundred acres of land, a house, twenty cows, one bull, five hundred sheep, eight oxen, six horses and a few hogs. The plan did not grant ownership of the land to the farmer; he would lease the land from the Company which would have a right to one half of the increase of his stock and to one half of the produce of his fields. Events in Oregon created a need to seek emigrants from a source closer to the territory before the plan could be publicized.

Turning to the Red River settlement, the Company offered the same conditions of land tenure as it had intended to promote in Britain. The Company could not fathom the attraction of free ownership of land. Its failure to offer free ownership, in spite of its otherwise generous terms, was one reason for the collapse of the entire colonization scheme. The Company feared that free settlement would jeopardize the fur trade of the interior. Of the few families that did come from Red River to settle around Nisqually, none remained after 1843 as they all drifted to the Willamette Valley. This exodus did much to dampen the Company's ardour and cut short its plans for further settlement. By 1845 American settlers were flooding into Oregon and in the following year the resolution of the Oregon Question nullified the original purpose of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. Cowlitz and Nisqually were maintained strictly as profit-making enterprises.

The conclusion to the Oregon boundary dispute left the fur lands of New Caledonia in an exposed situation. Vancouver Island took on significance as a buffer zone for the fur lands to the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company. It became imperative for the Company

to promote settlement on Vancouver Island for two reasons. First, the northward movement of American settlement had to be halted before it spilled over the forty-ninth parallel. Second, if the Hudson's Bay Company failed to promote colonization, the Colonial Office might seek another organization to do it, thereby introducing a potential trading rival into close proximity to the fur area. The emigration project devised for Vancouver Island was quite different from the one earlier attempted in Oregon. The emphasis now was to be on free (as opposed to "controlled") settlement, with land sold at £1 per acre in parcels no smaller than twenty acres.

At first the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company had no connection with the colonization of Vancouver Island. The decision to establish the Company there was part of the Hudson's Bay Company's organized withdrawal from Oregon. Although Cowlitz and Nisqually had begun to show profits, the officers of the fur trade realized that the various concerns of the Hudson's Bay Company in American territory would have to be terminated. At the same time, Cowlitz and Nisqually gave reason to hope that profitable farms might be set up on Vancouver Island.⁴ Between 1850 and 1853 the island became the location of four Puget's Sound Agricultural Company farms. The original plan for extending the Company's operations was a purely commercial one: the Company would sell its produce to the parent firm's employees and to whalers and coal ships.

While the profit motive was always present as long as the farms continued, it diminished in importance as the Hudson's Bay Company began to adopt a defensive tone in the face of its detractors. The Company had to answer accusations that it was trying to circumvent the conditions of the grant of 1849 by discouraging emigration to Vancouver Island. The Company had left itself open to this charge when it reserved to itself and to the

agricultural firm large tracts of land near Fort Victoria. Pelly's answer was that justice and urgency dictated the Company's actions.⁵ When Pelly faded from the scene, to be replaced by Andrew Colvile who opposed any policy of independent settlement, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company became a vehicle for Company-controlled settlement. It also provided concrete evidence of the sincerity of the Hudson's Bay Company's efforts to colonize and develop Vancouver Island.

The story of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company during the middle of the nineteenth century is so full of mis-management and neglect by the head office in London that one might easily conclude that the farms were nothing more than part-time hobbies indulged in by the directors whenever the mood struck them. However, the reason for the neglect lies to a considerable extent in the general circumstances of the parent firm. The year 1846 ushered in a quarter-century of set-backs and upheaval for the Hudson's Bay Company. In just over ten years from that date it lost its claim in Oregon, experienced serious unrest in Red River, and was investigated by a parliamentary committee. Within another fifteen years its directors sold their controlling interest to outsiders and the Company surrendered its charter to Rupert's Land. The existence of the four farms on Vancouver Island coincided with the first sequence of disturbances. The London directors, caught up in a rapid succession of pressing issues, had little time to devote to the subsidiary enterprise. They also entertained some fantastic delusions about the feasibility of farming on Vancouver Island. These delusions lulled them into a complacency about the state of the farms. The consequences of the directors' neglect would be disastrous.

CHAPTER ONE

PREPARING THE GROUNDWORK

The earliest reasons for the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's farms on Vancouver Island were founded in the emergency created by the settlement of the Oregon Question. The feeling of urgency was soon replaced by a mood of optimism among the directors caused by the impact of the California gold rush and the granting of Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company. While the original purpose of the farms was to make a profit, the directors displayed a rather unorthodox manner of operating a commercial enterprise. They acted without caution in the face of negative reports about the agricultural and economic prospects of the island. They followed their assumptions instead of critically examining all aspects of the venture. This modus operandi was employed even in specific details such as the hiring of Edward Edwards Langford as bailiff. Such a lax style of management could only guarantee that future problems would arise.

The prevailing atmosphere in the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company after the resolution of the Oregon Question became one of urgency. The Company's officers had suspected for several months prior to the outcome of the issue that it would be settled in a manner unfavorable to the interests of the fur trade. When the boundary was defined their attention was absorbed by the need to establish the extent and value of all the Company's holdings in Oregon as a first step to selling them to the United States Government.¹ They also had to protect them in the meantime. Even before the agreement between Great Britain and the United States was signed, the officers of the Company realized that in the event of an

American victory the Company's property would be jeopardized by land-hungry settlers. Peter Skene Ogden, a member of the board of management for the western department, warned the overseas governor George Simpson in March 1846 that "so far all is apparently tranquil but still we are looked upon with a suspicious eye by one and all."² The officers hastened to order James Douglas, Chief Factor at Fort Victoria, to seek out and reserve enough land around the fort to accommodate the herds and flocks then at Nisqually. In December they wrote to him again stating that in spite of his objection that such a quantity of land was nowhere to be found, the transfer of livestock would proceed: "Under the circumstances all that can be done is to select the nearest tract suitable to the wants of the Company that you can find."³

There was a second source of anxiety felt by the directors. Earl Grey, the Colonial Secretary, favored systematic colonization of the hospitable regions of the empire. Because of the recent events in Oregon, Vancouver Island took on a greater importance to him than it had previously enjoyed. John Pelly, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, was in personal contact with Grey in the fall of 1846 and broached the subject of a grant of the territory north and west of Rupert's Land. Grey was cool to a proposal of such magnitude because he would only consider granting land in return for a commitment to colonize it. As he considered most of the territory in question to be unattractive to settlers, Grey was willing to discuss only the possibility of granting Vancouver Island to the Company. By April 1847, the directors were ordering that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's livestock be transferred to the southern tip of the island and were requesting that a survey be made of the whole island. These measures were preliminary steps to establishing proprietary rights to large areas of land before the British Government granted the island to anyone.⁴

James Douglas, who was responsible for seeing that the Company's directives were obeyed, was pre-occupied throughout 1847 with the task of evaluating the Company's property in Oregon. In fact, it was not until the fall of 1848 that he had an opportunity to address his superiors on the subject of agriculture and stock raising on Vancouver Island. He elaborated upon the negative opinions he had formed in 1846. Claiming to have examined the east coast of the island, he found that except for the "District around Fort Victoria and some other places of less extent," the "impenetrable" pine forest, "intruding deciduous bushes" and rugged mountains prevented any extensive stock raising. The only land suited to this purpose was around Fort Victoria and westward to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, yet even this "open ground" was

interspersed by stony ridges, covered with grass and oak trees which certainly add much to the beauty and picturesque effect of the country, but are nevertheless a great inconvenience and prevent that order and regularity which is desirable in laying out large farms. 5

The directors replied that they noted "with much interest" his observations but nonetheless they felt that the clearing of brushwood and timber would present no more difficulty on Vancouver Island than it would in any other colony.⁶

The directors were writing to Douglas when their expectations had been given a tremendous boost. Two events which occurred in 1848 swept away the despondency felt earlier. The first was the discovery of gold in California. Both the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies reaped immediate benefits from the rush to the gold fields. The danger of settlers squatting on the properties at Cowlitz and Nisqually eased as two thousand families left Oregon in 1848.⁷ The prices of food and goods at the Hudson's Bay Company's depot at Fort Vancouver rose sharply as crowds of

would-be miners bought out its stores.⁸ The directors moved quickly to begin developing the island's supposed agricultural potential so that even more profit could be earned. Douglas' pessimistic survey of November 1848 was still en route to London when the directors penned the instructions to reserve "about ten square miles" to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, and to include in the reserve "as much open or prairie land as possible."⁹

The second event which heightened the Company's sense of well-being came in September 1848. The Hudson's Bay Company and the Colonial Office concluded negotiations respecting the grant of Vancouver Island. By the terms of the grant the Company undertook to promote independent colonization. The question of colonization sparked a considerable amount of disagreement among the chief administrators of the Hudson's Bay Company. Governor Pelly accepted the terms as the only means to prevent the government from entrusting settlement to other parties who might subsequently endanger the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly in the fur lands. Deputy governor Andrew Colville saw in the grant a possibility of preventing independent settlement. George Simpson, the overseas governor, was opposed to any mode of settlement but he took heart in the five year period of probation in the grant because he expected the fur trade to have become unprofitable by then.¹⁰ The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company remained outside the argument. Until 1850 the Company was considered to have but one purpose, to make a profit. That purpose was reason enough for the directors to exercise caution before setting up any farms.

Another factor dictating careful assessment of the prospects of the Company was the reservation expressed by Eden Colville, the newly appointed Associate-governor of Rupert's Land, when he visited Vancouver Island in 1849. He had misgivings about both the nature of the soil of the island

and the impact of the gold rush on the economy of the west coast. After surveying the district around Fort Victoria, he felt constrained to inform London that

what soil there is, is of good quality, but the plain is traversed in all directions by beds of trap and granite, that interfere materially with the proper laying out of farms for settlement, and I understand this is the general character of the island as far as yet explored.

On the same day he wrote to George Simpson that "...the quantity of prairie land is limited, and this land is by no means suited for either stock or sheep raising."¹¹

A month later Eden Colville warned that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company would be more advantageously situated were it to abandon its plan to transfer its farming operations to Vancouver Island and instead sell its sheep and cattle, thus making the most from the current high prices for livestock. This course would, he reasoned, result in a double benefit to the Company; it would reduce operating costs drastically and it would avoid the establishment of expensive farms on Vancouver Island where the prospects of success were smaller than in Oregon:

The number of officers, clerks and men might thus be materially reduced. I believe the provisions required might be purchased at a much lower rate than at the present exorbitant rate of wages they can be raised. The surplus stock of sheep belonging to the Puget's Sound Company, for which no sufficient range can be found on Vancouver Island might be advantageously disposed of to the purchasers of the different lots. 12

Eden Colville believed that Vancouver Island's best hopes for prosperity lay in its timber and coal resources which were needed in the gold country.¹³ He warned that the gold rush was a mixed blessing. Its adverse effects were serious and widespread. It created a general shortage of labour along the Pacific coast which made enterprises like large-scale

farming expensive. Farming in a new land always demanded an enormous amount of labour and capital before any return could be expected, but the labour shortage drove wages up to an unprecedented scale. Already the farms at Cowlitz and Nisqually were feeling the unwelcome effects of the gold rush:

From the difficulty of obtaining labourers I am afraid that the Puget's Sound Company will have great difficulty in carrying on their affairs. The inducements to desertion are so great, the ordinary rate of wages being \$5 per diem and for mechanics from \$8-\$10, that it is almost impossible to keep our men. I would here remark, however, that owing to the high price of goods that at present prevails, our servants are in fact as well off as the others, yet the nominally high rate of wages is too great a temptation to be resisted....¹⁴

Eden Colville's high position and close personal connections in the Hudson's Bay Company notwithstanding, his warnings had no effect on the directors of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. They were impressed only with his account of the astronomical rise of food prices in California. He mentioned that the price of flour there had doubled recently from fifteen to thirty dollars a barrel and, because California was gripped by a fear of famine, he expected it to rise to one hundred dollars.¹⁵ His forecasts of the food crisis confirmed the directors in their attitude of Roma locuta est, causa finita est; there would be no turning back.

In the meantime Douglas was carrying out his instructions from London. In accordance with those sent out in December 1848, he reserved a large area of land to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. About three-quarters of the reserve was a peninsula extending south between the "Canal of Camosan" (The Gorge) and Esquimalt Bay. Detached from this portion of land and located on the west side of Esquimalt Bay was the remainder. The

reserve had little to recommend it as farm country. Douglas chose it because part of it bordered on fresh water and other portions had potentially valuable timber stands:

The extent of prairie land within these limits is about four square miles in detached portions, several of which are of considerable size. On the north and west sides are three, pretty, fresh water lakes with their feeders, outlets, green meadows and level lawns dotted with groups of oak trees, forming a scene rich in rural beauty and fertility. The remainder of the land is covered with fine timber of various kinds adapted to every useful purpose, which in process of time will not be the least valuable part of the Company's property. 16

Through Douglas' actions, the first Company farm on the island was established sooner than the directors had intended. In late summer 1850 Douglas informed them that he had arranged with one Donald Macaulay to take a farm on the peninsula reserved to the Company. The land was "well supplied with wood and water and there is a space of level land sloping from the houses toward the sea which will make a field of twenty-eight acres and a good sheep range on a line of hills in the neighborhood."¹⁷ Macaulay was a fur trade employee who was about to retire when Douglas approached him with the proposal to start a farm.¹⁸ His qualifications for farming were that he had managed sheep in his youth before entering the fur trade, and that he was "honest, careful and industrious", although Douglas cautioned that he was "not a very active person."¹⁹ Douglas' choice of Macaulay was undoubtedly influenced by the severe labour shortage which prevented him from taking someone out of active service. In arranging terms with Macaulay, Douglas adopted the major features of the earlier scheme used to attract settlers from Red River to Oregon. By these terms, Macaulay received the use of land owned by the Company as well as buildings and livestock. In return, he was to pay to

the Company one half of the increase of the livestock and one half of the profits. While Douglas acted without precise instructions, his behaviour is understandable. Since the directors had discounted all of his and Eden Colville's objections while insisting that he set aside lands and transfer animals for the Company, he could only conclude that they wanted farming to begin immediately. In fact, the head office was only just arriving at a definite plan for setting up farms and that plan was not based on the Oregon scheme. However, London accepted Douglas' fait accompli without a murmur; the head office was always more generous with forgiveness than with permission.

Andrew Colville became the dominant policy-maker of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1850 after Governor Pelly's health deteriorated. Colville's new status occasioned a new role for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. He frowned on the obligation of the fur trade company to promote independent settlement on Vancouver Island and he favored systematic, company-controlled emigration.²⁰ Although the chances were slim that independent settlers would emigrate to the island while free land was available in Oregon, Colville was aware that the absence of settlers would put in doubt the sincerity of the Hudson's Bay Company's commitment to foster colonization. The dilemma could be avoided by using the agricultural company as an instrument for controlled settlement. Instead of the semi-independent farmers whom the Company had tried to establish in Oregon, Colville envisioned bailiffs and labourers bound to the Company by contracts and wages for five years.²¹ The outline of this colonization project was publicized in August 1850:

Colonization of Vancouver Island - Notice to Emigrants

Parties wishing to emigrate to Vancouver Island are informed that a SHIP or SHIPS, managed by the Hudson's Bay Company will sail for PORT VICTORIA (sic) in all

(sic) September. A few married men are wanted as bailiffs, or managing farmers, who must have some property of their own, or be able to find some security to the amount of £30. They will each have charge of a farm of 600 or 700 acres, and European agricultural workers, in the proportion of five men to every 100 acres will be placed under them. Wages from £50 to £60 per annum with maintainance, under a contract for five years. 22

The wage arrangements reflected the Company's awareness of the strong prospects of desertion. The bailiff's salary was guaranteed whatever the results of his management might be. The workers would be hired directly by the Company and would be given the same discounts at the Hudson's Bay Supply Shop in Victoria as fur trade employees. There would be greater incentive to remain on the farms and it would be easier for the Company to enforce adherence to contracts rather than a bailiff acting alone.

Only four days after the publication of the notice Archibald Barclay, the secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Edward Edwards Langford, a gentleman farmer from Sussex, reached a tentative agreement about the terms for the position of bailiff. The hiring of Langford is important because it typifies the lack of attention to relevant facts that marked the entire project of establishing the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company on Vancouver Island. The terms conceded to Langford were far more remunerative than those originally advertized. His contract would run for fifteen years, subject to revision or termination at the behest of either party every five years provided six months notice were given. It took effect from the date of his arrival on the island. Langford was to receive not only an annual salary of £60, but also one-third of each year's profit from the farm. Although he was to be held responsible for one-third of any loss, the Company would expect him to make good only "provided he shall have previously realized or received profits to that extent". In the event that no profits were made for several years the losses would be deducted

from future profits. It was a strange contract in its implication that the longer it took Langford to begin to earn a profit, the more secure was his tenure of employment.²³ The Company was willing to offer these generous terms because it never doubted that large profits would be made. Such liberal terms certainly indicated that Barclay was much impressed with Langford whom he interviewed personally. So too did the fact that Langford felt he could demand that the Company pay for a first class passage for himself and his family as a condition of his accepting the terms even before the office had received the majority of replies to the notice.²⁴ Further, when presenting his demand that he be permitted to travel in style, Langford mentioned that he would be requesting testimonials from his neighbors. Thus, the Company was entering into an agreement with Langford of whom little was known except what he had told Barclay. The secretary did not even wince at the size and make-up of Langford's family - his wife, five daughters and a sister - all of whom would have to be fed at the Company's expense while they in no way contributed to the prosperity of the farm. Yet, many later applicants were rejected for the stated reason that their dependants were too numerous.²⁵

The Company did not agree to Langford's demand for a first class passage, but the demand itself should have given the officers some pause to consider whether Langford expected to live like a gentleman farmer in a primitive colony. Langford was willing to pay in excess of £100 for a first class cabin even though he did not have the £30 security required by the Company.²⁶ To satisfy the officers on the issue of security he took out a life insurance policy with the Company as beneficiary and paid the annual premium of £6 himself.²⁷ The directors remained confident that Langford was well qualified to manage the breeding and raising of sheep even though none of the testimonials sent associated him with that kind of husbandry.

The most definite statement about Langford's expertise was that he grew "heavy crops of turnips and corn", perhaps implying that he might have fattened sheep for market and, therefore, would have been familiar with only the last phase of sheep raising.²⁸

By 1850 the directors had demonstrated all the major characteristics of their method of operating the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company on Vancouver Island. The Company would not be considered by them as an entity in its own right. Its use as a vehicle for controlling settlement illustrates the fact that decisions regarding the farms were based on the needs of the Hudson's Bay Company. This development was natural enough since the directors were chief administrators of both companies. Another consequence of dual management was that very little of the directors' time and attention would be devoted to the problems of the farms. The directors, however, would fail to see their neglect as a cause for concern. They entertained an incredibly optimistic view of the capabilities of Vancouver Island as a farming country. Consequently, they minimized the obstacles impeding the establishment and progress of the farms. Whenever London tried to play a direct role in the affairs of the farms, the results bore the marks of mis-management.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FARMS

The directors of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company were familiar with the system of administration in the fur trade which comprised a hierarchy. The overseas governor George Simpson, although responsible to the Governor and Committee in London, exercised "virtually absolute" power over subordinates.¹ However, he acknowledged that local officers were in the best position to appraise situations and to make decisions on the spot. Simpson was willing to admit that a field officer might be justified in initiating a course of action which violated Company policy.² By contrast, the system of administration provided for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was chaotic and self-destructive. It was composed of three levels, the London directors, the local agent and the bailiffs. There were no clearly defined limitations to the jurisdictions of the latter two offices. Eventually the bailiffs came to deny the right of the agent to govern their affairs in any respect.

The chief officers reserved for themselves a direct role in the operations of the farms. They insisted on determining what kind of crops the bailiffs should grow but their pronouncements served only to illustrate their abysmal ignorance of the conditions of Vancouver Island. The goals which they set for the farms were often contradictory and nearly always unrealistic. In July 1853 Andrew Colville informed J. D. Pemberton, the Hudson's Bay Company's surveyor and land agent, that the bailiffs should concentrate on producing food for both human and work-animal consumption:

The first thing our farmers...should do is to raise food, grain, potatoes, and animals. When they have raised a full supply for the market then they may with advantage turn their atten-

tion to articles for export, sheep for wool, beef and pork for salting for shipping....³

If followed, this program would have demanded intensive cultivation of the fields. Exactly one week later, Colvile was the co-author of a letter which accused Langford of gross negligence because he had not given his flock of sheep priority and had not secured sufficient pasturage through "rough ploughing and sowing with timothy grass to extend the pasturage". Colvile was miffed that Langford had also failed to provide winter fodder by sowing oats, "even on rough ground and cut before ripe and made into hay."⁴ He now expected Langford to supply food for the workers from purchases at the fort.

In 1855 the directors became convinced that wheat would become a profitable export commodity. In July of that year, they informed Kenneth McKenzie, since March of the previous year the Company's agent, that all efforts should be geared to growing wheat.⁵ This directive was based on obsolete information. Two years previously, in April 1853, the price of flour in San Francisco had dropped to ten dollars a barrel from an earlier high of fifty dollars, and the Hudson's Bay Company started to import it into Vancouver Island for resale to the fledgling Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's farms at thirteen dollars a barrel. At the same time, unground wheat was sold to employees of both companies at four shillings (\$0.96) per bushel while the price to outsiders was fifty per cent higher. By February 1855 the price to outsiders had more than doubled from 6/ to 12/6 per bushel.⁶ This jump precipitated the July 1855 instructions to McKenzie to concentrate on wheat. The men in London were too late, however, for wheat had reached its ceiling. It remained at this level for approximately two years, but by 1857 it was beginning to drop again.⁷ Ironically, it was just as McKenzie was reading his employers' wishes with respect to wheat, that they were casually informing the stockholders in London that the farms' best prospects for

success were in provisioning the Royal Navy with meat and vegetables.⁸

The directors' assessment of the market for specific items was rendered obsolete by the slowness of communication. Delays meant that the real decision-making power had to rest with the agent who could simply ignore London's orders. In 1853, shortly after the arrival of the two bailiffs Kenneth McKenzie and Thomas Skinner, the then agent for the Company, James Douglas, received a letter from the directors which expressed their fears that the peninsula reserved for some of the farms would not be suitable for agricultural purposes. They wished Douglas and Pemberton, the land agent, to consult with the two new bailiffs in selecting new sites for their farms.⁹ But by this time McKenzie had done much to establish his farm on the peninsula. Nothing was done to try to induce either him or Skinner, who had done practically nothing, to move. Faced with a fait accompli, London kept silent. Douglas merely informed the directors that McKenzie and Skinner "appear to be pleased"¹⁰ with their lands and, in fact, there were no complaints from either bailiff about his location. The incident did not make the men in London even dimly aware that their influence half a world away was non-existent. Only in 1857, after they sent Alexander Grant Dallas to enquire into the state of the farms, would they be told outright that they had deceived themselves in thinking that they could direct affairs from behind their desks.¹¹

Belief in the efficacy of their management was but one reason why the directors failed to provide a strong local authority for the farms. Another reason was that they failed to perceive the need for one. In their distorted view of Vancouver Island they minimized the problems which the bailiffs encountered. As late as 1851 Douglas tried to make the directors reconsider the entire project by placing the problem of clearing the land in a context they could not possibly ignore. He stated that the cost of clearing would

be about eighty shillings an acre and that "with all the men in Victoria not fifty acres in a year would be cleared".¹² The directors' reply to this bit of news was a fresh assertion of their belief that the "pastures" of Vancouver Island were "richer than those at Nisqually".¹³

The directors' idyllic view of Vancouver Island seems to have had its counterpart in their conception of human nature. They anticipated that harmonious relations between the bailiffs would lessen the need for a supervisory agent. The directors believed that the bailiffs would co-operate with each other even though the wage arrangements of each bailiff made him put the interests of his particular farm ahead of the Company's good. It was expected that through the allocation of cultivating implements the farms would be made dependent upon and hence forced to co-operate with each other. Thus, when two bailiffs were making ready to leave Britain in 1852, one of them, Kenneth McKenzie, was given liberty to purchase whatever implements he desired. He was also told to inform the Company of such purchases so "that both parties do not go to market for the same article."¹⁴ Each bailiff had a share in the profits of his farm only; each was liable for a portion of any loss incurred on his farm. Consequently, shortages of implements and draught animals would be borne by each bailiff alone.

London's neglect with respect to the office of agent is illustrated by both the failure to define adequately the duties of that office and by the selection of a man who lacked knowledge of agricultural matters to hold the office. When James Douglas was informed of his appointment as agent, he was told that his duties would be very light. He would act simply as a collector and forwarder of accounts and information:

The Hudson's Bay Company...propose to appoint you their agent...to keep registers of all grants of land, to receive reports of all surveys, and to appoint people...to perform that or other duties which may be required....The

Puget's Sound Association will likewise give you similar authority as far as any land or stock they may have on the island. 15

A year later the agent's duties were expanded to include those of guardian of the Company's property:

You will have forms...sent you by I hope the next mail...for your appointment as agent to the Puget's Sound Company....(It) will principally consist in checking the accounts of the Bailiffs and such supervision as a landlord would give to his estates. 16

Each bailiff's contract contained a clause which, in theory, made him subservient to the agent in all things. He was bound to

strictly observe and obey all orders and regulations with respect to the farming management or cultivation of the said land or otherwise howsoever which he shall from time to time receive from the said Puget's Sound Agricultural Company or their officials or agents in Vancouver Island.... 17

However, the directors intended that the agent should not have any authority to interfere directly with the actual operations of the farms. Before leaving Britain, McKenzie was assured that Douglas would have nothing to do with the details and mode of cultivation, but that he did have the right to examine the farm's accounts.¹⁸

Douglas restricted his activities to regulating relations between the several farms. He expected them to relieve each other of burdens like surplus livestock and he attempted to smooth possible conflicts of interest before they became causes of friction. His views were based on a letter, sent soon after Langford, which allowed him to allocate farming implements as he saw fit.¹⁹ What criterion Douglas employed when parcelling out the implements is unknown, but it most assuredly did not stem from an acquaintance with the needs of the farms. After the four farms had been established there appeared a great variation in the kind and quality of implement owned by each. Esquimalt Farm appears to have been the best

equipped both in terms of variety and excellence. Some of the implements there were of the Crosskill patent and all but one of the plough frames were made of iron.²⁰ Skinner was unhappy with his allotment; he complained that "...many articles selected by me...have been sent to other farms...."²¹ He was left with a smaller assortment than was Langford and most of his ploughs had wooden frames with an attendant risk of breakage. McKenzie seems to have kept within his possession a large number of different types of ploughs, but no evidence suggests that he had any other kind of implement.²²

Further evidence of Douglas' lack of qualifications for administering the farms came to light when the Hudson's Bay Company land agent, J. D. Pemberton, all but condemned Douglas' choice of the peninsula as the site of the agricultural company's reserve:

...of those (farms) at Esquimalt and the small Peninsula marked C D on the sketch map for agricultural purposes, I have but a poor opinion. These do not contain much land, a large proportion of this is gravelly and pasture is insufficient for a large farming establishment. ²³

However, the directors did not see any reason yet to replace Douglas as agent.

Through his lack of experience Douglas created the conditions for a major disaster to the Company's property. Although he entertained a poor opinion of the soil and its capabilities and had even mentioned the enormous cost involved in clearing the land, he inexplicably sent an order to Nisqually for sheep and horses.²⁴ Consequently, there was a flock of 402 sheep, mostly of the Southdown breed, to greet Langford when he first set foot on the land he was supposed to convert into a farm.²⁵ A few weeks later a second shipment increased the flock to 1,200 animals.²⁶ The problem of feeding the sheep was especially acute owing to the pampered care which the Southdown breed must have. A Southdown's chief value was in its

mutton, and to keep it tender it was necessary to provide it with as much fodder from crops as possible in order to reduce the need to wander in search of food, an exercise which toughened the meat, to a minimum. In Sussex, native home of the Southdown, the general rule on a sheep farm was "a sheep to an acre"²⁷ assuming that every acre in some way contributed to the care of the flock. If Esquimalt Farm had been developed so intensely, it would still have had double the maximum recommended number of sheep.

Serious as this problem was, Douglas had made it insurmountable by neglecting to provide Langford with the means to deal with it. Clearing and intensive ploughing would have to precede any planting of seed. In Langford's county of Sussex, the land had been ploughed for centuries; it still required a team of eight oxen to pull the plough.²⁸ Douglas was able to find only two oxen for Langford when the bailiff arrived and another two shortly thereafter. There were also some horses, "unbroken animals only two years (old)", but being of a small breed they were not suitable for pulling ploughs through new soil.²⁹ Nevertheless, the horses ate their share of the available food and the cost of them was added to the debit of the farm. All the animals faced a threatening shortage of food in the winter since Langford's arrival in May 1851 came too late in the agricultural year to accomplish anything. Luckily, there were no losses from starvation that winter; "remarkably mild" weather prevailed which permitted them to find sufficient forage.³⁰

Douglas' precipitate action in importing the sheep had two immediate adverse effects on Langford. The animals, valued at five shillings each, added to the cost of the oxen and horses, placed his farm in debt to Nisqually to the amount of £352/5 while the freight charges added another £270.³¹ The following year Douglas transferred to Langford another 781 sheep. In the meantime the market value of the first flock had deteriora-

ted because the animals' diet, combined with the effort expended in finding it, had toughened them. There was only one bright spot in the affair: no rams had been included in the first transfer so the ewes were able to suffer the conditions of the island better than had they been carrying lambs.

Disaster befell the flock in the early months of 1853 and the responsibility was laid at Langford's door by the directors. Langford's version of what happened was written as an attempt to lay the blame on Douglas. According to Langford, Douglas began making a series of bad decisions around Christmas, 1852. At that time the agent informed Langford of his intention to transport "five hundred sheep and some cattle" from Nisqually to Esquimalt within a few weeks. Langford doubted the wisdom of this plan because his range land was already supporting too many sheep. A change for the worse in the still mild weather would mean starvation for much of his present flock. However, Douglas countered Langford's suggestion that the proposed transfer wait until spring with an objection that no boat would be available then. He also assured Langford that winters on the island presented no danger; "Trusting in your knowledge of the weather, I finally consented." Instead of the five hundred sheep, more than seven hundred were transferred, "in most wretched condition". They had been confined to a scow for five days without food and on the day following their arrival snow fell and covered the ground for ten days. Three to four hundred animals died. Langford, in an effort to prevent another such mishap, sold two hundred and thirty sheep to James Cooper, an independent settler, but Douglas "frowned on reductions in the flock". Thus, Langford had to refuse an offer from HMS Thetis to buy mutton. The animals continued to lose weight so Langford prevailed on Douglas to permit him to sell to the Royal Navy. By the time Douglas consented the Navy was buying its supplies from

the fort. Langford was able to sell only a few thin sheep which, owing to their reduced weight, brought a very low price. In the summer before this chain of events developed the flock had suffered a smaller loss; because of the ignorance of Langford's workers

...they killed ninety-six sheep at washing time in a few moments, and, whereby afterwards following my instructions they had first received upwards of 1600 sheep were washed without the loss of one on the same spot; whenever I have reprimanded them for their negligence or misconduct they have often at once quitted the charge of their flock and oftener threatened to do so.

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From the day of its founding to the winter of 1853 the rate of progress on Esquimalt Farm had been slow. In his previous reports Douglas had cited Langford's elaborate but substantial buildings and the unco-operative behaviour of his workers as reasons for the lack of agricultural activities.³⁴ Langford's letter accusing him of bad judgment and of making the decisions was an unexpected slap to which Douglas reacted strongly. Langford's motives, he wrote, were purely mercenary; he was trying to escape the clause in his contract which made him liable for one-third of any loss incurred on the farm.³⁵ Douglas claimed that Langford's incompetence was to blame for the recent disaster; the bailiff was "not capable of managing" more than five hundred sheep. So far he had cultivated only twenty acres of land and had sown only fourteen of them. After nearly two years under Langford, "the whole establishment is fed from Victoria", there being "not a mouthful of food produced last season." Completely absent from Douglas' letter was any mention of Langford's workers or of his building program as mitigating circumstances.

The bitterness Douglas felt toward Langford was betrayed when he turned to a defense of his actions in the affair. He all but called Langford a liar. Contrary to the bailiff's contention that the sheep range at

his disposal was too small for the size of the flock, it was really "one of the largest ranges on Vancouver Island, extending from Port Esquimalt to Pedder Bay nearly seven miles." On it were "only 1600 sheep" but it was "capable of feeding many more than that number." Instead of between three and four hundred sheep dying, as Langford stated, the actual number was closer to six hundred. But the major thrust of Douglas' letter was to establish that all of the fateful decisions had been made by Langford. Douglas claimed to have advised Langford to sell his wedders but the bailiff refused. When he did finally agree to sell, he could obtain a price of only twenty-one shillings a head, "too low to cover the cost of sheep and transport from Nisqually." Moreover, Langford rejected a further suggestion that he give some sheep to other parties in return for half of the lambs weaned. The only area of common agreement with Langford's account was with regard to the decision to transfer the sheep from Nisqually; Douglas did not deny that he had made it.

Although the bailiff's contract clearly made him subject to the agent, and in spite of the fact that the directors were presented with two contradictory versions of the facts, they had no hesitation in assigning blame for the disaster to Langford. It was inevitable that they do so for, if Douglas were held responsible, the Company would be unable to recover a portion of the loss. The case served to define roughly the relationship between the agent and the bailiff. The wording of the contract notwithstanding, the directors considered that Douglas' responsibility for the sheep involved in the transfer halted at the boundaries of Esquimalt Farm.³⁶ Once on the property, they were totally in Langford's charge. The directors did not address themselves to the question of whether the decision to transfer the sheep had been a wise one. Their verdict contradicted their later assurances to Kenneth McKenzie that the agent would have nothing to

do with the operation of the farms; that was precisely what was happening to Esquimalt Farm. The principle in the verdict was that the agent was supreme in matters involving two or more farms in a common issue while the bailiffs would each be supreme in strictly internal matters on their farms. But the entire affair shows that it was unrealistic for the directors to believe that they could keep the two spheres of authority so completely separate.

A possible reason for the directors' facile condemnation of Langford is the correspondence they received at that time from J. D. Pemberton. In it the land agent compared the chaos of the other Company farms unfavorably with the organization exhibited by the newly arrived McKenzie. Pemberton described the system of husbandry on the other farms as "wild cattle farming", meaning "large bands of cattle wandering over extensive tracts of country". The disadvantages of this system, he wrote, were that it interfered with the proper breeding of stock and the young were killed by "wolves and Pumas", and by Indians and Americans. Slaughtering was done by shooting the beasts from horseback and many that were wounded crept into the bush to die. Moreover, while the market for fat beef was said to be very high, the product of the farms was lean. The solution was a simple one dictated by common sense; Pemberton suggested that the farms should raise fewer animals and keep them enclosed, especially cattle which, when wild, could not be handled. He implied a lack of faith in Langford by singling out Kenneth McKenzie as a model farmer, asserting that if the Company had more men like him it would be "as profitable a concern as could be wished."³⁷

Langford was the victim of circumstances. It would do him little good that eventually Thomas Skinner would support his claim that the range at Esquimalt was not large enough to support more than a fraction of the sheep Douglas placed on it.³⁸ Pemberton's letter corroborated Douglas'

criticisms of Langford, as far as the directors were concerned, and in replying to both correspondents they intimated that unless the bailiff improved his performance soon, his service with the Company would be terminated.³⁹ Their disenchantment with him was intensified by the receipt of a further piece of bad news. John Miles, an accountant sent out to visit the Hudson's Bay Company's establishments on the Pacific coast, forwarded the information that although all the other Puget's Sound Agricultural Company farms were performing profitably in the year ending October 1852, Esquimalt Farm lost £1257/18/1.⁴⁰ Langford, oblivious to the blows to his reputation, picked this very time to send, via Douglas, a demand that the Company reimburse him £100, the amount spent by him as part-payment for his first-class cabin on the voyage from Britain. He felt insulted that he had been required to pay for his cabin himself while McKenzie and Skinner had been granted the same accomodation at Company expense. He was upset also by the requirement that he take out an insurance policy as security for the Company while no such demand had been placed on the two new bailiffs. He insisted the Company return the sum of £18 for the three years during which he had paid the premiums on his policy.⁴¹

The verdict of the directors on the issue of responsibility for the loss of Langford's sheep was understandable in the light of the correspondence from and about Langford. But while the directors may have felt that they had disposed of the matter in a fair manner, their verdict would have serious repercussions in the future. All the bailiffs, and particularly Langford, learned that they were considered by London to be ultimately responsible regardless of who made the decision. Small wonder that soon they would begin to resist the agent.

In purely internal matters, the directors lived up to their promise that the bailiffs would be free from the authority of the agent. For example,

the building of the Esquimalt, Constance Cove and Craigflower Farms suggests that the bailiffs had so much independence that they began to think of themselves as equal in status to the agent. Each farm became the physical manifestation of its bailiff's ambitions.

Langford seems to have wanted to be the squire of a small country village. In spring 1852 Douglas sent a report to London which stressed the slowness with which agriculture was being developed on Esquimalt Farm; only five acres "at most" had been cultivated.⁴² The reason Douglas cited was the length of time Langford took to complete his buildings. The directors had intended that Douglas erect Langford's buildings before the bailiff arrived. They expected nothing elaborate, simply buildings of an ad hoc nature which would permit Langford to tend immediately to the business of preparing the land.⁴³ These instructions arrived after Langford, but Douglas, anticipating them, began building in April.⁴⁴ Langford was disdainful of his efforts: "The frames only of two houses were up close together, the roofs on with two large holes left in the middle for chimneys."⁴⁵ Either because of Langford's decision to begin afresh, or perhaps due to the labour shortage, Douglas withdrew the three Canadian carpenters who had been employed on the buildings. Langford was left to construct his buildings with only the assistance of his farm labourers, "who had never had an axe in their hands." There was not even any lumber on the island at that time.⁴⁶ These considerations certainly prolonged the building of Esquimalt Farm, but there is a more subtle cause.

Vancouver Island represented to Langford a chance to regain his former station in society. A "reversal of fortunes"⁴⁷ had driven him to seek employment with the Company. He never allowed himself to forget that he had once been a "gentleman".⁴⁸ His demand for a first-class passage was as much an expression of a desire to maintain distance between himself and the

representatives of the working class as it was a preference for material comfort. The distinction between a gentleman and a labourer was extremely difficult to preserve after reaching the island. For several days the Langfords and the farm workers were forced to share the same wretched accomodation.⁴⁹ The building of Esquimalt Farm and particularly the home he built for his family was an expression of his wish to erase the memories of the recent unhappy past through re-creating his former circumstances as a gentleman farmer in Sussex.

All other buildings were constructed mainly of timber, but the Langford residence combined timber, stone and brick.⁵⁰ It was actually formed of several buildings joined by passageways.⁵¹ The farm house had a floor area of 1,500 square feet. It was divided into six rooms, each oiled and plastered throughout, and five of the rooms contained fireplaces. Connected to the residence was a second structure about half its size, which housed the school-room where the Misses Langford taught, a kitchen, storeroom, and pantry. At one end of this building and parallel to the house was a back kitchen.⁵² In the space enclosed on three sides by these edifices was a wood house, a small bake house with a brick oven, and a garden protected by a picket fence. This complex was the centre of the farm; it stood on high ground overlooking the farm buildings and cottages and it was estimated by Langford to be worth £1000.⁵³

Langford's domicile demonstrates that he looked upon himself as a person of considerably more standing than a mere bailiff. The paternalism he displayed towards his workers indicates that he thought of himself as the squire of a "closed" country village.⁵⁴ His attitude to the care of those under him was governed by a sense of duty to create an atmosphere which would have a salutary effect on their moral character. At least such was the rationale he used when he gave as his priority the need to provide

the workers with "decent and comfortable" dwellings.⁵⁵ These dwellings were far superior to anything his workers had ever experienced. Only four of the cottages were one-room buildings. They varied in size from 144 to 375 square feet, making them roomier than their English counterparts. They were constructed of logs and each boasted a fireplace. There were two double-room cottages, each measuring 375 square feet and containing a fireplace. Unlike the traditional English cottage, they were finished inside with plastered walls to reduce draughts. The two largest cottages, really duplexes, measured 800 square feet each and had all of the aforementioned features. Langford expected that substantial buildings would increase the value of the farm and he hoped that this value would be entered against the deficit.⁵⁶ But he was indulging in wishful thinking. His contract stated explicitly that "...no value whatever shall be set on any houses or buildings of whatever description erected by the labourers on the said land."⁵⁷

Langford's attempts to maintain an aloofness from the workers added to the time and expense of establishing the farm. It made necessary the digging of two wells and the erection of two brick ovens. It seems also that he built in excess of the needs of the farm. He built three cowsheds, each measuring fifty by sixteen feet, and a fourth smaller one. These he proudly described as "weather boarded and fitted up complete".⁵⁸ All were finished by 1855 although the number of cattle on his farm never surpassed the forty-six he had in 1856.⁵⁹ By contrast, Kenneth McKenzie, bailiff of Craigflower Farm, a man very solicitous for the care of his livestock, saw fit in May 1855 to house his sixty-nine cattle in only two large sheds and a third smaller one.⁶⁰ When completed, Esquimalt Farm included, besides those buildings already mentioned, a lime kiln, a brick kiln, two pig stys, a horse stable, a granary, a large barn, and a dairy and cheese house with

stone walls eighteen inches thick. While it is impossible to determine how long all this building activity took, the first sign that it was finished appeared in October 1853.⁶¹

For most of the time during which the buildings were being erected Douglas restricted his involvement to a few dry comments which, on the surface, suggest that he disapproved of the extent of it. For example, in January 1852 he noted that Langford's chief attention was devoted to construction, "which makes no immediate return", and that the £900 already spent on servants' wages and provisions "certainly exceeds the value of the improvements."⁶² Yet, the agent's actions belie his statement. At the same time as he was criticizing Langford to the directors, he was conveying to the bailiff his delight at the prospect of the latter building a schoolroom.⁶³ By now there were several empty cottages on the farm since Douglas himself had reduced Langford's original complement of men from thirty to twenty-four and was about to cut it by a further ten.⁶⁴ Douglas' final comment on the building of Esquimalt Farm becomes easier to understand in spite of its being contrary to his earlier denunciations. He praised Langford's establishment as "...neat and the work on the buildings was executed at far less cost than the buildings are now worth."⁶⁵ Douglas returned to this theme when he defended Langford against the Company's attempt to evict him.⁶⁶ Obviously, the rift that had occurred between the two men in early 1853 soon healed without trace.

As with Langford, Douglas merely observed McKenzie and Skinner as they went about their task of putting up their farm buildings. McKenzie treated the other colonists to a spectacular display of organization and progress that earned for himself unqualified praise from Douglas and others. McKenzie carried out his project in three major phases. Only six days after disembarking, the carpenters and blacksmiths and all single men

were sent from the fort, where the entire party had been staying, to begin work on the shops and sawmill.⁶⁷ It was the intention of the directors to make of McKenzie's farm a centre of supply and services for the surrounding area and he had brought with him a small portable steam engine which could be fitted either to circular saws or to millstones, as well as to machinery for planing or moulding wood.⁶⁸

Only after the service buildings were erected and the sawmill put into operation did McKenzie direct his attention to housing his workers who had been living in a half-finished frame building on the site.⁶⁹ The number of labourers' cottages eventually reached twenty-one and the majority were put up between March 30 and December 31 1853, during which time a great many other projects, such as an improved blacksmith shop, a vegetable garden, the digging of a well, and brick-making were being carried out.⁷⁰ The lumber for the cottages came from the sawmill which most certainly expedited matters and accounted for the vast difference in time used by McKenzie and Langford. Technology unavailable to one allowed the other to build so much more in far less time

Again unlike Langford, McKenzie had little appreciation for rank or comfort. His family was first housed in a cottage completed by April 30. It could not have been very large or very different in any way from the workers' abodes, considering that so much other activity was going on at the same time. Yet, McKenzie was content to remain in it for three years until Craigflower Manor was finished.⁷¹ Another contrast between the two bailiffs is that from the outset the Scot attempted to minimize his farm's dependance on outside sources for provisions, as the above-mentioned garden and a potato field suggest.⁷² Wheat was not sown until November 1 1853, but the flour mill erected by October 11 began to grind wheat from other farms in the district within a month.⁷³ Craigflower Farm showed early

promise of at least being able to maintain itself.

The contrast between the early achievements of McKenzie and Langford make it understandable why Douglas could laud McKenzie's "tact and decision" and why Pemberton could consider him to be the Company's only hope, but their verdict was not entirely just.⁷⁴ McKenzie, unlike Langford, was not burdened by Douglas with the problem of caring for a large number of sheep.⁷⁵ Although horses, cows and pigs were present on his farm, they did not require a comparable degree of intensive care. While McKenzie seemed more suited by temperament than Langford to frontier farming, much of his early success could be attributed to happy circumstances. Extremely self-confident, he minimized the problems to be faced in transforming a rocky, wooded piece of land into a productive farm. In his impetuous rush to set up his farm, he failed first to determine the presence of fresh water. Had the fortunate discovery of water on June 2, 1853 not occurred, all his efforts thus far would have been useless.⁷⁶

While McKenzie was making an auspicious beginning during the spring and summer of 1853, Thomas Skinner of Constance Cove Farm floundered about in a state of indecision and confusion. From his first letter to his employers it is clear that he was woefully unprepared to meet the harsh demands imposed by a frontier country. He laid before the directors a litany of the sorrows which he had to bear and a list of excuses proffered as reasons for the lack of any constructive activities on the site of his farm. First, his and another family, ten persons, were sharing a two-room cottage containing boxes for beds and chairs. Second, Douglas had erected the frame of a building intended for his use but, because it was designed to have neither doors nor windows nor fireplace, it was unsuitable for his family. He would have to start building his residence from the ground. The abandoned frame was, however, used to house labourers; all of

them were placed inside it until Langford lent him the use of two vacant cottages at Esquimalt Farm. But, having removed the majority of his work force across Esquimalt Bay, it was now impossible to do anything in the way of cultivation. Although Skinner had been informed before he left Britain about the condition of the country to which he was emigrating, his letter shows that he was aghast at what he saw. The land had no fences on it; consequently much time would be lost in searching for wandering animals. The scarcity and smallness of the draught animals prevented him from ploughing, "thus fifty acres of prairie land are untouched needlessly."⁷⁷

Three months after his arrival he outlined the course of action he had finally resolved to follow. For the rest of the year he would concentrate upon building housing for the workers. He had already made a start by nailing "boards and mats" to the frame Douglas had erected. Whatever time was still available after the housing crisis was solved would be used to put what land he could into a fit state to receive winter grain.⁷⁸

Colvile's reaction to this pleading was an angry, acid retort which he fired off immediately. He warned Skinner that the content of his letter

has created in my mind very serious doubts whether you are at all adapted for the situation and business which you have undertaken. You write as if you had expected to enter upon a farm so fully established as any one in Essex, and with all the facilities to be found in this country....The nature and state of the country was distinctly explained to you, and you were told that...you would find a great deal was required to be done by yourself and your men, to the buildings required for the accomodation of your family, and of your servants, as well as for the purpose of carrying on the farm....I infer from your letter that you and they did nothing but grumble and complain that other people did not do the work for you. 79

This remonstrance failed to spark Skinner. He followed the plan he had set before Colvile. By October Douglas was able to write of him that all

of his men were living in some of the eight cottages built during the summer, although there were now only five workers left, and that a large frame barn and stable had also been constructed. Other buildings were put up after the harvest. An inventory made in January 1854 lists sheds, a block house and other farm buildings.⁸⁰ Most of these structures were built through contracts with outside workers, notably Canadians and "Kanakas" (Hawaiians). Skinner's own men were needed to cultivate and harvest the two hundred bushels of potatoes and the three hundred bushels of turnips that were the farm's total produce in its first year.⁸¹ The buildings were valued at \$3,462.00, or £712/1/10.⁸² The produce was consumed by the farm itself and represented no profit to the Company.

While all the farms exhibited different growth patterns and rates, in one respect they were similar; each of them ran into debt early in its history. In part, this situation arose out of the bailiffs' freedom from any control on expenditure. The account books of the Company, although incomplete, show that the bailiffs made full use of this freedom. Langford's farm owed £479/12/1 by the end of the fiscal year 1851.⁸³ In the following twelve months Langford spent a further £931/16 on goods.⁸⁴ The total expenditure on supplies in the farm's third year was £1039/2.⁸⁵ Although the amount of goods bought seems to have increased from one year to the next, at the same time the number of people on the farm was decreasing.⁸⁶ The discrepancy can be explained in part by Langford's taste for the finer things in life and his habit of acting as a lavish host.⁸⁷ His personal account which was charged to the Company had entries for alcoholic beverages in quantities which the directors thought excessive. In one year alone he spent £23/1/7 on "liquors" and he bought fifty-nine gallons of brandy, four gallons of rum, two gallons of whiskey, and five of wine.⁸⁸ The next two years saw this pattern of high expenditure continued; £880

in 1854 and more than £1200 in 1855 were spent at the supply shop.⁸⁹ The farm's total deficit by the latter year was £6752/13/3, made up of items including besides the above expenses, wages to workers, money owed for livestock, freight charges, debts to other farms for services and materials, and the five per cent interest charge on the unpaid balance of each previous year's debt.⁹⁰

Spending was also high on the other farms. There was less reason for Skinner and McKenzie to hold down their expenses for the first three years, the length of the period of grace during which the deficit of their farms would be borne entirely by the Company.⁹¹ Craigflower Farm owed to the supply shop in Victoria £3569/8/3 after one year, out of a total deficit of £5650/14/10. By the end of the second year the total deficit was £9822/9; £2341/2/2 of this increased debt was for supplies. In mid-1856 the total deficit was £15931/16/2. The farm had bought a further £6234/18/8 worth of goods from the Hudson's Bay Company.⁹² McKenzie's expenditures were a result of his greater ambitions. Besides investing in a boat to trade with the mainland and in some heavy capital goods, he began a store in 1855 to serve the Company's workers.⁹³ He proved to be a poor businessman. In 1858 it was disclosed by Dallas that

Mr McKenzie has been without authority buying goods instead of remitting his funds home, thus taking upon himself the duties of a merchant. The result, irrespective of its being foreign to his business of a farmer, is bad, as some of the goods have been on hand for several years, and it is doubtful when they can all be cleared off. ⁹⁴

Skinner may have been slow to begin any constructive work about his farm, but he spent as avidly as anyone else. While the records of the Company are very deficient in material relating to Constance Cove's finances, they indicate that in its first year of existence it owed £1884/8/3 for supplies, out of a total debt of £2579/7/4.⁹⁵

The nature of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's reserve on Vancouver Island demanded a highly centralized system for administering it if it were to be used for both raising livestock and crops for human consumption. The land was so poor that the variety of crops it could produce was quite limited. Wheat, barley, oats, peas, potatoes and turnips were all that were ever produced. Esquimalt Farm was able to realize a respectable return from wheat and led in the production of oats and peas but it seems to have had the least success of all the farms in growing turnips. Thomas Skinner's farm was the best potato producer, but in most of its other crops its yield was lower than that of Esquimalt Farm. McKenzie's Craigflower Farm was the least productive, except for its turnips in which it excelled. There was no practice of crop rotation, but McKenzie was toying with the idea of establishing a four or five-course system. Craigflower Farm had the least amount of land suitable for cultivation; only eighty of its more than seven hundred acres could be so used. The need for it to specialize in those crops which it could produce best is evident, but the same need existed on the other farms. The total useful acreage on the three largest farms of the Company was 517 acres, exclusive of pasture land.⁹⁶ If, as the directors seem to have expected, the farms were to maintain their large flocks, feed themselves and export surplus produce, then it was necessary for each to concentrate on growing its most successful crops rather than duplicating the efforts of the other farms. This circumstance created the need for an immediate and powerful authority who would oversee and direct the bailiffs. Such authority was sadly lacking. Instead, the directors created a weak system of administration in which authority was divided between agent and bailiffs. The two most significant results were that the Company was very quickly saddled with a large and growing debt and that the bailiffs became accustomed to

the idea of complete independence. Future attempts to bring them more securely under the agent's control would be rebuffed. Even had the directors provided the proper system of administration, the choice of Douglas as agent was still an unwise one. His blunderings created serious problems for Langford who was held accountable by London for the outcome. It was likely that confidence in such an agent would decline, but by the time the directors decided to revise the system, irreparable damage had been done.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NEW AGENT AND THE BAILIFFS

In 1854 the directors replaced James Douglas as the agent for the Company. They intended that the new incumbent, Kenneth McKenzie, should exercise a wider range of authority. This extension of power meant that the bailiffs would have less responsibility for the management of their farms, although the modification was not accompanied by a change in the salary arrangements with the bailiffs. For some of the bailiffs the change of administration implied that they would have to become more open about the financial status of their farms and consequently would be forced to alter their life styles. There was little inducement to accepting the authority of the agent. Under McKenzie, whatever authority had existed prior to his assuming the office of agent had virtually evaporated within a year.

During his quarrel with Langford, Douglas had suggested to the directors that each farm be limited to spending only £500 per annum for provisions.¹ The suggestion, made in a moment of exasperation with Langford, did not accurately reflect Douglas' opinion on the proper way of administering the farms. As it would have fallen to the agent to see that such a limit was honoured and to deal with the offending bailiff should it be violated, Douglas was recommending an increase in the agent's authority. Yet, in the previous year he had made a suggestion which, if followed, would have all but done away with the agent's position. In April 1852 he had stated his view that the Company should abandon its scheme of developing a few large farms; their sheer size alone was an obstacle to their development. In a country such as Vancouver Island the cost per acre

of clearing the land was enormous and only the Company had enough money to underwrite the expense.² Naturally, in return for assuming the burden, the Company expected the major portion of profits to accrue to it. Douglas thought that such an arrangement failed to provide the bailiff with an incentive attractive enough to make him want to put his farm on a profitable basis as soon as possible. He recommended that the Company set up small farms on which the cost of clearing land would not be so prohibitive as to prevent the bailiff from sharing the cost and becoming an equal partner with the Company. The profits would be divided in half.³ By fixing the farmer's remuneration to the profit of his farm the Company would cause him to impose his own limits on spending and to regulate his building activities so that only work that was absolutely necessary would be done. Under this scheme the agent's role would be reduced to collecting and forwarding accounts.

London turned a deaf ear to Douglas' ideas. There was not even an allusion to the small farm scheme in Colvile's reply to his letter.⁴ As to the notion that a ceiling should be placed on the bailiffs' spending powers, Colvile rejected it. Even while he was expressing his great annoyance with Langford and Skinner he was still clinging to his optimism that the bailiffs would manage to turn things around on their farms:

The gentlemen in charge of the farms will have to be supplied with provisions or rations for themselves and their men as long as it may be necessary, but if they are attentive and industrious they should soon be able to maintain themselves. 5

The decision not to curtail expenditures was logical and just, given the existing system of administration and the status of the bailiffs within it. If the bailiff was fully accountable for whatever happened on his farm, then he had to be given full freedom to buy whatever he deemed essential to the farm's progress without interference from anyone. The knowledge

that he was liable for one-third of the losses incurred would, the directors hoped, inspire each bailiff to watch over his own expenses. However, during the months that followed the directors' rebuff of Douglas' scheme, they gradually changed their minds. They did not address themselves specifically to the question of curbing the bailiffs' spending powers, but they intended to limit them by changing the system of administration.

The change came without any warning:

...we think the undivided attention of a Gentleman thoroughly acquainted with the improved system of agriculture is required to attain success in our operations.... 6

The removal of Douglas was in no way intended to cast a bad reflection on his fulfillment of the duties of the agent. The directors' reference to "undivided attention" suggests that they felt Douglas had too many other responsibilities and should be relieved of the agent's tasks. Douglas concurred with this opinion; writing to William Fraser Tolmie, bailiff of Nisqually, he mentioned his removal with an almost audible sigh of relief.⁷ The directors' reference to a "thorough" knowledge of agriculture, until now not a requirement for the agent, implies that from henceforth the occupant of the office would be more intimately involved with the farming operations.

McKenzie's duties were of a broader nature than Douglas' had been. His letter of appointment gave him

full power to superintend and regulate the management of the several farms of the Company placed under the immediate charge of Mr. Langford, Mr. Skinner, and Mr. Maccauley (sic) according to the special agreements made with the Gentlemen.... 8

The "special agreements", it will be remembered, made each bailiff subject to the supervision of the agent. As if to impress this point more deeply, the directors wrote a second letter to McKenzie on the same day emphasizing the fact that he was assuming "the Agency generally and more especially the

Superintending charge and direction of the management of the other farms." His salary as agent would be ten per cent of the net profit realized from the four farms on the island and he would continue to receive his bailiff's salary also.⁹

While the directors said nothing at this time about placing a limit on expenditures, McKenzie was given the right to regulate each farm's spending and he could set whatever limit he wished for each. He promised his superiors he would put an end to wastages of time and money which resulted from a great deal of "unnecessary building".¹⁰ During his tenure as agent he frequently resorted to the threat of cutting off supplies from Fort Victoria when one or another bailiff refused to comply with his orders.¹¹ The entire issue of limiting expenditures was critical to harmonious relations between agent and bailiff. The latter were still responsible for one-third of any losses on their farms, even though the fault for the losses might lie with the agent. McKenzie tried to use his power as a club to ensure submission from the bailiffs. Legally, he had no right to threaten to cut off supplies because the Company was committed to providing the labourers and bailiffs with food. But McKenzie was not in the habit of considering such intangibles as legalities before proceeding with his plans.

McKenzie's reply to his notice of appointment exuded confidence and optimism. It could only have reassured the directors that at last their hopes for success might soon be transformed into reality. The same single-minded devotion to purpose that had made possible the rapid rise of Craigflower Farm on the rocky peninsula was now to be applied to the task of co-ordinating the efforts of the several farms. McKenzie analyzed the reasons for their failure to reach a productive state. The root cause was the shortage of draught animals. He had only "a few young weak half-starved unbroken" oxen since the time of his arrival.¹² The horses of the

country were of no use owing to their small size.¹³ The want of good work oxen meant that the limited range land, already too crowded with the numbers of sheep on it, could not be supplemented by the cultivation of fodder crops. In turn, the constant shortage of food meant that the few work oxen on hand had frequently to be let out at night to wander in the bush for forage, thereby causing several days' labour to be lost while workers were despatched to find them. The solution lay in extending the supply of fodder by reducing the number of sheep and by increasing the "number of the strongest working oxen that can be had".

The directors never expressed any dissatisfaction with McKenzie's airing of the problems besetting the farms. The agent warned that although the farms could overcome problems of shortages of food and surpluses of livestock given enough time, other difficulties were more serious and would not be so easy to solve. Such difficulties were the legacy of the incompetence and even connivings of "others". The sheep belonging to "McAulay (sic) and others" suffered from scab and starvation through a "want of proper management". Again, all the Company farms were alienated from "the finest or most available land of the district, the finest land of course, being selected by parties which like to hold farms upon their own account". This assertion contradicted Douglas' statement of a year earlier that McKenzie and Skinner "appear to be pleased" with their lands.¹⁴ Moreover, McKenzie's present verdict on his farm land was belied by his own alacrity in establishing his farm upon it very soon after his arrival.¹⁵ Contradictions between McKenzie's version of an incident and that of others would gradually become a common feature of his correspondence with the London committee.¹⁶

As a consequence of the wretched land on which his farm was situated, McKenzie indicated that its horticultural potential was severely limited.

There was but a small extent of prairie land and it was covered by oak. The best farm land was heavily covered with timber, the open land was light and sandy. As for the kinds of crops he expected to grow on his cleared and ploughed land, it appears that as yet he was still experimenting. He was about to plant a few acres of wheat, oats and peas along with ten or fifteen acres of turnips, this last being the only crop that he knew for certain gave good returns.¹⁷ Being on a peninsula, his farm was naturally fenced and with the addition of a few man-made fences it would serve to domesticate the Company's calves so that more use of them could be had than was formerly the case. McKenzie realized that his farm alone could not support large numbers of livestock and the same could be said of Constance Cove and Viewfield Farms which occupied the same peninsula. He intimated that from now on all the farms would have to work together to achieve a common goal. He identified the lack of a sense of unity of purpose as one of the difficulties hurting the Company.

McKenzie's greatest challenge would be to gain the willing co-operation of the bailiffs. They began at once to express their dislike for losing the autonomy which they had enjoyed under Douglas. The directors had instructed McKenzie to make up complete accounts and statements of the present condition of each farm as soon as possible.¹⁸ The bailiffs were not in the habit of keeping proper accounts. Douglas had once complained that Langford and Skinner were both "incapable" of keeping accounts, "an evil which is not much felt at present, but which may become a source of loss to the Company hereafter".¹⁹ McKenzie never succeeded in satisfying London's curiosity about the farms. Langford was the least inclined to give McKenzie any of the required information and he had personal reasons for withholding it. Just a few months before McKenzie first broached the subject with him, John Miles, the touring accountant for the Hudson's

Bay Company, had informed Langford of the miserable performance of his farm to date:

The first year you were on the farm exhibits a loss of £1387/9/3. The second year shows a further loss of £1257/18/1, making on the two years a total loss of £2645/7/4, and this without the calculation of Interest that the fifth section of your agreement stipulates for and which must be added to it. In the course of thirteen years active official experience, I never met with a result as disastrous as this. 20

Even if his farm's financial picture had been attractive it is unlikely that Langford, who was always concerned about his local reputation, would have allowed McKenzie, a junior in the service, to examine papers which Langford considered to be of a private nature. When McKenzie began trying to obtain statements from Langford in July 1854 the bailiff simply ignored him and questioned the agent's right even to make such a demand.²¹ By the end of September McKenzie had still received no satisfaction.²²

Langford was not content simply to ignore McKenzie. He adopted a deliberately obstructionist policy and pursued it throughout the three years McKenzie was in office. Even petty opportunities were exploited by Langford to make McKenzie appear incompetent. When the time came to make an accounting of the year's wool production in the fall of 1854 in preparation for shipment to London, Langford delivered the wool from his farm but neglected to send a statement of the amount. The wool was packed in September; by the end of December McKenzie was still awaiting the statement.²³

At the end of 1854 both men were writing to London to complain about each other. Langford was aggrieved that he had been placed under the authority of a man whom he considered no better qualified than himself to make important decisions:

I conceive I ought to be set free as to the farming management and arrangements as to labour. The agent, Mr. McKenzie, has the power of carrying

out any work he may deem proper or likely to be profitable but can check anything of a similar nature I may wish to undertake. I have not (sic) reason to expect any cordial support from him, but I feel sure that there is sufficient evidence by what has been done here to convince any impartial person that I know the nature of the business which I have undertaken. 24

The "evidence" to which Langford alluded was the "best collection (of buildings) on the Island". If they had been erected at a later date, he contended, the cost would have been higher than was the case. He hoped to initiate projects which would put his farm well on the way to becoming productive. He mentioned that there was a hundred acre swamp on the property which, if drained, would prove fertile. A single crop of grain sown on it would recover the cost of drainage, estimated to be from £500 to £600. After two more crops of grain the field would be sown with grass, thereby extending the pasture land now so limited in quantity and quality.²⁵

McKenzie was very skeptical of the wisdom in cultivating the land at Esquimalt Farm. He wrote a scathing report of the farm's capabilities and of Langford's foolishness in devoting any effort at all to making it productive:

My own opinion is that the farm being of a very dry sandy soil and so little rain here during the summer that the choice of growing crops on that farm is very precarious. In fact I should never have selected that district for a farm, therefore it is a pity so much money should have been laid out upon such a subject...Langford has, in the last six months, cleared and put under crop more than eighty acres. 26

The buildings, of which Langford was so proud, were evidence for McKenzie of the bailiff's desire to live a life of ease and comfort:

there has been a pretty outlay for buildings and I may say not a small sum in embellishments about his dwellings, this appears to have been his object on first starting the farming operations.... Balls and parties every now and then for farmers in a new country will not do. 27

McKenzie continued to attack Langford by reviewing some of the tangible results of his negligence. The sheep, at one time numbering seventeen hundred, were now only three hundred. It was the height of folly to try to keep large numbers of stock on the property because "as a pastoral farm it is quite out of the question, there being little or no fence upon it during the summer."²⁸

London decided not to intervene in the squabble between the agent and the bailiff because it had lately been decided by the directors to terminate Langford's contract at the end of his first five year period.²⁹ As far as they were concerned, an unhappy association would be over and the matter would be closed.³⁰ In the meantime, McKenzie would have to deal with Langford as best he knew how. For his part, McKenzie was only too happy to give Langford notice that he would be fired on the fifth anniversary of his employment with the Company. The notice was served on February 8 1855.³¹ It produced in Langford a moment of contrition for his past defiance of McKenzie. At the end of February he produced an inventory of all the buildings and implements on his farm together with an account of the present amount of crops and numbers of livestock. There was no indication in it as to whether the farm was making or losing money and Langford's glowing description of each building, along with its estimated value, simply gave to McKenzie another opportunity to denounce Langford. The agent claimed the inventory was replete with gross misrepresentations. Langford had inflated the value of his buildings, "...likewise the cost he puts down for clearing the land, a pretty portion of which was open and clear with the exception of a few oak stumps."³²

Langford reverted to his tactic of ignoring McKenzie whenever the agent pressed him for his account. In March McKenzie indicated that he wanted a complete record of all the business transactions conducted on Esquimalt

Farm over the past eighteen months.³³ Langford replied with a page from his labour book that gave the details of all the work performed on his farm for exactly one day.³⁴ As late as December 1856, McKenzie and his clerk, Herbert Margary, were vainly chasing after statements from Langford so they could complete the Company's accounts for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1855.³⁵

At times Langford carried on his feud with McKenzie in an unscrupulous manner. To annoy McKenzie, to embarrass him, became for Langford an end in itself which he strove for assiduously and sometimes ruthlessly. He seemed not to care that innocent people might be made to suffer for it. On one occasion he refused to give to McKenzie a statement of money owed by the Company to labourers on the farm. Until this statement could be obtained McKenzie had to withhold their pay.³⁶ In another matter, Langford not only came close to causing a man to lose a half-year's pay, but managed also to make McKenzie the scape-goat. In the spring of 1854 Langford hired as his shepherd one Robert Weir who until shortly before had been the land steward on Craigflower Farm, but who had abandoned the farm and had broken his contract with the Company. McKenzie disapproved not only of the hiring of Weir by Langford without his consent, but also of the salary promised to him by Langford which was £100 per annum or almost double what a bailiff received.³⁷ Weir was supposed to be paid with promissory notes drawn upon the Company and McKenzie would have to sign the notes in order for them to be honoured. When Weir presented one to him, McKenzie refused to accept it unless Langford would first agree to reimburse the Company with money from his personal account at the Hudson's Bay Company store.³⁸ Langford refused so Weir went without his money until he threatened to take legal action against the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. This threat prompted Douglas to pay Weir the amount of the note. Douglas be-

lieved that Weir had a right to the money and he felt the courts would have made the Company pay not only the wages but the legal costs as well had the matter come before them.³⁹

Langford refused to acknowledge McKenzie's jurisdiction over any aspect of the farm under his bailiffship. In the summer of 1855 McKenzie denied him permission to build a new barn.⁴⁰ Langford began to construct it anyway and sent the men employed on it to McKenzie for their wages.⁴¹ He also conducted sales of livestock on his own instead of through the agent. Sometimes he made foolish transactions, as when he sold all the rams in his possession without first ascertaining whether there were any available to replace them. McKenzie was thereby placed in a dilemma because he had hardly enough for his own flock. But to deprive Langford of them would mean no increase in the flock in spring. Torn between a desire to let Langford stew in his own juices and a wish to protect the Company's interest, McKenzie begrudgingly lent Langford the use of seven of his own rams for a short time.⁴²

Esquimalt Farm failed as a commercial enterprise but it is not possible to explain all the reasons for the failure. Langford spent some of the income to satisfy his lavish tastes but it is not known how large an income the farm enjoyed. The size of the flock varied greatly from one year to the next. In 1851 Langford received two shipments of sheep from Nisqually totalling nearly two thousand animals. By the following spring only 873 remained. A year later, the number had risen to 1176 but by the summer of 1854 the size of the flock had shrivelled to 426 animals. During the following winter it plummeted to less than half of that number.⁴³ Because of Langford's reluctance to exhibit his accounts, it is not known if the variations reflect volumes of sales. Nor is there any indication of sales of crops. As late as the winter of 1853, when Langford

was completing his second year on the island, Douglas affirmed that there was not "a mouthful of food produced last season" on Esquimalt Farm.⁴⁴

The other two bailiffs showed the same unwillingness to accept McKenzie's authority, although they did not act from malicious motives. Macaulay had to support an "extravagant half-breed wife and a large family".⁴⁵ He found the flock under his care admirably suited to that purpose and, understandably, did not relish the prospect of having to account for it to someone else. McKenzie issued orders to both Macaulay and his shepherd not to kill any sheep without his permission.⁴⁶ The order was ignored until McKenzie cut off supplies from the fort to Viewfield Farm.⁴⁷ This expedient appears to have had the desired effect as McKenzie's correspondence to Macaulay for more than a year following this incident contains no hint of difficulties between the two men. McKenzie even persuaded Macaulay to amalgamate his flock with McKenzie's on the sheep station which the agent established in 1855 at Lakehill. McKenzie had virtual control over the combined flock and, according to his own testimony, the scab-ridden animals of Macaulay improved tremendously.⁴⁸ But the era of co-operation ended a year later when Macaulay accused McKenzie of taking the best lambs from his flock and crediting them to Craigflower Farm. To prove that he had no designs on Macaulay's sheep, McKenzie permitted him to remove them from the Lakehill station on the condition that he return them to Viewfield Farm.⁴⁹ Macaulay sent the flock to the farm of a Captain McNeill.⁵⁰ At the same time, he refused to submit accounts of the business of his farm. McKenzie's threat to cut off supplies from the fort until the accounts were handed over appears not to have had any effect this time, for McKenzie's clerk was still pursuing the matter three weeks later.⁵¹ The sheep station was vital to the well-being of the flock. No farm had pasture enough to support a large number

of sheep. McKenzie wrote to London in December 1854 to say that he was intending to set up a separate sheep station for the benefit of all the farms.⁵² When Macaulay withdrew his animals from Lakehill, he placed them in a small pen on McNeill's farm where they were soon suffering from scab again.⁵³

Macaulay's salary was not fixed; he was given half of the profits earned by his farm. He must have believed that such an arrangement gave him the right to dispose of the farm as he wished. Since profits were scarce, his personal finances soon became desperate. He approached the agent with a request for a loan of \$250.00 to pay off his debts, offering to use the farm as security. McKenzie, while scornfully dismissing the request, berated Macaulay for his recent refusal to follow an order to transfer one hundred ewes to Skinner's farm.⁵⁴ In retaliation, Macaulay took a leaf from Langford's book and deliberately bungled the account of his wool shipment for that year, causing McKenzie enormous problems in making out a bill of lading.⁵⁵

McKenzie's complete lack of power over defiant bailiffs is best exemplified by the continuation of Macaulay's neglect and mismanagement. If anyone needed supervision, it was Macaulay. He allowed his farm literally to decay. His buildings were "most wretched hovels" and his barn was tumbling down with one end of it propped up by "staks" (sic).⁵⁶ The farming activities seem to have been carried on at whim. While Skinner had all of his potatoes out of the fields by the middle of October, Macaulay did not harvest his potatoes until the beginning of November, taking the entire month to accomplish it.⁵⁷ His greatest spurt of activity was in the fall of 1855 when he put thirty new acres under the plough; he thereby doubled the acreage he had cultivated in his four and a half years on the farm.⁵⁸ The Company lost hundreds of sheep through

his negligence. At the end of August 1850 he had 619 sheep. By the end of the following May the old stock had been reduced to 480 through sales, theft, wild animals, death and use by the farm. New stock raised the total to 502; by the end of May 1852, the count was down to 400. This last figure takes into consideration new births as well as the sale of 171 sheep and a further loss of 177 to "inflammation and hunger", "negligence", wild dogs, Indians, and use by the farm.⁵⁹

The large losses incurred by the flock were matched by strange disappearances of crops. McKenzie, after four years, conveyed his poor opinion of Macaulay's capabilities to the bailiff directly:

Last year I sent you Four Bushels Grey Pease
(sic) - What have you done with the produce of
that crop? Is there not sufficient left for
this year's seed? Miserable farming! to think
that you have to be supplied with seed every
year and no returns!! 60

During his visit to the island in 1858 the Associate-Governor of Rupert's Land, Alexander Grant Dallas, blamed the situation of Viewfield Farm which he termed "disastrous" on Macaulay's total incompetence and "apparent dishonesty".⁶¹ But he also felt that McKenzie should share some of the blame for not bringing matters to a head with Macaulay much sooner.

McKenzie's earliest recorded impression of the three bailiffs betrays a marked preference for Skinner. In contrast to his comments on Langford and to his description of Macaulay as a "very stupid ignorant man", he declared that Skinner was "getting along well and his farm should pay if this continues."⁶² The agent's dealings with Skinner were generally peaceful and amicable. Disputes between them were very few; in only one instance did McKenzie resort to a threat to cut off supplies to the farm.⁶³ A better indication of the relative harmony in their dealings with each other is the fact that McKenzie was willing to compromise with Skinner whenever disputes started to arise, a courtesy he never

extended to the other bailiffs. In one case Skinner moved the boundary fence between his and McKenzie's farm so that he infringed on some of the agent's land and blocked his access to a suitable landing place on Esquimalt Bay. Although McKenzie expressed some annoyance over the matter, he was willing to permit Skinner to keep the fence where it was until Craigflower Farm actually needed the land alienated from it.⁶⁴

McKenzie could be a bit indulgent toward Skinner because that bailiff exhibited a concern for the success of the Company which was not evident in either Langford or Macaulay. Skinner once prevented McKenzie from making an injudicious loan of work oxen to Langford. The agent was prepared to send the animals when Skinner informed him that they would starve on Esquimalt Farm because there was no fodder for them there.⁶⁵ Even when Skinner employed his concern for the Company to thwart a project of McKenzie, he was forgiven. In November 1856 McKenzie put up some cattle for sale by auction. Skinner placed a bid for a lot and won it. After a week he had not paid for it so McKenzie wrote to enquire about it. Skinner replied that his bid had been nothing more than a ruse to keep the animals in possession of and for the purposes of the Company.⁶⁶ McKenzie really had no choice but to accept this fait accompli, but instead of becoming angry with Skinner, he took it with a good grace.⁶⁷

Another difference between Skinner and the two recalcitrant bailiffs was that the former was willing to admit the agent's right to examine his accounts. The Company clerk, Herbert Margary, testified that Skinner kept his accounts well and up to date and McKenzie never indicated that he had problems in obtaining Skinner's accounts.⁶⁸ The bailiff also seems to have been ready to keep the agent informed of activities on the farm without being asked to do so.⁶⁹ But in the matter of managing the farm, he was as much inclined to preserve his independence

from the agent as were the other two bailiffs. Despite McKenzie's wish to amalgamate all the flocks on one station, Skinner kept his apart. He made a fortunate decision for one winter McKenzie's flock at Lakehill was caught by heavy snow and many animals died from starvation.⁷⁰ Skinner was able to inform a correspondent that because he had stored up enough turnips to last until spring, not one of his three hundred sheep died.⁷¹ Perhaps the reason for his reluctance to follow McKenzie's lead in farm management was that Skinner considered himself to be as competent as the agent. After he had recovered from the initial shock suffered at seeing the primitive condition of Vancouver Island, Skinner got along well with his task. In three years he cleared all the land on his farm that was fit for agriculture, about one hundred and fifty acres.⁷² The evidence relating to the competence of each of the subordinate bailiffs is sketchy, but it seems to indicate that Skinner utilized his land in the most efficient manner. He always had produce to sell after his first year. In 1854 he sold wheat to the Hudson's Bay Company and to McKenzie; barley to a private settler and to the fort; potatoes to the Royal Navy.⁷³ He did not have any sheep to care for until the autumn of 1854, so he had more freedom to grow food for human consumption than did Langford.⁷⁴ In 1855 most of his produce was used to support his growing numbers of livestock,⁷⁵ but he was still making sales of food to the Royal Navy. McKenzie complained that Skinner had placed a large Government Bill into the account of Constance Cove Farm instead of passing it to the agent to pay for stock which Skinner had recently received from Nisqually.⁷⁶ In 1856 Skinner sold between eight hundred and a thousand bushels of potatoes to the Royal Navy.⁷⁷

Unfortunately, not even the best managed farm could show a profit. Like all the farms, Constance Cove yearly sank deeper into debt. After

one year of operations it had a deficit of almost £3,000; after two years the deficit was £5670/14/½. It increased in the third year by a further £2,500, and £700 over the next two years.⁷⁸ The deficit was derived from the interest charge of five per cent on the unpaid balance of the debt, deterioration of the buildings and implements, as well as actual expenditures for goods and wages and new livestock. Thus, the size of the deficit alone is not an accurate indicator of the competence of a bailiff. Skinner's experience illustrates that the Company erred in establishing the farms since there was so little chance of success.

McKenzie's farm, like Skinner's, showed that a well run operation did not necessarily bring financial success. His enterprise at Craigflower Farm was nearly as productive as Constance Cove. He sold beef, mutton and vegetables to the Navy, fresh meat to the colliers at Nanaimo, and fresh salmon in Victoria.⁷⁹ His property on the peninsula was the least capable of development, having only eighty acres fit for cultivation and seventy for pasturage.⁸⁰ Yet, with the annexed portions of land at Lakehill and other locations, he managed to keep the largest flocks of sheep and the biggest herd of cattle.⁸¹ McKenzie also provided services to other people in the district, such as blacksmith work, lumber sawing and wheat grinding.⁸² But despite the great amount of activity, the deficit on his farm mounted rapidly, increasing from £5189/0/8 in 1854 to £13,000 by 1857.⁸³

The appointment of Kenneth McKenzie as agent was not made with the intention of curtailing the heavy spending indulged in by the farms but was made for the sake of efficiency. McKenzie had demonstrated his abilities and superiority over the other bailiffs and appeared to be eminently qualified for the task of instilling in them discipline and a devotion to the Company's interest. The revamped system of administration spelled an end to the autonomy to which the bailiffs had become accustomed while

Douglas was the agent, but it left the bailiffs as responsible for losses on their farms as if they still enjoyed this autonomy. The bailiffs had no inducement to accept McKenzie's authority, nor were two of them disposed to do so in any case. McKenzie, by his somewhat harsh tactics, increased their desire to oppose him. He had a propensity for earning peoples' dislike.

CHAPTER FOUR

KENNETH MCKENZIE AND THE COLONIAL OFFICIALS

During the three years in which he served as the agent for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, Kenneth McKenzie exhibited what could be described as a state-of-seige mentality. The Associate-Governor of Rupert's Land, Alexander Grant Dallas, commented that he was "in hot water with everyone".¹ The bad feeling harboured against the agent may have been generalized toward the Company itself. Referring to a case of litigation in which the Company was involved, Dallas noted that "the chances would be strong against us before any jury in this place."² McKenzie's difficulties with some of the officials of Vancouver Island were numerous. The agent spoke frequently of instances of what he considered to be deliberate interference with his authority and his efforts to expand and secure the Company's enterprises by Governor Douglas, land agent Joseph Despard Pemberton and Chief Justice David Cameron. While some of the actions of these individuals did have harmful effects on the Company, McKenzie had more to do with the origin of these problems than his own testimony would indicate.

The office of agent made demands on McKenzie other than those of managing the agricultural affairs of the Company. He had also to make decisions affecting employer-employee relations, such as the interpretation of various clauses in the contracts of both bailiffs and labourers. Much could have been done to promote a more favourable attitude toward the Company by its employees had McKenzie adopted a more flexible position in such matters. As it happened, he tried to enforce the letter of the contracts with absolutely no regard for the spirit that others saw

in them. In two instances, McKenzie hurled himself into opposition to James Douglas. The first occasion arose out of a dispute between the agent and one of his blacksmiths, a Peter Bartleman. This latter individual had established a wretched record of strikes, desertions and quarreling with McKenzie in the two years since they had both arrived.³ Bartleman had gone so far as to set up on the premises of Craigflower Farm his own blacksmith shop from which he sold his services to people in the district. McKenzie had allowed the shop to continue undisturbed until one day its interests collided with those of the farm. The trouble began over a load of coal brought to the farm at a time when coal was hard to obtain.⁴ McKenzie insisted the coal was for the exclusive use of the blacksmith shop operated for the Company's benefit, while Bartleman claimed it for his own shop. McKenzie, whose temper was violent, settled the debate by attacking and destroying Bartleman's shop, and followed this action by laying a charge of breach of contract against Bartleman.⁵ McKenzie asked the court to impose "the greatest disappointment that could be inflicted."⁶ The contract of the labourers provided for deportation back to Britain in such cases. Chief Justice Cameron found in favour of McKenzie and delivered the sentence requested by him, but an order from Governor Douglas was needed before it could be executed. Douglas refused to issue the order because, as he explained to McKenzie, a colonial statute restricted punishment for breaches of contract to fine and imprisonment. The deportation clause was "intended to guarantee to the labourer a passage to Europe, and that he not be thrown upon the mercy of the savages...and is meant as an advantage and not as a punishment...."⁷ The result was that the court could impose neither fine nor imprisonment upon Bartleman because McKenzie had already asked it, in effect, to set the blacksmith free. McKenzie, fuming at having

been frustrated in his attempt to tighten control over his worker, complained that Douglas had weakened his authority and "...Bartleman has now set up on his own account upon Captain Cooper's claim, laughing at us, our 'contracts' and the 'Court of Justice'".⁸

The summer of 1855 was a very wearing time for McKenzie. Just as the Bartleman case was ending so unsatisfactorily for him, another incident which had been a long time brewing was reaching its climax. McKenzie had brought out a school teacher, one Robert Barr. Douglas decided to use Barr's services at the school in the fort and, exercising his power as agent, removed him from Craigflower Farm.⁹ Having been deprived of the school teacher, Thomas Skinner considered that his boys would be better off to have their schooling at home because, as he told Douglas, it was too far for them to walk back and forth every day and he could not afford to have them board at the fort.¹⁰ According to his contract the bailiff could feed his family from the produce of the farm and Douglas stated that it would make little difference to the Company whether they ate at home or at school and gave Skinner permission to send food to the fort. At the time the farm was not yet producing any food so Douglas "said make some arrangement with Mr. Barr and let me know what it is, and if not too much he would sanction it." The Skinner boys remained at Barr's school until Christmas 1854 and in the meantime McKenzie replaced Douglas as the agent. When Skinner presented Barr's bill for keeping the children, McKenzie refused to honour it because according to his interpretation of the contract the Company was obliged to support a bailiff's family only if they lived on the farm. Moreover, McKenzie did not consider himself bound to any agreements made by his predecessor in office. Douglas advised Skinner to send the bill to London and assured him that if the Company refused to pay it, he would honour it himself.

For Barr, it meant that he would have to do without his money for several months. He tried to convince McKenzie to pay the bill, but he tried once too often. He and McKenzie came to blows over the matter.¹¹ Barr laid a charge of assault against McKenzie who was tried before the Justices of the Peace, Langford and Cameron. Barr won his case and the agent, who had a fine of £5 imposed on him, appealed. Douglas had to refuse the appeal petition because, as he explained to McKenzie, appeals could only be allowed in cases where the fine exceeded £5.¹²

By the end of 1855 McKenzie had given several instances of his difficulties with the colonial officials to support his contention that both he and the Company were being made the victims of some ill-defined plot. While the above two incidents might help to give rise to this suspicion, an examination of McKenzie's dealings with officialdom reveals that if such a conspiracy did exist, McKenzie himself created the climate in which it grew. The Bartleman episode shows that McKenzie was impetuous. The same trait that caused him to set up Craigflower Farm without first determining that there was fresh water to serve it now impelled him to rush into the courtroom without prior advice on the meaning of the contract. Writing of the Bartleman and Barr cases, Douglas declared that on these and other occasion "...I strove to withhold him from plunging into difficulties...."¹³ Other people noted McKenzie's aversion to seeking or taking advice. Margary complained that although McKenzie "understands no more of bookkeeping than a boy who has been not more than six months in a County house...." he was always giving contradictory instructions to the young clerk on "this and that way of entry".¹⁴ Although Margary tried his best to accomodate the agent, McKenzie was continually finding fault with him and accusing him of "making his books in a mess..." and would fly into a rage whenever Margary tried to correct him.¹⁵ Dallas

saw in McKenzie's "hasty temper and unsound judgment" causes for the agent's failure to bring the affairs of the Company into good order.¹⁶

Since Douglas had given his assurance to Skinner that he would pay Barr's bill if it were not honoured by London, there is little excuse for McKenzie's stubborn refusal to accept it in the interim. Such stubbornness proceeded as much from a blunt insistence on doing things his own way as from a distrust of Douglas. McKenzie persisted in following his own course and in so doing he enmeshed himself in other difficulties which hurt the Company's fortunes. Towards the end of 1854 he was looking for land which would provide better range for the sheep and cattle than the sites of the four farms.¹⁷ Subsequently he found two pieces of property, one at Lakehill and the other at Deadman's River. McKenzie registered both properties in the Company's name, a procedure which the land office took to mean a declaration of intention to buy. Douglas thought that purchase of the land was both unwise and unnecessary: unwise because unless McKenzie bought large tracts of land, "when the surrounding lands are sold, to other people, it will be too limited in extent for the purpose intended."¹⁸ In fact, added Douglas, there was no need to buy the land as the Company had the same right of commonage on public land as did other parties. McKenzie had no intention of paying for the land. The act of registering it had been done to assure himself of exclusive use of it. Having achieved that end, he set up buildings to serve the flock of sheep. However, the day arrived when his project was threatened with extinction, for someone made an application to the land office to buy the best portion of the property, including the section containing McKenzie's improvements. If the land were sold, McKenzie complained to London, the remaining portion would be dissected and rendered useless.¹⁹ The affair embroiled McKenzie in a long dispute with the land agent and

his assistant, Benjamin Pearse, in which McKenzie insisted that his registering of the property and his buildings not only gave the Company the first option to buy the land, but virtually eliminated the right of any one else even to make application to buy it.²⁰ Pearse, tired of waiting for several months for McKenzie to pay for the land, replied that the registration was no longer valid "when another person offers to pay down the money and get his title...."²¹ Pearse offered to McKenzie the suggestion that he find a "pretext" for stalling the interested purchaser until London's disposition could be ascertained, but McKenzie, suspecting that Douglas was behind the threat to buy out his sheep range, suddenly presented Pearse with the money.²²

McKenzie learned nothing from the near loss of the important Lakehill property. He behaved in the same manner when he registered land at Deadman's River for a cattle range, but whereas in the former instance the land office had given him prior warning of its intention to sell, there was no such consideration given in the latter case. Sales of land in the colony were so few that Pemberton would plead with people to buy.²³ When a spontaneous offer was made to buy the Deadman's River acreage registered by McKenzie, he did not hesitate to act upon it. McKenzie had no inkling that his cattle range was threatened until Pemberton informed him of its sale. The Company agent fell back upon his former argument that the buildings on the property put him in possession of the land.²⁴ He also employed a new argument, "...the right of squatter's law viz. the first offer for the purchase whenever application should have been made to you by any other party" (emphasis his).²⁵ Neither his arguments nor the money he submitted along with them were of any avail. The land was sold to Caleb Pike who was gracious enough to allow McKenzie to remove his property from the site. McKenzie took his time about it. The land was sold in June 1856;

Pike waited until the end of the following March before he lost patience and destroyed the buildings.²⁶ Pemberton did not look upon the sale of Deadman's River as some kind of coup against McKenzie. He apologized for not having given him prior warning and he notified the agent that the Company's sheep range at Christmas Hill was likewise threatened.²⁷

McKenzie's unsuccessful attempts at securing free and exclusive use of public lands for the Company certainly won neither himself nor the Company any friends. They exposed not only his obnoxiousness but also his craftiness which is even more discernible in the way he operated to secure a victualling contract from the Royal Navy. McKenzie had won the contract in 1855 amid the cries of his competitors that he had undersold the beef, the market price of which was sixteen cents per pound. When the time to renew the contract arrived in 1856, McKenzie submitted a bid to sell beef to the Navy at the current market price. His tender was for the benefit of his competitors. Privately, he made an arrangement to supply the beef "at the same rates as last year."²⁸

If McKenzie judged others in the light of his own behaviour, it is understandable that he should be so suspicious of Douglas. The paths of the two men crossed frequently. On one occasion Douglas' behaviour was questionable. McKenzie informed him of a wish to fit out the vessel newly acquired to conduct a trade between the farm and the Indians near the mouth of the Fraser River. Douglas gave his blessing to the venture. Just as McKenzie was prepared to initiate the venture Douglas withdrew his permission, giving as his reason the uncertainty as to whether he had the power to grant it.²⁹ Undeterred, McKenzie proceeded with his plan. Douglas did not impede him. Nevertheless, McKenzie used this and several other incidents as proof of what he interpreted to be duplicity on the part of Douglas. Besides the Governor's supposed involvement in the Bartleman and

Barr cases and his alleged attempt to alienate the Lakehill range from the Company, McKenzie charged him with having intervened in the Weir episode by paying that man's wages without first obtaining the agent's approval, thus nullifying McKenzie's attempts to bring Weir to heel.³⁰ In fact, McKenzie had told Langford, who had hired Weir, to request Douglas to pay Weir's wages for McKenzie was convinced that Douglas had advised Langford to hire Weir.³¹ Coupled with this accusation was another to the effect that Douglas had stopped purchases of Company wheat by the Hudson's Bay Company, while at the same time making it unprofitable for the farms to grind their wheat into flour. McKenzie claimed that the fur trade company was importing flour from San Francisco which it sold at 28/4 per one hundred pounds. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company had only one steam engine, which was employed to turn the saws for cutting lumber. It could be fitted to the mill stones only at night. This expedient meant extra wages which made the Company's flour uncompetitive with the imported product.³² Douglas was also said to be behind the rebellion of Macaulay. The agent accused the Governor of having advised the bailiff to disobey McKenzie's orders regarding a transfer of sheep to another farm.³³ Douglas, said the agent, was Macaulay's "friend and adviser in all cases".³⁴

When called upon by London to reply to some of these allegations, Douglas appears to have been taken aback that McKenzie had made them. The Weir affair, he retorted, could have been settled peaceably and in far less time had it not been for McKenzie's stubborn refusal to follow Douglas' advice "to pay the wages,...and if improperly hired by Mr. Langford to hold the latter responsible for the sum paid...."³⁵ Instead, Weir went without his wages for months until he had to resort to threats of taking court action against the Company. Douglas learned from the magistrate that Weir had a just claim and the Company would end up paying

not only the wages, but the court costs, too. It was only to save the Company from needless trouble and expense that Douglas decided to pay Weir his wages, which amounted to only half the figure cited by McKenzie. Douglas condemned the agent's entire involvement, stating that it "savours more of persecution than of just resentment." He denied outright the agent's charge that the fur trade was trying to undersell the wheat grown by the agricultural company. On the contrary, he declared, the latter had been selling wheat to the former all winter, "at the rate of 8/4 per bushel, and (we) are most anxious to get the Puget's Sound Company's grain to save the importation of flour from California...."³⁶ Douglas' ire was deeply aroused by these charges; it had not abated after four days when he added his comment that McKenzie was guilty of "treachery and back-biting" and he pointed out to director Berens that the agent's behaviour in the Weir case had its parallel in the Barr and Bartleman affairs.³⁷

The issue of credibility raised by the discrepancy between the Douglas and McKenzie versions can be settled only by finding other evidence to support one or the other. That evidence strongly suggests that Douglas was the more accurate in his statements. The feeling of animosity is entirely on McKenzie's side. Until Douglas was asked to reply to the allegations he was totally unaware of the intensity, if not of the very existence, of McKenzie's dislike for him. Douglas had acted on the agent's behalf on a number of occasions. One of these instances involved a matter of great importance to the finances of the farms on the island. Shortly after assuming his duties as agent, McKenzie made a request to Nisqually for some badly needed work oxen and breeding stock of horses, cattle and sheep.³⁸ The animals which were sent from there dismayed him. They were "the most miserable lot of sheep I ever beheld...."³⁹ Nearly

one hundred of them died shortly after they reached the island; the indispensable oxen were by their age and condition unfit for service.⁴⁰ McKenzie was also angry over the price William Fraser Tolmie had charged for the animals and informed him that transfers of all livestock from one Company farm to another were to be conducted at the inventory price of the animals instead of the market price. Douglas took the agent's side in the dispute.⁴¹ Unfortunately, it did no good. Tolmie, preoccupied with the ravages to his livestock and land from in-coming settlers to the surrounding territory, did not have a chance to reply for three months. He simply shrugged off the matter by suggesting to McKenzie that he seek redress from the owner of the "ill ventilated scow" used to convey the animals.⁴²

In another instance, Douglas tried to assist McKenzie in his efforts to remove Langford from Esquimalt Farm after his contract was supposedly terminated. McKenzie had requested the Hudson's Bay Company supply shop to stop its sales of provisions to Langford. Douglas thought this action to be unwise because there was some doubt as to whether the firing of Langford was done legally.⁴³ If the bailiff's contract were still binding on the Company, then Langford would have the right to sue the Company for breach of contract if McKenzie persisted in his action.⁴⁴ The clerk in the supply shop obeyed McKenzie's order, presumably on instructions from Douglas.⁴⁵ Six months later, Douglas was again supporting McKenzie in his conflict with Langford by complying with another request to halt all transactions between Esquimalt Farm and the Hudson's Bay Company and was urging him to enter upon the premises of the farm in order "to take every necessary measure for the security of (the Company's) property...."⁴⁶ No mention of Douglas' assistance to him ever crept into McKenzie's correspondence to the head office in London. For his part,

Douglas never mentioned any difficulties between himself and McKenzie until London brought the latter's accusations to his attention. The absence of any rancour in Douglas' letters suggests that the tension between the two men was fostered by McKenzie.

Perhaps the strongest evidence for concluding that many of McKenzie's allegations were fabrications comes from the agent himself. There are several contradictions in his letters. At one time he criticized Langford's buildings for being too well built for a new country.⁴⁷ Yet, when London chided him sternly for the unsatisfactory nature of his accounts,⁴⁸ he tried to distract the directors' attention from relevant issues by praising his own edifices which, he boasted, were the most substantial in the colony, "not put up like most of the buildings on this Island falling down about their ears in a year or so".⁴⁹ His evaluation of the land of Langford's farm as being easy to clear because "a pretty portion" of it "was open and clear with the exception of a few oak stumps"⁵⁰ conflicted with his appraisal of only a few months previous that the same farm was in such a poor location that it was a pity so much money had been spent to develop it.⁵¹ As for his own farm, McKenzie blamed Pemberton "and others" for its having been situated in an area of poor agricultural potential, but the speed and drive exhibited by himself in establishing it belie his stated impression of it.⁵² Thus, it appears that McKenzie's singling out Douglas as a provocateur is not reliable evidence of a plot to do him or the Company any harm. More probably, it was the result of a personality conflict. McKenzie, a man of extreme temperament, could not countenance Douglas' attempts to guide him along a path of compromise and moderation.

The Company was not well served by a man like McKenzie who had a propensity for enmeshing himself in difficulties. A good example of how

McKenzie's foibles made him ineffective in the performance of his duties is the attempt to terminate Langford's contract. In November 1854 the directors sent McKenzie notice of their intention to sever Langford's connection with the Company at the end of the first five year period, as provided for in his contract.⁵³ They neglected to include instructions as to the proper manner of proceeding in serving notice to the bailiff. McKenzie, no doubt eager to do their bidding, despatched his land steward, James Stewart, to serve it on February 8, 1855.⁵⁴ Skinner tried to advise McKenzie that he was not following the English manner of giving notice and with considerable accuracy he later declared that McKenzie "will now find going in the matter tough and expensive."⁵⁵ Moreover, the agent had in his possession a copy of Langford's contract which stipulated that notice was to be given six calendar months prior to the date of termination.⁵⁶ In Langford's case, notice should have been given on November 10, 1855.

At first, Douglas interceded on Langford's behalf. He reminded the directors that no farm on Vancouver Island was profitable as yet, and stated that Langford's greatest fault was "a want of energy and decision in the management of his servants" who had not accomplished enough to earn their food, the "great source of expense" at the farm.⁵⁷ This plea earned for Douglas a sharp rebuke from London. He was reminded of his earlier criticisms of Langford wherein he had expressed dismay the total inability of Esquimalt Farm to produce any food in quantity sufficient to feed even itself. The directors questioned whether Douglas' appeal on behalf of Langford might be

actuated by friendship towards him rather than by your sense of justice....Mr. Langford has been on the farm five years and has not even made it self-supporting, continuing to draw Potatoes, Flour, Beef, from the stores of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Douglas' defense of Langford may also have been the beginning of McKenzie's animosity for him, as most of the agent's accusations date from after the time Douglas wrote to London. McKenzie, with his intense feelings, would be inclined to define anyone who befriended Langford, as an enemy to himself.

In the meantime, McKenzie received orders telling him to take two witnesses when he served notice on Langford.⁵⁹ In his own mind, the requirements had been fulfilled through the despatch of James Stewart. McKenzie filed this latest letter away and forgot about it until one day "...Mr. Skinner on calling at my house let slip that Mr. Langford intended to deny having received the first notice...."⁶⁰ By then it was December 1855, too late to serve the notice in the prescribed fashion but, undaunted, McKenzie took two witnesses and went to serve the notice a second time.⁶¹

McKenzie had unwittingly created a situation which Langford was clever enough to exploit. As the time for his expected departure from the farm approached, a series of notes was exchanged between the bailiff and the agent, the gist of which was that Langford considered McKenzie's action to be illegal on the basis of "the temer of my agreement".⁶² Langford still occupied the farm on May 14, 1856, a few days after he was theoretically no longer in the Company's employ. McKenzie presented a petition to Chief Justice David Cameron to prevent Langford from transacting any business involving the Company's property. It had been his intention to apply to the court to have Langford forcibly evicted, but Douglas counselled him to wait for London's reaction to Langford's offer to rent the farm.⁶³

McKenzie's problems now began to multiply. Cameron rejected his petition for an injunction against Langford because, lacking the power

of Attorney, McKenzie was not able to apply to the Supreme Court. Worse, the Chief Justice had decided that the notices served by McKenzie were invalid. The first notice was served in contravention of Langford's agreement which "expressly designates the officer or agent of the Company in Vancouver's Island as the person who must give notice on their part...." As for the second notice, it was delivered more than "six weeks after the time required by the agreement...."⁶⁴ Cameron was also of the opinion that the document of notice was irregular because it was drawn up in London by the directors whereas according to his interpretation, the notice should have been drawn up by McKenzie.⁶⁵ In short, Langford was still the bailiff of Esquimalt Farm, and could be for the next five years.

The directors were highly sceptical of the correctness of Cameron's decision. They submitted it to their own solicitors in London. The reply given by the solicitors was that the second notice to dismiss Langford was invalid because of its timing, but it in no way affected the validity of the first notice. Moreover, in their opinion, Cameron was splitting hairs in his interpretation of the contract:

Under the agreement with him the Company were at liberty to determine his employment at the end of five years. A written invoice to that effect was signed by the Representative in this country of the Company, and was served upon Langford by the Company's agent in the terms of the agreement. The agreement did not determine that the notice should be signed by the agent in the Colony but simply that it should be a notice in writing of the determination of the Company to put an end to the agreement.

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In spite of the assurances of the legal counsel that the Company was standing on solid ground in its dispute with Langford, Henry Hulse Berens, now sole director of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, was annoyed at the way McKenzie had handled the affair. He demanded to know why the agent had served two notices; the delivery of the second

had "erected the question in Mr. Cameron's mind as to the validity of the service of the original notice...."⁶⁷ Not waiting for an explanation, he prepared and sent a document conferring Power of Attorney upon McKenzie so that the agent might proceed in the matter. Privately, he entertained doubts about the capabilities of McKenzie: "...I see plainly that he is unpopular," he confided to George Simpson, the overseas governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, "whereas Langford is befriended by Douglas and Cameron...."⁶⁸

Cameron's treatment of McKenzie in subsequent events would support Berens' suspicions if such treatment were to be viewed in isolation from its legal context. When McKenzie brought his Power of Attorney to the Supreme Justice in expectation of gaining his injunction to evict Langford, he was startled to be informed that the Supreme Court of Vancouver Island did not exist. Cameron explained that there was no Sheriff or Registrar of the Court,⁶⁹ nor would there be any until the first Monday in January, the only day which a recent Order-in-Council from Westminster had set aside for the Governor of the colony to make such appointments. Once constituted, the Court would have as its first duty "...to draw up a manner of proceeding to be observed in the Court which are to be promulgated to all the Colony for three months before procedure is valid...."⁶⁹

Understandably, McKenzie was baffled:

It appears to me very singular why Mr. Cameron should on one instance give his opinion as supreme judge viz. on the point of refusing me an inhibition for the security of the Company's property and when I apply to him for an ejection against Langford that I may get possession of the Company's farm, He writes me that the Civil Court under his appointment is not yet constituted...I find every difficulty to act, there being such a great sympathy towards Mr. Langford by the powers that be. 70

Cameron's explanation was valid; although the Supreme Court of Civil Justice had been established by an Act of the Legislative Council of Vancouver Island in 1853, the Colonial Office did not officially approve of David Cameron's appointment to the position of Chief Justice until 1856.⁷¹ The Order-in Council permitting the Colony to establish a Supreme Court of Civil Justice was signed on April 4, 1856.⁷² The Order gave the particulars for setting up the Court, and Cameron had received it only a short time before McKenzie made his latest request. However, Cameron's explanation does not imply that McKenzie and Berens' misgivings about a possible prejudice in the colonial judicial system against the Company should be entirely discounted. Cameron's decision that the first notice served on Langford was invalid was a strange one. It could only be arrived at after a grotesque distortion of the wording of Langford's contract.⁷³ The decision is a possible indication that in 1856 McKenzie's chickens were coming home to roost. He had finally brought colonial officialdom into a league opposed to him and determined to make life uncomfortable for him. The court decision followed closely upon the heels of a plan passed by the colonial administration to lay new roads across McKenzie's fields and through his fences, slicing the former in half and doubling the expense of rebuilding the latter.⁷⁴ In turn, Cameron's decision was followed by the Deadman's River issue.

Eventually, the Langford affair would conclude in a manner satisfactory to no one but Langford. McKenzie's downfall was imminent. Throughout most of the time he was agent, London held steadfast to a fatal optimism that the farms would shortly begin to prove successful as business enterprises. The only source of dissatisfaction with McKenzie was in his failure to send statements of profit and loss. Not once did he submit a clear or complete account of the financial status of the farms. In place of it,

he gave a long string of platitudes and excuses. In May 1854 he promised that the statements would soon be on their way to London, but none had been sent by December when he excused himself for not having completed them due to the press of outdoor work.⁷⁵ Later, he blamed the short notice given by Douglas of the despatch of a ship to England for his inability to send any, but promised to have some statements for the next ship.⁷⁶ His subsequent communication boasted that all the buildings on the farms were complete and that everything on the farms was proceeding smoothly.⁷⁷ But it took two years for Colville, the chief among the directors, to develop the intense feeling of frustration he expressed in December 1855 when he wrote, after a wretchedly made statement had arrived in London, that "the Accountants have not been able to bring the confused statements which you sent home to any result".⁷⁸ He warned that "I cannot submit to this state of things much longer", and that the farms would soon have a ceiling on the amount of their expenditures imposed on them by London.

In less than two months, Colville was dead.⁷⁹ As soon as Berens assumed the sole directorship of the Company, the letters from London began to convey a strong and persistent note of dissatisfaction and scepticism which could only have made McKenzie feel ill at ease. Berens demonstrated that henceforth London would be taking a more active role in pursuing the Company's interest. The charges which McKenzie had made about Douglas, until now ignored by the directors, would be investigated, but Berens made McKenzie understand that his willingness to inquire about them in no way implied acceptance of McKenzie's allegations:

As regards your difference with Mr. Douglas...
I can express no opinion without hearing both
sides of the question, but I am very unwilling
to believe that Mr. Douglas would be induced to
do anything unhandsome towards you, or intention-

ally to counteract any views you might wish to see carried out. 80

Berens began to apply, slowly at first, the threat to curtail expenditures. He refused McKenzie permission to purchase a set of millstones, "as I am disinclined to spend any more capital until the assets of the Company show such a return for the Capital already laid out as will justify it...."⁸¹ In subsequent letters Berens' annoyance with McKenzie's continuing dismal performance in the matter of accounts and with his inability to impose some kind of limit on spending grew increasingly prominent as his questions became more pointed. Replying to a requisition for goods which McKenzie sent, he noted:

The Indent you have forwarded shall have our best attention, but we must call your attention to the very large advance made by the Hudson's Bay Company to the Puget's Sound Company, which Mr. Douglas states at £6597/4/6 for Outfit 1855. Your present Indent will amount to above £1000 which will exceed your remittances...Assuming Mr. Douglas' statements to be correct, we should be glad to learn in what manner you propose to liquidate the debt owing to the Hudson's Bay Company. 82

Before McKenzie received any communication from Berens, he compiled another of his "reports", the main intent of which was to placate Colville whose annoyance showed so clearly in his final letter to McKenzie. But the report was received by Berens who rejected it outright for its many shortcomings. Besides having nothing to say of Esquimalt and Cowlitz Farms, "...the accounts just transmitted extend only to the 31 December, 1854 for Nisqually, and to 30th September, 1855 for the farms occupied by yourself, Mr. Skinner and Mr. McAulay (sic)...."⁸³

McKenzie's reply to Berens' searching comments could only exasperate the director. The agent informed him that the millstones had been purchased and a new flour mill erected.⁸⁴ He failed to so much as allude to Berens' demand that McKenzie give concrete proposals for reducing the debt

to the Hudson's Bay Company, and he accused his clerk, Herbert Margary, of having made, through his negligence, a mess of the accounts rejected by Berens.⁸⁵ The director realized that equivocations and evasions were all that were likely to come from McKenzie. He accepted Douglas' rebuttal of McKenzie's version of the Weir case in its entirety. He assured Douglas that his advice "to Mr. McKenzie to pay the amount and make Langford responsible for it was, under the circumstances, judicious."⁸⁶ When next Berens wrote to McKenzie, he was barely able to disguise his complete unwillingness to put any credence into the the agent's remarks:

We observe that you describe the position of the Company's property to be decisively improving, that the farms are now self-supporting, and that you anticipate with the produce of the current year to be able to liquidate a considerable portion of our debt to the Hudson's Bay Company, we earnestly hope that these anticipations may be realized, but we must confess that we are grievously disappointed with the present appearance of affairs. For Outfit 1854 the Hudson's Bay Company claimed a balance of £4845/14/7. They now present an account showing our debt to the Western Department for 1855 to be £6652/17/2 and to the Oregon Department £3409/15/4. We had supposed with your promise to prevent all, excepting absolutely necessary, expenditure, coupled with the assertion that the buildings upon the different farms were finished, we should be relieved from any further heavy drain, but instead of this being the case, according to the accounts tendered, we are indebted to the Hudson's Bay Company about £14,000, and from the monthly reports sent home large advances continue to be made to you. We cannot allow this drain to continue and you must put a stop to it - both you and Mr. Skinner as well as all concerned for the Puget's Sound Company, must limit all domestic expenses to absolute necessities, and the farming operations should be carried on with the strictest economy.... 87

Berens was fast reaching the conclusion that a thorough house-cleaning was in order. He began the new year by sending Herbert Margary, whom he blamed for the unorthodox form of McKenzie's accounts, his notice of dismissal.⁸⁸ Shortly thereafter, he informed McKenzie that he would be

superseded by Alexander Grant Dallas, who had recently embarked for Vancouver Island.⁸⁹

In one sense, the story of the Company's bailiffs on the island ends with the despatch of Dallas. His instructions were to investigate the situation of the farms and to make recommendations for necessary alterations in the arrangements with the bailiffs. Berens suggested that he serve notices of expiration on Skinner and McKenzie so that the Company could, if it wished, make new agreements with them.⁹⁰ Loose ends like Langford were to be tied up in as satisfactory a way as possible. In another sense, the story went on, as the animosity between the principal individuals continued for the better part of two years.

Dallas' initial impression of McKenzie was unrelievedly negative: "...I need not tell you that it (McKenzie's management) has been a total failure...a more unfit man...could not have been selected to exercise the control and direction of affairs generally...."⁹¹ However, Dallas revised his assessment two days later to clear it of any implied attacks on McKenzie's moral character: the former agent had a hasty temper and unsound judgment, but he was "well meaning and thoroughly honest".⁹² It is possible for one examining McKenzie's letters to London to see in them something other than an intention to deceive the directors. Colvile was less inclined to ask direct questions about the condition of the farms. His letters were written mainly to express his dissatisfaction with affairs generally, but he seldom called McKenzie to account for specific matters. McKenzie's replies could comfortably avoid the real issues. Moreover, for all his faults, McKenzie seems to have possessed an irrepressible optimism and confidence in himself. Physical obstacles, such as the lack of fresh water on the peninsula, were not as forbidding to him as they were to Skinner. The fitting out of a boat to trade with other parts of the

coast demonstrates that he could see and exploit opportunities far afield. Present reverses were underplayed because he always saw better times approaching. It was better to emphasize the signs of happier days to come; brisk sales to the Royal Navy; the improved condition of the sheep and cattle; the worth of the Company's property being in excess of £20,000 and the fact that no more buildings would have to be erected.⁹³ Colvile, through his neglect to question very seriously McKenzie's good tidings, appeared willing to believe him. The abrupt change of attitude resulting from Berens' taking over the reins of the Company could have only one outcome. Berens demanded specific explanations and McKenzie must have found some of the director's letters embarrassing. But the content of McKenzie's letters remained basically the same as before. His irrelevancies and groundless optimistic prognostications served only to focus Berens' attention ever more sharply on the only important issue - the fact that the farms were running ever more deeply into debt.

McKenzie's behaviour in the colony was perceived to be that of an impetuous, strong-willed and unforgiving person. While there is very little evidence to support his claim that people were conspiring to harm the Company, it is not so easy to dismiss his suspicions of a plot to harass him. The way in which he acted to achieve his ends would grate against others, causing them finally to respond in kind. If the loss of Deadman's River and the laying out of farms across his lands at inconvenient locations were expressions of such a response, McKenzie's experience illustrated the fact that in a small community, personal feelings can determine a great deal. The Company itself was a victim of McKenzie's reputation. The memory of the Company was attended by hatred and bitterness among the early colonists. Those individuals most intimately associated with the Company, the farm labourers, were especially hostile to it.

CHAPTER FIVE

LABOUR PROBLEMS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

The study of the farmworkers hired by the Company is hampered by the fact that the workers have left so little in the way of a written record. The English workers have left nothing, as most of them were illiterate. Most of the Scots were capable of writing about their experiences, but few such accounts survive. The greater portion of the direct and indirect evidence which reveals anything about the workers pertains to the men on Langford's and McKenzie's farms only. Skinner's force was quickly whittled down to five people, while Macaulay employed Indian labour most of the time.

Relations between the Company and its labourers were poor, but the fault would seem to lie wholly on the side of the workers. The Company was placed at their mercy because of the severe labour shortage which prevailed on the island throughout the 1850s. English and Scottish workers differed in their methods of exploitation. Generally, the English remained on the farm, wringing every concession possible from Langford. The Scots found it more to their advantage to desert McKenzie and begin to work for someone else, often in a trade or craft. Both bailiffs had their own responses to work stoppages and, while Langford's more conciliatory moves might explain why he had less of a problem in retaining his workers than did McKenzie, another explanation may lie in the backgrounds of each group of workers.

The Orkney Islands had been the traditional source of labour for the Hudson's Bay Company's fur trade, and it was there that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company first sought to hire its workers. However, the letter

to the Hudson's Bay Company agent in Stromness, Edward Clouston, arrived too late in the harvest season. The directors were under the impression that they could send a party of emigrants away before the end of September. They expected Clouston to be able to entice workers from their employment at the busiest and best-paying time of the year. They were greatly disappointed when he informed them that although he had advertised throughout the country, only "six or eight" men had declared themselves willing to go.¹ Less than two weeks later, the situation had improved considerably in Orkney. As the harvest work began to wind down, more labourers became available and Clouston was able to inform his superiors that he had found fourteen men who were impatient to embark, "now that they are ready, and altogether out of employment".²

Presumably, the directors decided to incorporate Clouston's contingent into the emigration party, but they did not ask him to find more. Still hoping to get the ship under way as quickly as possible, they had changed the locale of their search for labour to Kent, Dorsetshire, and Gloucestershire upon the receipt of Clouston's first letter.³ Again due to the time of year, workers were slow to recruit; it was the end of September before the agent in Gloucestershire, and the fourth of October before the Dorsetshire agent, were able to report any measure of success in their efforts.⁴ The former supplied only four men, the majority of Langford's workers originating from Dorsetshire.⁵ Later, Douglas perceived one of the dangers to the Company to be the homogeneity of background of the English workers. Taking a lesson from the behaviour of Langford's crew, he suggested to the directors that in future they strive to hire their workers from several counties so that they would not be "so apt to combine against their employers."⁶

Dorsetshire men were more eager to emigrate than were the men of

Gloucestershire. The latter had to be reassured that they "would not have to live on oatmeal" and they also questioned the terms of the contract offered to them. Archibald Barclay, the secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, had to inform the agent there that the men were to be employed in "agricultural labour generally, but it would be impossible to define what would come under that description, nor can it be conceded to hired servants to choose what they will do or not do."⁷ The caution displayed by the Gloucestershire men and the paucity of their actual numbers among the emigrants is impossible to explain, considering the conditions of agriculture in England at that time.

In the latter 1830s, English agriculture began a lengthy period of rapid progress. But the technical advance in farming was not matched immediately by any noticeable improvement in the living conditions of the English farm worker.⁸ In some ways his lot became worse. In 1834 the allowance system, which supplemented a labourer's wages with money from the parish poor rates, was discontinued. Henceforth, in order to earn enough to live, it was necessary for women and children to seek regular work on the farms, a phenomenon rare in England until that time. A general surfeit of labour was the result except, perhaps, at harvest time, and the overall effect was the suppression of wages, particularly in the southern counties. In the following decade severe famine drove up the price of bread while at the same time it decreased the demand for labour. The effects of the repeal of the Corn Laws were not felt immediately, and it was only in 1853 when England, emerging from the effects of the famine, witnessed a sharp rise in the demand for farm labourers.⁹

It is difficult to imagine how the circumstances of a farm worker in England might have been more miserable than they were by 1850. What was true of England generally applied with greater intensity to Dorset-

shire. The labourer's situation in that county was said to have "passed into a proverb", and no recruiting agent would have had to idealize Vancouver Island in order to arouse interest in it.¹⁰ Rural housing was scarce in England around the middle of the century when the plight of the agricultural labourer was a frequent source of interest to the readers of newspapers. One correspondent from Dorsetshire remarked that "there has been but one cottage built in this village for the last thirty years".¹¹ Two years later, the same writer gave a detailed description of one village which consisted of the vicarage, one farm house and the tenement hovels in which most of the population of three hundred were doomed to spend their lives.¹² Even later in the century a typical English rural cottage was a two room building, one for living in and the other for sleeping. The floor was made of packed earth, and the roof was made of thatch which usually failed to keep out the rain in the wet season, turning the floor into a morass. The effect of the one fireplace, located at the end of the living room, was combatted by draughts which entered through badly fitted doors and windows and chinks in the mortar used to hold the stone walls together.¹³ The diet of the labourer varied from one district to another and from time to time. Through most of the 1840s potatoes replaced bread as the staple in Dorsetshire, but in the two years following the repeal of the Corn Laws, the potato crop failed.¹⁴ People then ate whatever could be made digestible. The bread made from the wretched domestic wheat was so bad that it was still remembered many years later.¹⁵

The directors of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company were mindful that the cheapest labour could be found in Dorsetshire and Gloucestershire.¹⁶ However, the Company did not take unfair advantage of the plight of the labourers by offering them lower wages than prevailed

in those counties. In strictly cash terms its offer of £17 per annum was slightly less than the Dorsetshire average of 7/6 per week. However, besides free provisions, the labourer was given rent-free accomodation and the guarantee of payment in cash and of steady employment for several years, none of which were attainable in England. Even the simplest fare of vegetables would have been an improvement over what the worker had lately managed to procure, and would not have added much to the expense of operations on Vancouver Island. Nevertheless, the Company was generous as its contract provided the worker with free provisions without defining what was meant by "provisions".¹⁷

As already noted, the material circumstances of the workers on the island were dictated by Langford's sensibilities.¹⁸ He seems to have gone beyond what the directors considered to be fitting housing for labourers. He fed his men what could only be described, when compared to their former diet, as lavish foods. In one year alone he purchased more than £900 worth of food from the Hudson's Bay Company's supply shop in Victoria. Most of the purchases were for meat, flour and vegetables which were usually absent from the workers' former table.¹⁹ Such liberality added not only to the farm's, but to Langford's personal indebtedness. He also provided extras like the riding horses for his men, and the twenty-four bedsteads he purchased in 1851, an item of luxury to people who had been reared in hovels bereft of furnishings.²⁰ Langford later claimed that many of his purchases went to the men in lieu of wages, but the amount of cash paid out as wages in 1851 is more than £17 per man, assuming a full complement of thirty workers.²¹

The secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, Archibald Barclay, expected no trouble from the English emigrés, perhaps because they were illiterate or because the Dorset men who were in the majority exhibited

far less curiosity about working conditions than did the Gloucester men.²² While the Tolpuddle Martyrdom of 1834 had taken place in Dorsetshire, this outbreak of labour action was the exception there. The farm labourer had few definite beliefs about his station in life, and those he did have contradicted one another. One source of his beliefs came from his religion. Since 1830, rural labourers had been espousing Methodism in rapidly growing numbers. Methodism taught a spiritual egalitarianism in that all were declared "precious in the sight of God". A practical application of this tenet was that the existing order should not be accepted by the ones who reaped the least advantage from it, but that the labourer had a right and a duty to better his lot. Tolpuddle may have been an attempt to apply Methodist teachings. Its failure was due, ostensibly, to quick and brutal action by the local authorities.²³ For the next forty years, the rural labourer seems to have adopted a fatalistic attitude to his condition. Improvement meant to him an increase in the quantity rather than in the quality of what was available. One observer of the agricultural scene noted the labourers' reluctance to change their lifestyle in even the smallest of details.²⁴ The difficulties experienced by the Company with its workers from England were usually in the form of demands for higher wages.

The Company's labour problems developed from the prevailing labour shortage along the west coast of North America. The shortage was caused by the greater attractiveness of the American lands immediately to the south of Vancouver Island. Settlers coming into Washington and Oregon were granted parcels of free land. There was, too, the California gold rush. It was in full swing at about the time Langford arrived on the island and its magnetic force exerted a strong pull from which not even the Royal Navy was immune.²⁵

For the labour-hungry Puget's Sound Agricultural and Hudson's Bay Companies, the chief implication of the shortage was that they could not use the threat of discharging unco-operative or defiant workers. The solution most often used was to transfer a recalcitrant worker to another branch of the service. Evidence of such action being taken is to be found frequently in the records of the two companies. Douglas sent one troublesome Englishman to the farm at Nisqually, and another from Fort Langley to Fort Victoria where, he promised, an effort would be made to make him work.²⁶ Later, Douglas was willing to hire at the fort, upon their release from gaol, three Scots workers who had deserted McKenzie's farm.²⁷ Robert Weir, McKenzie's troublesome land steward, was quickly able to find at least temporary employment with the fur trade.²⁸ When Langford arrived in 1851, Douglas withdrew for use at the fort the three Canadian carpenters employed in erecting the first crude buildings on Esquimalt Farm. Langford was forced to put his own men to tasks of wood cutting and building, whereby they developed "mechanics" skills. Instead of abiding by their contracts, they went about the district selling their newly acquired services and they would only agree to return to Langford after he had promised them higher wages.²⁹ The labour problem had not abated by 1856 when Douglas, referring to French-Canadian deserters, noted that rehiring them was "more a matter of necessity on our part, for want of other hands to replace them, than of discretion".³⁰ On one occasion, Douglas' disdain for English workers prompted him to make an exception to this policy. When four of Langford's men and four Scots ran off in the direction of Nisqually, Douglas instructed the bailiff there, William Fraser Tolmie, that the former "are not wanted, but the poor ignorant Scots should be sent back if possible."³¹

The defiance displayed by Langford's men cannot be attributed to radicalism. They simply exploited to the full the situation they encountered. Not only did the necessity of having to build their own cottages and other farm buildings provide them with a new source of income, but they also argued that such work lay outside the terms of their contracts and they successfully demanded extra pay for it.³² In England the practice was to give tasks which required special knowledge or skills to men trained for them. The term "agricultural labourer" was reserved for the common field hand who performed the more menial tasks about the farm. Langford's men took exception to the clause in their contracts which required all labourers "to do and obey all orders" and "to perform all such work and service by day or by night".³³ The only legal recourse Langford had was to bring the men before Douglas whose decision was that "according to the custom of the country, labourers are bound to assist in all such kinds of work."³⁴ Douglas was willing to incarcerate defiant workers for periods of thirty days but Langford, unwilling to deprive himself totally of their services, conceded to their demands for extra pay for non-agricultural work. However, Douglas felt that Langford would be able to control his men better if their number were reduced and so he began transferring some of the bailiff's men to the fur trade. By January 1852 he had taken six men from Langford and he advised the directors that further reductions might be necessary. The labourers remained steadfast in their interpretation of the contract:

Several of them were brought before me the other day by Mr. Langford, charged with refusing to do their work, one with refusing to drive bullocks, another objected to breaking horses and a third refused to hew timber, and one and all declined herding or shearing sheep, because labourers were not accustomed to do such work in England. 35

By the end of Langford's second year, he had only twelve of his original

thirty labourers.³⁶

The labour shortage placed the Company in a real dilemma. Langford's policy of appeasement was the only one that seemed to be able to retain the workers' services. As of March 5, 1855, he still had the twelve workers left to him by Douglas. But his method was also very costly. Almost every task was considered to be "extra" work:

The men with the oxen get 1s./ per day extra for every day's work with the teams, as also those who go with the horses, it involves attendance on Saturday often on Sundays. Croghan has £30 per annum as gardener...Bond whose work must be performed all weathers and every day gets £25 per annum and being a tolerably good butcher 1s./ for every sheep and pig that he kills. Sanghurst acts as carpenter and by law is entitled to £25 per annum. Williams is not an engaged servant and works mainly by contract. 37

When their contracts expired, few of the men could be induced to remain with the Company. McKenzie allowed Langford to offer his workers a wage of £52 per annum and a free house if they re-engaged.³⁸ Of the twelve, only two accepted the new conditions and a third, Croghan, who had "kept to his agreement with the Company and being a man of good education and although somewhat given to drink, still I believe a man of good principle..." was won over only after Langford promised him £60 per annum.³⁹

When McKenzie and Skinner were making ready to embark for North America, they were given the responsibility of recruiting their own labour forces.⁴⁰ The Company restricted its involvement in the matter to issuing a few specific guidelines. If the directors had learned anything from the experience with Langford's workers, it was that they must attempt to deprive future recruits of the freedom to maneuver; thus their insistence that candidates for emigration be married. So determined were the directors to prevent bachelors from emigrating

that they urged McKenzie to induce any unmarried applicants to marry before they left Britain, or at least to see to it that single men brought with them an unmarried sister.⁴¹ It was expected that a married man would be less likely to desert or strike and that the wife would help compensate for the desperate labour shortage at critical times. The latter hope betrays an ignorance about the habits of farm workers in McKenzie's district of East Lothian where a married woman did not work in the fields but remained at home, caring for the family cow.⁴²

In the matter of transporting its workers the Company displayed a miserly attitude completely out of character with the way it allowed money to be spent on other aspects of its operations. People with more than two children were disqualified from being hired.⁴³ All workers were to sign on as employees of the Hudson's Bay Company in order to avoid the restrictions imposed by the Passenger Act which prohibited the transportation, in any explosives-laden ship, of passengers who were not employees of the ship's operators.⁴⁴ Once arrived on Vancouver Island, the workers were to be transferred to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company.

The nature of the Scots' reaction to their contracts was quite different from that of the English labourers and it raises the suspicion that a good proportion of McKenzie's party were not disposed to emigrate as farm workers. The people whom McKenzie eventually hired first discovered their opportunity through an advertisement in the "East Lothian and Berwickshire Monthly Advertizer". The notice was short and simple:

Wanted for the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, Vancouver's Island, in North America, a few good PLOUGHMEN and FARM LABOURERS, also a HOUSE CARPENTER and BLACKSMITH. Apply to Mr. McKenzie, Saggerdean, 12 May, 1852. 45

This advertisement appeared on April 9th, a full month before McKenzie began interviewing applicants. There was ample time for word of this opportunity for employment to be widely diffused throughout the southeast corner of Scotland. One month after the interviews began, McKenzie informed the Company that his party was complete and was comprised of forty-three adults and twenty-four children. Twenty-seven of the adults were employees of the Company, the remainder being their wives. Fifteen of the contracts survive, of which ten show that the labourer resided in East Lothian, and five in Mid-Lothian (Edinburghshire).⁴⁶ Although these districts were mainly agricultural and were the most advanced of all the farming regions of Scotland, McKenzie seems to have experienced difficulties in organizing a skilled agricultural labour force while adhering to the Company's stipulations.⁴⁷ He was told to limit himself to twenty workers "of all trades".⁴⁸ McKenzie hired five blacksmiths and carpenters, leaving fifteen which he could hire as farm workers. Two men were engaged as land stewards. He was able to find only eight married men to fill the balance of his quota. He therefore found it expedient to make up in numbers what was lacking in skill. He hired ten single men. In the agricultural society of the Southeast men seldom married until they had acquired enough proficiency in skill-demanding tasks, like driving the plough-team, before they could ask for a wage commensurate with the raising of a family. The evidence relating to the individuals in McKenzie's party is scanty, but it indicates that many of his workers were not from farming backgrounds. John Instant, for example, had spent at least seventeen years in the British army, and was a saddler by trade. James Deans, the brother of one of the carpenters, was astonished at the dirt floor of the storehouse which was his first home on Vancouver Island. His reaction is another detail sug-

gesting a familiarity with a different lifestyle.⁴⁹

It would have been undesirable on McKenzie's part to extend his search for workers beyond the Lothians. Farming techniques varied widely from one district in Britain to another and McKenzie was familiar mainly with mixed farming, the Lothian specialty.⁵⁰ Even in regions which might be characterized by a general mode of agriculture, a great variation in technique might be employed, for it was an age of experimentation and innovation in Scottish agriculture:

Scotland in those years (1840s) was undergoing a technological revolution in agriculture with the introduction of farm machinery, scientific manuring of fields, and the selective breeding of livestock, especially sheep. Of greatest importance was the introduction of tiling to drain the wet marsh lands. Young McKenzie thus gained invaluable experience in the management of his father's farm and sheep runs, and he established a tile works, utilizing local clays, to bring more of his father's land into production. 51.

McKenzie was typical of the farmers who had helped to make the Lothian region one of the most productive in Britain. Accordingly, it would be of great advantage to hire workers who, besides having a reputation as being the best farm workers in the country, would also be familiar with many of the techniques he employed.⁵² Yet, one of the reasons why he could not assemble an adequate party is that his search was restricted to the Lothians.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, conditions in Scottish agriculture generally were working against anyone who might try to induce people to emigrate as hired farm labourers. The demand at home for such labour was high while the supply was low. Between 1801 and 1851 new methods of fertilizing the fields, a more intensive succession of crops, improved animal husbandry and the complexity of chores these innovations engendered all demanded more labour which was increasing-

ly difficult to find. While the south-east portion of Scotland did not experience a drop in population during this time, the region's expanding agricultural base placed heavy demands for labour on the rural population which was founded on the family-cottage system.⁵³

Attitudes towards farm labour were changing; proximity to growing towns with alternate means of livelihood helped keep the labour force below the requirements of the time. In the Lothians, with their stultified social structure which prevented a wage earner from becoming independent, "...there was growing revulsion from heavy agricultural work even among the families of agricultural workers."⁵⁴ If a worker was disinclined to remain on a landlord's farm, he could either migrate to the factories or emigrate abroad and set up his own farm.

The clearest indication of the scarcity of workers, whether ploughmen, seasonal or day labourers, is the rise in wages after the 1830s:

By the forties a fresh rise (in wages) had started which was to continue, though not at a steady rate, almost without interruption till the mid-seventies. In the South-East, at current prices, increases of at least one-third occurred between the late thirties and the early fifties.... 55

Lothian wages were usually paid in kind rather than in cash, an arrangement which the ploughmen preferred, according to various writers.⁵⁶ What he received was more than could be consumed by his household, unless he had a very large family. The remainder could be sold or bartered for other necessities such as shoes. In times of high grain prices the value of his wages increased. When the market was depressed, he still had enough for his own needs, and the quality of his wages was steadily improving. The cow was the means by which he could augment his income. In some places the alternative of five pounds was offered in lieu of a cow, but the wise man rejected it.⁵⁷ The oats, barley and

beans portion of his wages was supplemented by the potatoes and vegetables which he grew in his garden plot.

The wage arrangement gave to Lothian ploughmen the best living standard enjoyed by farm workers in Scotland. There were two basic systems of housing workers. Through most of the country the "bothy" system was used. The "bothy" was a dormitory in which six or eight men cooked and slept. There was no place on farms for a family to live together, hence the name "anti-family" which was attached to the system. Women were housed the same way as the men, and in a few cases men and women were housed together. The "bothy" was a wretched hovel but it was easier and cheaper to put up a few bothies than it was to erect many cottages.⁵⁸ In most parts of Scotland, farmers frowned upon workers marrying because couples wanted private dwellings.

In the Lothians and Berwickshire this situation was reversed:

...the Lothian farmers encourage hinds to marry; and while in many parts of Scotland where the bothie (sic) system prevails, marriage means to ploughmen notice to quit, in the Lothians, their prospects become better." 59

Nevertheless, a man would wait until he had earned enough experience driving the oxen before he could demand the wages of a "hind" or ploughman.⁶⁰ The large number of single men in McKenzie's party shows that if they were farm workers, they were not yet considered experts in their careers. Only married ploughmen had the right to a cottage; single men were housed in bothies. About all that could be said for the cottage was that it provided a measure of privacy. The typical cottage was a one-room affair with a dirt floor and a small window. The beds were boxes lined up along the wall or used to divide the family quarters from the animals.⁶¹ Yet, the worker appears to have been well satisfied with it. One observor who thought it "painful to

see the sick shut up in such breathless holes", was astute enough to add that "old people smile when you ask them if they are not choked, and say they 'could na sleep in any other bed'".⁶²

The offer of employment as a farm labourer was not likely to induce anyone residing in the Lothians to emigrate. Nor was McKenzie assisted in his efforts by the Company's wage offer. The contract held out the same rewards extended two years earlier to Langford's workers: a sum of £17 per annum, free passage to North America, rations and rent-free housing. There was no provision for a cow, pig, or garden. The directors seem to have learned nothing from the disputes with Langford's workers over the interpretation of the term "agricultural labourer". "Ploughman" and "labourer" were synonymous to the Company, whereas in Scotland the former term bore not merely a functional distinction from the latter but also a social one.⁶³

Perhaps the best indication that many of McKenzie's workers had little interest in careers as farm labourers is the alacrity with which they tried to escape their contracts. McKenzie's diary and that of one of his workers, Robert Melrose, contain numerous references to labourers absconding from the farm. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that McKenzie's treatment of his men was anything but benevolent.⁶⁴ The bailiff surpassed the wage provisions of the contracts by duplicating as much as possible the wage scale of the Lothians. He built individual cottages for them, and he gave a cow to many of the married men. Douglas commended him for his concern for the workers.⁶⁵ The contract required the worker to work as long as might be required each day with no extra pay, but McKenzie gave to those who laboured in the sawmill two shillings extra per night.⁶⁶ Aside from what he grew on the farm, the diet that he could provide was restricted by

the variety of foods available at the fort, but even so, it was more diverse than an agricultural labourer could expect to obtain in the Lothians.⁶⁷ A typical order for the men's provisions was thirty bags of flour (each weighing 127 pounds), ten barrels of beef, ten barrels of pork, one chest of tea, one cask of sugar, six casks of oatmeal, and four casks each of rice and split peas.⁶⁸ Yet, complaints about food were frequent. On one occasion, the plaintiff decried the quantity being distributed by McKenzie to one man and his family, but Douglas could not fault the bailiff on his manner of supplying the men, and Melrose's deary contains several mentions of food being taken to the farm and of animals being slaughtered and divided.⁶⁹

The major response to McKenzie's efforts to bring the Company's wages up to the level of the Lothians was disloyalty. The men soon began availing themselves of the many opportunities for work at higher wages at other locations around Victoria.⁷⁰ It is not known whether the Scots were willing to re-negotiate their contracts, but it probably would not have made much difference to a man of unyielding character like McKenzie. His initial recourse was to fall back on the provisions of the Law of Master and Servant (4 Geo. IV, c. 34) which had as its basic feature a strong tendency to favour the master. Breach of contract was a criminal offense if committed by the servant, but only a civil matter if performed by the master. In the former instance it was punishable by imprisonment of up to three months, forfeiture of wages earned, and discharge from service.⁷¹

McKenzie seems to have been the last person to realize that the labour shortage meant that this law could not have the force on Vancouver Island which it enjoyed in Great Britain. One of the first

recorded instances of contract-breaking involved Robert Weir, a land steward, and his two sons William and John. In June 1853 these three men went to Sooke to take advantage of the higher wages being offered there.⁷² McKenzie promptly had warrants issued for the arrest of all three. The elder Weir eluded McKenzie who finally decided to enforce the provision in the contract that a servant who deserted must repay the cost of his passage. How seriously Weir took this threat can be estimated from his reply: he submitted a bill for payment of wages since the date when he had signed his contract (August 1852), amounting to nearly £100.⁷³ Weir experienced no difficulty in finding another job. Three days after demanding the return of the passage money, McKenzie was expressing his annoyance with Robert Finlayson, Chief Trader at Fort Victoria, for having employed Weir in some capacity.⁷⁴ The Weirs became an example to other workers: more defections occurred. Usually, McKenzie was willing to allow the recalcitrant workers to avoid punishment by returning to work. But in August 1853 there was a severe rash of desertions. Fearing a complete exodus of his labourers to other employers, McKenzie began using the gaol as a deterrent. Three men were sentenced on September 7th, 1853. The day before their sentences were up, the two younger Weirs were incarcerated.⁷⁵ It was all to no avail as the string of defections continued.

Douglas once more tried to bring to the directors' attention the severity of the labour problem and he urged that a raise in wages would be necessary to counteract the attractions of breaking service:

...our low scale of wages...is not quite equal to one-fourth of the wages earned by any free labourers in this country, while carpenters can earn from three to five dollars a day at the former rate, with board....The only remedy is to increase our rate of pay to servants and to charge the same prices, as the other merchants,

for clothing and other necessaries. 76

Douglas' interpretation of the underlying cause of labour unrest was only partially correct. It is known for certain that some individuals were drawn into breaking their contracts not from the desire for higher wages but from a wish to become independent, free-hold citizens. Such was the case of George Deans, husband of Annie whose letters provide the only glimpse of the period as seen through the eyes of the Company's employees. Annie's letters suggest that many were motivated to desert because outside employment offered a faster means of acquiring the money to buy land and, consequently, to rise in society.

George Deans was one of McKenzie's carpenters. He was one of the three men gaoled on September 7th, 1853. All three found employment at the fort immediately upon their release.⁷⁷ By the following February, Deans had moved out to a town lot he had purchased where he started to build a house.⁷⁸ His house was larger than the average residence of a working man and in order to pay for it he continued to work at his carpenter's trade while his wife helped by sewing.⁷⁹ George was still building his home in September 1854, by which time the cost had risen to £100. But the reason for the length of time taken to build it seems to have been that his services were in heavy demand elsewhere.⁸⁰ One of the persons providing jobs for deserted Company employees was James Douglas:

You will see in my letter that I speak of one Robert Anderson a carpenter he has got a job just now to put on the weather boarding and roofing on to the church and he has to get about 2 hundred pounds it will take him and Geordie 1 and 2 other men to do it in 3 month the(y) commenced Monday the 4 September the Gove(r)nor give them that job because the(y) would not work any more than 2 hours a day for the Com-

pany like all the rest of the servants here for I do assure you there is a rum set of folk on this Island the Company is not good to there (sic) servants when the(y) have them completely under there (sic) charge but here the(y) have not so there (sic) servants just does as the(y) like work when the(y) like and drop of(f) when the(y) like.... 81

In spite of the good wages and steady work George Deans enjoyed, it was his overriding ambition to become an independent farmer. Annie's rationale was that farming "is the only thing that pays well here".⁸² Yet, the attraction must have held more than the possibility of earning a good living, for it demanded a heavy investment of time, money, and labour before any return could be expected. In September 1855, George purchased "two hundred acres of land" with the intention of raising cattle and pigs.⁸³ The purchase meant that he had to divide his time between Victoria and the farm which was not ready for occupation until May 1858. Annie could not resist comparing her husband's present station with his former one in Scotland; of special pride to her was the fact that George travelled from farm to fort on horse-back like a gentleman.⁸⁴

Much the same career was followed by Deans' close friend, Robert Anderson who, although able to make a good living as a carpenter, decided at the height of the building boom brought by the advent of the gold rush in British Columbia, when his services were at a premium, to divest himself of his Victoria property and, in spite of the skyrocketing building costs, to start a farm.⁸⁵

The Company had recognized the attraction of land ownership and had tried to use it to induce workers to adhere to their contracts. In 1852, McKenzie was permitted to offer a bonus of four or five pounds per annum payable in land (valued at one pound per acre) to

those workers who stayed on the farms for the duration of their contracts. It was felt by the directors that the prospect of land ownership would serve better than a raise in the wage scale.⁸⁶ The bonus was not to be offered to workers who had preceded McKenzie, unless they agreed to renew their contracts for a further five years at the end of their original terms.⁸⁷ Eleven of McKenzie's party earned their land, although Melrose's diary clearly indicates that the Company received far less than maximum service from most of them. Only three of the eleven took the bonus in cash, indicating again that land ownership was a more attractive reward.⁸⁸

The foregoing account may lend a glimpse into the hopes and aspirations of some of the earliest settlers in the Victoria region, and it may help to explain why so much money and time were consumed in bringing the farms into a productive state. One should, however, be wary of putting too much emphasis on the labour situation as a cause of the Company's failure to make a profit from its farms. The greatest need for workers existed until the land was developed and fit for cultivation. Even so, the length of time it took each farm to reach such a state depended on a combination of circumstances: the disposition of the labourers, the nature of the soil, the availability of draught animals, and the personality of the bailiff. When Langford came out, he was given five men for each one hundred of the roughly six hundred acres comprising Esquimalt Farm.⁸⁹ The directors were then under the impression that every acre could be utilized. The truth was that barely half had any agricultural potential. After six years only 207 out of a total of 307 possibly productive acres had been "fenced and brought under the plough at heavy expense."⁹⁰ At no time after the land was cleared was Langford in need of more than ten full-time work-

ers. Skinner managed to do quite well with his five men and 150 acres. In spite of McKenzie's constant problems with his workers, he was the most advantageously situated of all the bailiffs. His farm had the least need for farm workers, being endowed with only seventy acres of good land.⁹¹ Yet, it was able to supply some large customers like the Royal Navy for a considerable period of time. Moreover, McKenzie was able to assign many of his workers to other enterprises conducted on the property, such as lumbering, milling, and providing repair services for other parties in the area.⁹² Even the sad state of Viewfield Farm may not be wholly attributable to Donald Macaulay's mismanagement. He had only untrained Indian labour with which to carry on the work. Only when the labour force became extremely small might the effect on the farms become serious. After Langford's workers declined to renew their contracts in 1855, he was faced with the prospect of attempting the spring planting with only three workers. He had to forego his plans to sow wheat, Esquimalt Farm's most bountiful crop, and substitute peas, which sold for less.⁹³

The troubled relations between the Company and its employees are a further reflection of London's mismanagement of the farms. The bonus of twenty-five acres of land, payable after five years, was not a strong enough inducement to remain loyal for those who intended to start their own farms. They could earn sufficient money from other employers to buy the same amount of land in far less time.⁹⁴ The only practical solution was to offer comparable wages instead of a land premium. The directors had little reason for failing to realize what must be done as Douglas had advised them of the detrimental effects of the Company's low wages, and Langford had raised the wages on Esquimalt Farm, thereby securing a fair degree of loyalty from his men.

As suggested earlier, the natural limitations of the Company's land

implied that the most efficient utilization of it could be achieved only through a tightly centralized authority that would coordinate the efforts of the farms. Because of the poor soil, no farm could successfully combine large-scale livestock raising with the cultivation of food crops for market. The labour situation helped to prevent the establishment of such an authority. McKenzie's problems with his workers undermined his standing with the bailiffs who had no cause to fear the agent's impotent splutterings while his workers rebelled with impunity.

Few of the emigrants in the story fit the popular image of the pioneer who, leaving the security of his familiar surroundings, endeavors to better himself through his own efforts, asking no favours of anyone, and willing to shoulder heavy burdens for the sake of a distant goal. Those who wished to become independent farmers took the shortest route, regardless of prior commitments, to reach their goal. They thought little of taking advantage of the Company that had treated them with nothing but generosity and fairness. As for the bailiffs, the rapid decrease in the number of their workers was not matched by a proportionate decrease in the amount of money spent at the supply shop. The Company had placed itself in a vulnerable position by establishing itself on the island, and all of its employees took whatever advantage they could reap from it.

CONCLUSION

The dominant feature of the history of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company on Vancouver Island, and the one most difficult to explain, was the scope of the expectations of the directors. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was not the first large-scale attempt to make money out of agricultural resettlement in British North America. Andrew Colvile, the dominant policy-maker of the Company by 1850, was a trustee of Lord Selkirk's estates in Red River and Prince Edward Island. The experience of Selkirk had proved that vast infusions of capital were necessary before any returns could be realized. It is possible that the strongly negative reports of Eden Colvile and James Douglas failed to have the intended effect in London because the directors there had already accepted the inevitability of incurring high costs while the farms were being developed. One indication of this preparedness is the fact that there was no limit imposed on the bailiffs' power to spend money. Another indication is that little concern was expressed by London over the amount of money being spent until 1856, when Henry Hulse Berens replaced Andrew Colvile as the chief director of the Company. The major source of concern to Colvile had been the length of time taken to develop the farms. This annoyance was the reason for the dismissal of Langford.

The directors' willingness to incur heavy initial costs was reinforced by their expectations of enormous profits. These hopes were buoyed up by the early impact of the gold rush in California, but why the directors should have harboured expectations of such magnitude is unknown. They were never given any reason to believe that profits would be great enough to justify a huge capital investment. The few indicators of the demand for food pointed to an unstable market, for the Company had to bid against

competitors to supply the Royal Navy. The only other major customer, the Hudson's Bay Company, did not make purchases large enough to offset the debt run up by the farms' purchases from it. Moreover, as Eden Colville stated before the farms were established, the rapidly rising wage scale meant that it would be cheaper to import food than to grow it. Even at the height of the gold rush, Douglas found San Francisco flour cheaper than local wheat.

Having decided to push forward with the farms, the directors created a whole array of problems, some of which were the result of lack of sufficient forethought. A closer scrutiny of Langford at the time of his interview with Archibald Barclay might have resulted in the selection of another person who was more inclined to adapt himself to the rigors of a frontier country. The most glaring result of London's mismanagement was the system of administration which was provided for the farms. There was hardly any attention paid, at first, to the powers of the agent, partly because the directors assumed that there was little need for close supervision of the bailiffs, and partly because they thought they could adequately govern affairs from London. As Dallas stated in 1857, such a thought was foolish. Nor was there any consideration given to the qualifications of the agent.

The system of administration succeeded only in generating new problems. The hope that the bailiffs would co-operate in a united effort to achieve the Company's ends was undermined by the provision in each bailiff's contract making him solely responsible for deficits. Douglas' interference in the affairs of Langford's farm served to strengthen the bailiffs' resolve to reject future attempts to bring them under tighter control. The Company simply made matters worse when it replaced Douglas with McKenzie. It was a mistake to think that a bailiff could also be the agent.

In the first place, it asked too much of human nature; McKenzie the agent would have to limit the amount of money which McKenzie the bailiff would be permitted to spend for the operation of his farm. His farm was the most expensive of all the Company's ventures on the island. The other bailiffs did not appreciate McKenzie's efforts to limit their spending. The operation of their farms was imperilled by McKenzie's frequent threats to cut off provisions. It was hard, if not impossible, for them to accept the necessity of having their establishments curtailed while McKenzie showed no inclination to apply the same measures to his farm. One may well wonder if it would not have been better if the Company had retained Douglas as the agent, in spite of his lack of knowledge of farming; at least the realization that restrictions would be applied equally to all would have eliminated much of the rancour that permeated the atmosphere of the farms. The combining of the two offices in one person bears the mark of the directors' lack of foresight. They were unwilling to consider beforehand the human aspects of the situation just as they were unwilling to think of the physical and economic ones.

On a more positive note, it can be said that had the directors not acted in the way they did, the lives of many people who became part of this story would have developed along different, probably less advantageous lines. None of its employees suffered from the Company's mistakes; most benefitted by them. The Company was the only victim of its foolishness. Its assets were finally assumed by its creditor, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the shareholders, mostly officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, lost their investments. While the agricultural company must accept the major portion of the blame for its misfortunes, the same characteristics that resulted in those misfortunes also are proof that it was a human enterprise.

LIST OF REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

1 Unless otherwise indicated, all the background material concerning the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company is taken from John S. Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor 1821-1869 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), chapters 9 and 10.

2 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Report to Stockholders, 1853", F23/1, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter HBCA); microform copy held in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

3 Michael L. Olsen, "Corporate Farming in the Northwest." Idaho Yesterdays 14 (Spring 1970), pp. 18-23.

4 "The net profits of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company were £2,220 in 1845, and £1,733 in 1846." Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, chap. 13, n.14, p. 461. The Company appears to have entered upon a brief era of modest prosperity extending from the mid-1840s to the early 1850s. At the meeting of the stockholders in 1851, the financial status of Cowlitz and Nisqually Farms, based upon sales of food and livestock to settlers in Oregon, produced an optimistic outlook for the future. In 1853 the "undivided Profit" of the Company was £4150/5/11. In 1854 no dividend was declared because the directors decided to invest further capital into the Company's operations. In 1855 the profit was £2693/4/10. The profits were derived solely from the Cowlitz and Nisqually Farms and would have been greater had not the Company become involved in setting up its expensive farms on Vancouver Island. The Company's "Annual Reprt to the Stockholders" for 1851, 1853, and 1854 respectively are to be found in F23/1, F8/7, and F23/1, HBCA. For the amount of profit made in 1855, see "Statement of Profit or Loss for the last Four Years", F15/38, HBCA.

5 "To Blanshard's and Moresby's complaints that the two companies were monopolizing the best land, Pelly replied that the Hudson's Bay Company was entitled to the land it had improved before the treaty and that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company required large tracts of lands for its flocks and herds, since the Americans would in all likelihood soon seize its land at Fort Nisqually and Cowlitz Farm. Pelly's argument reflected the assumption that the Company's interest on Vancouver Island was paramount, an attitude that could have little support outside the Company." Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 296.

Galbraith's contention is that the Company did far less than it might have done to promote settlement of the island by independent persons (pp. 292-294). However, he cautions that since "...the times were unpropitious for settlement....", the failure to people the island cannot be blamed solely on the Company's attitude. (p. 293).

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, chap. 13, passim. See also E. E. Rich, The History of the Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870 (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1959), vol. 2, chap. 26, passim.
- 2 Ogden to Simpson, 20 March 1846, private and confidential, D5/16, HBCA; cited in Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 252.
- 3 Barclay to Douglas, December 1846, in "Fort Victoria Correspondence Inward from Hudson's Bay House, 1849-1859", TS, Provincial Archives of British Columbia (hereafter PABC), Victoria.
- 4 Rich, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 752. Rich suggests that the Company made itself appear "as part of a proprietary development rather than as a colonization scheme...." through the way in which it administered the reserve. (p. 760).
- 5 Douglas to Pelly, Colvile, and Simpson, 20 November 1848, F12/2, HBCA.
- 6 Pelly and Colvile to Douglas, 3 August 1849, F11/1, HBCA.
- 7 Rich, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 741.
- 8 Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 264.
- 9 Pelly and Colvile to Douglas, 1 December 1848, F11/1, HBCA. Another opinion is that the Company wished to reserve the choicest land to itself before colonists began emigrating to the island: "...Pelly thought that the colonization of Vancouver Island would take precedence, and that the Company's titles were to be set out before other claimants arrived - in fact even before the Bill (granting the island to the Hudson's Bay Company) was through Parliament." Rich, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 754. However, Rich seems to be undecided as to Pelly's motive in reserving the land for he states that "Pelly must have had his tongue in his cheek in accepting such terms, for there seemed little prospect of settlement taking place". Ibid.
- 10 Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, pp. 292f.
- 11 E. Colvile to Pelly, 15 October 1849, in E. E. Rich, ed., London Correspondence Inward from Eden Colvile 1849-1852 (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956), p. xiv. E. Colvile to Simpson, 15 October 1849, *ibid.*, p. 181.
- 12 E. Colvile to Pelly, 22 November 1849, *ibid.*, p. 10.
- 13 "Mr. Douglas has closed a bargain with the supercargo... (of the American Brig 'Cayuga') to take all our lumber here, say 100,000 feet at eighty dollars per thousand and shingles at ten dollars per M. to be paid for in gold dust at the rate of \$16 per oz. This very profitable transaction is one of the advantages we derive from the discovery of

13(cont'd) gold in California". (E. Colvile to Pelly, 14 January 1850, *ibid.*, p. 15.)

14 E. Colvile to Pelly, 5 March 1850, *ibid.*, p. 220.

15 E. Colvile to Pelly, 8 December 1849, *ibid.*, p. 13.

16 Douglas to Pelly, Colvile, and Simpson, 16 October 1849, F12/2, HBCA.

17 Douglas to Pelly, Colvile, and Simpson, 14 September 1850, B226/b/9, HBCA.

18 He was forty-two years old at the time. See the biographical material relating to Donald Macaulay, Vertical File, PABC.

19 Douglas to Pelly, Colvile, and Simpson, 14 September 1850, and 25 April 1851, B226/b/9, HBCA. Dallas later testified that Macaulay was neither honest nor industrious. See below, p. 53.

20 Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 291.

21 Rich is of the opinion that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was always intended to be an instrument for fulfilling "the duty of active colonization....For in 1850 it had sent out two bailiffs and seventy-four farm labourers, and then a further party of twenty-two labourers. The labourers were promised a grant of twenty acres of land when they had fulfilled their contract of five years...." (The Hudson's Bay Company, p. 759). However, no such promise was given to these labourers, for the Company intended to return them to Britain. Only in 1852 were farm workers associated with a colonization scheme. See Colvile to Douglas, 19 November 1852, F11/1, HBCA.

22 The Times (London), 12 August 1850, p. 1.

23 "Memorandum of Agreement Between Edward Edwards Langford and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company", dated 7 October 1850, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

24 Langford to the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, 16 August 1850, F12/2, HBCA. The earliest written reply to the notice is dated 13 August 1850; most are dated after 15 August; A10/28, HBCA.

25 Margin notes on several letters of application, dated throughout August and September 1850, A10/28, HBCA.

26 Pelly and Colvile to Douglas, 14 February 1851, F11/1, HBCA.

27 Langford to Douglas, 22 March 1853, enclosed in Douglas to Smith, 8 April 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

28 A. Chittenden to the Hudson's Bay Company, 19 August 1850, F12/2, HBCA.

CHAPTER TWO

1 Galbraith, The Hudson's Bay Company, pp. 18ff.

2 Such an occasion arose when Chief Factor John McLoughlin decided to buy out the fur trade operation of a Captain John Dominis. Although the Hudson's Bay Company's usual policy was to drive out competition by raising the price it paid for furs, McLoughlin found it more expedient to negotiate a takeover of Dominis' enterprise "on the grounds that a treaty depriving the Company of the Columbia trade might be signed at any time, and that his supplies were so depleted that it was risky to continue his competition." Simpson agreed with this decision. *Ibid.*, pp. 100f.

3 Colvile to Pemberton, 1 July 1853, A6/120, HBCA.

4 Colvile and Pelly to Douglas, 8 July 1853, F11/1, HBCA.

5 Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 19 July 1855, F11/1, HBCA.

6 Douglas to Barclay, 9 April 1853, "Fort Victoria Correspondence Outward: Letters signed by James Douglas", PABC. Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, Outfit 1852", F15/18, HBCA. "List and Value of Livestock on Esquimalt Farm", dated 21 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

7 The price of wheat in the summer of 1855 was \$3.00 (12/6) a bushel; Annie Deans to her sister, 1 July 1855, Annie Deans, Correspondence Outward, 1853-1868, TS., PABC. It was still the same during the following winter; Langford to McKenzie, 14 February 1856, "Langford Correspondence Outward, 1854-1857", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. In the winter of 1857, Langford gave as a reason for his farm's failure to make a profit the fact that the value of wheat, his main product, had lately fallen; Langford to Berens, 16 February 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

8 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Annual Report to the Stockholders, 1855", F23/1, HBCA.

9 "From your description of the Peninsula both at Esquimalt and Victoria Harbour I do not think it would be a fit location for Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Skinner, and in the meantime until it should be applied for by intending settlers, Mr. McAulay (sic) will have the means of increasing his flocks and herds as far as he can provide some supply of winter food for them by his cultivation." (Colvile to Pemberton, 16 November 1852, A6/120, HBCA). See also, Barclay to Douglas, 19 November 1852, B226/c/1, HBCA.

10 Douglas to Colvile, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

11 Dallas to Berens, 5 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA. Dallas later became the Chief Factor at Fort Victoria. Not long after his arrival on

- 11(cont'd) Vancouver Island, he married one of Douglas' daughters.
- 12 Douglas to Pelly, Colvile, and Simpson, 26 April 1851, F12/2, HBCA. A year later, Douglas revised this estimate to 120 shillings per acre; Douglas to Pelly, Colvile, and Simpson, 29 April 1852, *ibid*.
- 13 Pelly and Colvile to Douglas, 14 May 1852, A6/29, HBCA.
- 14 Smith to McKenzie, 5 July 1852, McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 15 Pelly to Douglas, 4 August 1849, "Fort Victoria Correspondence Inward from Hudson's Bay House", PABC.
- 16 Pelly to Douglas, 25 October 1850, *ibid*.
- 17 "Memorandum of Agreement Between Edward Edwards Langford and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company", dated 7 October 1850, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 18 Colvile to McKenzie, 5 March 1852, F12/2, HBCA.
- 19 Pelly and Colvile to Douglas, 14 February 1851, F11/1, HBCA.
- 20 "List and Value of Livestock on Esquimalt Farm", dated 21 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.
- 21 Skinner to Colvile, 13 April 1853, F12/2, HBCA.
- 22 "Inventory of Constance Cove Farm", dated 16 January 1854, F15/20, HBCA. "Accounts, Receipts, Promissory Notes, etc., 1844-1857", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 23 Pemberton to Colvile, 15 March 1852, private, A6/120, HBCA. Ironically, while Douglas was reserving these wretched lands to the agricultural enterprise, he was also setting aside for the fur trade lands about which Pemberton wrote enthusiastically: "...the fertility of the soil is remarkable, and I have no hesitation in saying that the crops raised here by your Company would do credit to any farm in England." (Pemberton to the Governor, Deputy Governor, and Committee of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, 11 September 1851, private, *ibid*.)
- 24 Douglas to W. F. Tolmie (bailiff of Nisqually Farm), 10 April 1851, B226/b/4, HBCA.
- 25 Douglas to Tolmie, 7 May 1851, B226/b/4, HBCA.
- 26 Douglas to Pelly, Colvile and Simpson, 25 June 1851, F12/2, HBCA.
- 27 M. Robinson, A Southdown Farm in the Sixties (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1938), chap. 1 *passim*. See also, J. F. J. Thomas, Sheep 3rd edition, (Bristol: Maidon, Son & Hall, 1957), chaps. 1 and 2.
- 28 Robinson, A Southdown Farm, *ibid*.

29 Langford to Berens, 16 February 1857, F12/4, HBCA. There are numerous references to the smallness of the horses. See, Douglas to Colville, Pelly and Simpson, 24 June 1852, F12/2, HBCA; McKenzie to Colville, 31 March 1854, F12/3, HBCA.

30 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 17 January 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

31 "Miscellaneous Notebooks and Diaries in Kenneth McKenzie's handwriting", vol. 4, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. See also, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Books, 1850-1852", F15/16, HBCA. In 1851, horses and oxen were valued at sixty shillings, colts at forty. Ibid.

32 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Accounts - Outfit 1852", F15/19, HBCA.

33 The Langford version of the disasters to the flock is found in Langford to Douglas, January 1853, enclosed in Douglas to Colville, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

34 For example, see Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 17 January and 29 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

35 Douglas to Colville, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

36 Colville and Berens to Douglas, 8 July 1853, F11/1, HBCA.

37 Pemberton to Colville, 10 February 1853, private, A6/120, HBCA. Colville felt that Pemberton was referring to Langford and Skinner in his condemnations. Replying to Pemberton, he said that he was most disappointed in both of the English bailiffs. Colville to Pemberton, 1 July 1853, *ibid.*

38 "From long experience in England in sheep feeding, and from careful observation of twelve months on the Island of Vancouver in my opinion the land under your charge and that within reach is at no time capable of carrying more than six hundred sheep for seven months and 300 the remaining five months...." (Skinner to Langford, 9 March 1854, F12/3, HBCA.)

39 Colville and Berens to Douglas, 8 July 1853, F11/1, HBCA. See also, Colville to Pemberton, 1 July 1853, A6/120, HBCA.

40 Even Viewfield Farm showed a profit: £2/4/7. John Miles to Smith, 5 April 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

41 Langford to Douglas, 22 March 1853, enclosed in Douglas to Smith, 8 April 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

42 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 29 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

43 Pelly and Colville to Douglas, 14 February 1851, F11/1, HBCA.

44 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 28 April 1851, F12/2, HBCA.

45 Langford to Berens, 16 February 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid. See also, Dorothy Blakey Smith, ed., The Reminiscences of Doctor John Sebastian Helmcken (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1975), p. 114.

48 Langford was very much concerned for his former status as a "gentleman". In an effort to prevent the Company from evicting him from the farm, he appealed to chief director Berens' sense of class loyalty. Langford to Berens, 16 February 1857, F12/4, HBCA. The term "bailiff" was probably obnoxious to Langford. In England, a bailiff was usually a tenant farmer on an estate, "...was severely limited in his powers, and his responsibilities were normally confined to the big house and its grounds or farm." (David Spring, The English Landed Estate in the Nineteenth Century: Its Administration (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1963), p. 3.)

49 All of Langford's party were "huddled together like cattle, as I have seen myself, to the number of thirty-five in each shed, men and women, married and single, without any kind of screen or partition to separate them..." (Richard Blanshard to Earl Grey, 10 June 1851, "Vancouver Island, Governor, Correspondence Outward, 1849-1851", PABC).

50 "Inventory of Esquimalt Farm", dated 15 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

51 Map 22 in "Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, Maps and Plans, 1843-1910", F25/1, HBCA.

52 A back kitchen was a common feature of the big house on an English estate.

53 "Inventory of Esquimalt Farm", dated 15 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

54 G. Kitson-Clark, The Making of Victorian England (London: Methuen & Company, 1962), reprinted 1965, pp. 222-225.

55 Langford to Berens, 13 January 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

56 Langford gave an estimated value of each of the buildings on his farm; the total estimated value was £3006/13. "Inventory of Esquimalt Farm", dated 15 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

57 "Memorandum of Agreement Between Edward Edwards Langford and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company", dated 7 October 1850, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

58 "Inventory of Esquimalt Farm", dated 15 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

59 This statement is derived from figures taken from various sources in both the Provincial Archives of British Columbia and the

59(cont'd) Hudson's Bay Company Archives. The account books of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company are chaotic because of the negligence of the bailiffs. Figures for the number of livestock on Esquimalt Farm for each year can be located thus: 1851 - F15/16, HBCA; 1852 - F15/19, HBCA; 1853 - *ibid.*; no inventory was taken in 1854; 1855 - "Day-Account Book", vol. 4, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC; 1856 - *ibid.*

In 1852 a shipment of eighty-six cattle arrived from Nisqually, but they bolted and ran off when they were landed and were never recovered. Nonetheless, Esquimalt Farm was charged for them. See the statement prepared by John Miles, folio 593, F15/37, HBCA. On the wild state of the cattle at Nisqually, see J. S. Galbraith, "The British and Americans at Fort Nisqually", Pacific Northwest Quarterly 41 (April 1950), p. 111.

60 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1854-1855", F15/22b, HBCA.

61 "He (Langford) is concerned now with tillage." (Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA).

62 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 17 January 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

63 Douglas stated that he "heartily approves" of the idea, and told Langford that he could rely on having at least two members of Douglas' family "for at least three years". (Douglas to Langford, 23 February 1852, B226/b/4, HBCA).

64 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 17 January 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

65 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

66 Douglas to Colville, 13 May 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

67 W. K. Lamb, ed., "The Royal Emigrant's Almanack: The Diary of Robert Melrose" British Columbia Historical Quarterly (hereafter BCHQ) 7 (April, June and October 1943), pp. 119-134; 199-218; 283-295. Entry for 24 January 1853, BCHQ 7 (April 1943), p. 125. See also, James Deans, "Rustic Rhymes of a Rural Rhymester", unpublished MS, PABC.

68 Colville to McKenzie, 25 March 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

69 Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entry for 30 March 1854, BCHQ 7 (July 1943), p. 202.

70 W. K. Lamb, ed., "Census of Vancouver Island", BCHQ 4 (January 1940), pp. 51-58. Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", various entries from 30 March to 31 December 1853, BCHQ 7 (April 1943), pp. 126-134.

71 Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entries for 31 March and 1 April 1853, BCHQ 7 (April 1943), p. 126.

72 Melrose distinguishes between "garden seeds", "potatoes planted in the garden", and "field potatoes"; Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entries for 5, 17 and 30 May 1853, BCHQ 7 (April 1943), p. 127.

73 Ibid., p. 132; and "Day-Account Books", v. 3, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

74 Douglas to Colvile, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA. Pemberton to Colvile, 18 February 1853, private, A6/120, HBCA.

75 Melrose makes no mention of any sheep on Craigflower Farm throughout 1853, nor does any material in either the HBCA or the PABC.

76 Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entry for 2 June 1853, BCHQ 7 (April 1943), p. 128.

77 Skinner mentioned that he had only two six-year old steers to serve for ploughing. Skinner to Colvile, 13 April 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

78 Ibid.

79 Colvile and Berens to Skinner, 28 June 1853, F11/1, HBCA.

80 Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA. Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1852-1854", F15/20, HBCA.

81 Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

82 The rate of exchange was usually reckoned at \$1.00 to 50d., or £1 to \$4.80.

83 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1850-1853", F15/16, HBCA. The figure cited was the amount owing for supplies after only six months.

84 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Accounts, Outfit 1852", F15/19, HBCA.

85 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Accounts, 1840-1855", F15/37, HBCA.

86 See above, p. 32, and below, p. 84.

87 Blakey-Smith, ed., Reminiscences, pp. 124 and 135.

88 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Accounts, 1840-1855", F15/37, HBCA.

89 "Day-Account Book", v. 4, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

90 "Correspondence, Accounts, etc., relating to Esquimalt Farm",

- 90(cont'd) Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 91 Colville to McKenzie, 7 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.
- 92 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Ledger, 1840-1889", F13/3, HBCA. The farm owed a further £1926/9/11 for machinery; *ibid.*
- 93 McKenzie was planning to open a store as early as 1854; McKenzie to Colville, 24 May 1854, F12/3, HBCA. The directors ignored the suggestion for a year before stating their disapproval of it; Berens to McKenzie, 1 October 1855, "Correspondence Inward, 1837-1874", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 94 Statement signed by A. G. Dallas, dated 24 December 1858, F15/38, HBCA.
- 95 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, Outfit 1853", F15/21, HBCA.
- 96 See Appendix I.

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Douglas to Colville, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA.
- 2 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 29 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.
- 3 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 29 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.
- 4 Colville to Douglas, 19 November 1852, F11/1, HBCA.
- 5 Colville and Berens to Douglas, 8 July 1853, F11/1, HBCA.
- 6 Colville and Berens to Douglas, 3 February 1854, F11/1, HBCA.
- 7 "I am therefore relieved of one burden." Douglas to Tolmie, 13 April 1854, "Fort Victoria Correspondence Outward", PABC.
- 8 Colville and Berens to McKenzie, 3 February 1854, (first of two letters), F11/1, HBCA.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 McKenzie to Colville and Berens, 31 March 1854, F12/3, HBCA. For the major portion of this letter, see Appendix II.
- 11 See below, pp. 51; 53; 67.
- 12 McKenzie to Colville and Berens, 31 March 1854, F12/3, HBCA.

13 The small stature of the horses had been mentioned earlier by Langford; see Langford to Smith, 1 December 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

14 Douglas to Colvile, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

15 Melrose's diary strongly intimates that McKenzie did not examine other sites before taking definite steps to establish Craigflower Farm on the peninsula; the sequence of events was too rapid: "Monday, January 17, 1853: English people went ashore, with Mr. McKenzie, Weir & Stewart, at Fort Victoria. Tues., Jan. 18: Scotch do. also do. Fri., Jan. 21: Norman Morison (the ship which conveyed the emigrants) came into Harbour. Sat., Jan. 22: Went up and saw our new abode. Mon., Jan. 24: Carpenters & Blacksmiths, all removed up to the farm. Shipwreck lost our stern going home." Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", BCHQ 7, (April 1943), p. 125.

16 See chap. five, passim.

17 Turnips grew "far beyond my expectation" without any manure; McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

18 Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 10 February 1854, F11/1, HBCA.

19 Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

20 Miles to Langford, 18 February 1854, F12/3, HBCA.

21 McKenzie to Langford, 10(?) July 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

22 "I duly received yours of the 29th Current and in answer beg to inform you that I have positive instructions from the agents at home to enquire minutely into every item of expenditure and check all unnecessary expense on the farms." (McKenzie to Langford, 30 September 1854, *ibid.*)

23 McKenzie to Langford, 27 December 1854, *ibid.*

24 Langford to Colvile, 13 January 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

25 *Ibid.*

26 McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*

29 Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 13 November 1854, F11/1, HBCA.

- 30 The actual outcome was quite different; see below, pp. 68-72.
- 31 McKenzie to Colvile and Berens, 9 April 1855, F12/3, HBCA.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 McKenzie to Langford, 5 March 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 34 McKenzie to Langford, 6 March 1855, *ibid.*
- 35 Margary to Langford, 15 December 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 36 McKenzie to Langford, 30 March 1857, *ibid.*
- 37 McKenzie to Langford, 30 September 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. Berens to Douglas, 14 March 1856, F11/1, HBCA.
- 38 McKenzie to Douglas, 27 April 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 39 Douglas to Berens, 7 June 1856, F12/3, HBCA.
- 40 McKenzie to Langford, 28 June 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 41 McKenzie refused to pay; see McKenzie to Langford, 7 December 1855, *ibid.*; and McKenzie to Captain James Cooper, 9 January 1856, *ibid.*
- 42 McKenzie to Langford, 14 November 1855, *ibid.*
- 43 The account books and inventories of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company permit only a fragmented look at the condition of livestock on the farms, but they do indicate that over a period of a few years the flock at Esquimalt Farm underwent a drastic reduction in size. The figures cited for each period are found as follows: Spring 1852 - Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1850-1852", F15/16, HBCA; Spring 1853 - "Accounts, Outfit 1852", F15/19, HBCA; Summer 1854 - "Miscellaneous Papers, 1840-1910", F26/1, HBCA; Winter 1855 - "List and Value of Livestock on Esquimalt Farm", dated 21 February 1855, F12/3, HBCA.
- 44 Douglas to Colvile, 24 February 1853, F12/2, HBCA.
- 45 Dallas to Berens, 2 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA.
- 46 McKenzie to Macaulay, 8 May 1855; and McKenzie to Marwick, 30 May 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

- 47 McKenzie to McDonald, 30 May 1855, *ibid.*
- 48 McKenzie to Colvile, 28 September 1855, F12/3, HBCA.
- 49 McKenzie to Macaulay, 8 September 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 50 McKenzie to Macaulay, 9 October 1856, *ibid.*
- 51 Margary to Macaulay, 30 October 1856, *ibid.*
- 52 McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, F12/3, HBCA.
- 53 McKenzie to Macaulay, 9 October 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 54 McKenzie to Macaulay, 12 November 1856, *ibid.*
- 55 "I received...yours of Saturday with a very garbled statement about your wool stating that you have marked it from #15 to #40 how in the name of wonder do you think I can make up a Bill of Lading for London from such a statement.
What I required of you was to mark your bags giving me distinctly the weight of each bag and number of fleeces." (McKenzie to Macaulay, 8 December 1856, *ibid.*)
- 56 Margary to Colvile and Berens, 11 March 1856, F12/3, HBCA.
- 57 "Labour Record of Constance Cove Farm, 1856", F15/38, HBCA.
"Viewfield Labour Report, 1856", *ibid.*
- 58 Unsigned inventory of Viewfield Farm, in Donald Macaulay's handwriting, dated 1 December 1854, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Accounts, 1840-1855", F15/37, HBCA. The document contains an addendum, written in the fall of 1855, containing this note: "He (Macaulay) has broken this season as much or more new land than he had before under cultivation." (Unsigned)
- 59 These figures are found in Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1852-1854", F15/20, HBCA.
- 60 McKenzie to Macaulay, 9 April 1857, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 61 Dallas to Berens, 2 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA.
- 62 McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 63 McKenzie to Skinner, 29 August 1855, *ibid.*

64 McKenzie to Skinner, 2 and 4 October 1855, *ibid.*

65 McKenzie to Langford, 13 February 1856, *ibid.*

66 McKenzie to Skinner, 25 November 1856, *ibid.* "I bid you the money you asked for the oxen to prevent their falling into the hands of parties not belonging to the P S Compy, as I consider you are not acting to the best interest of the Company and very much against the interest of the Bailiffs in offering the oxen for sale, they having been sent for the especial purpose of supply H M ship." (Skinner to McKenzie, 25 November 1856, "Skinner Correspondence Outward, 1854-1857", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC).

67 "I am in receipt of yours of 25. In answer to which I must say you have used as clever tactics in getting out of a bargain as I have met with for a long time. However, you being one of ourselves, I release you from the transaction". (McKenzie to Skinner, 26 November 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC).

68 Margary to Berens, 16 July 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

69 Skinner informed McKenzie that he had provided fifteen acres of turnips, as well as hay and straw for livestock. In addition, he had ready 800 - 1000 bushels of potatoes for the Royal Navy. The purpose of this information was to warn McKenzie of the magnitude of the possible consequences to befall the farms should the Company, through the agent's unwise sale of oxen to other parties, jeopardize the contract for victuals. Skinner to McKenzie, 25 November 1856, "Skinner Correspondence Outward, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

70 McKenzie to Berens, 19 February 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

71 Skinner to Captain Pelly, RN, 17 March 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

72 *Ibid.* See also, Margary to Berens, 11 March 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

73 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Accounts, 1840-1855", folio 602, F15/37, HBCA.

74 "Inventory of Constance Cove Farm", unsigned, dated 16 January 1854, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1852-1854", F15/20, HBCA. Skinner to the Hudson's Bay Company, 15 September 1854, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Accounts, 1840-1855", F15/37, HBCA. Lamb, ed., "Census of Vancouver Island, 1855", BCHQ 4 (January 1940), p. 56. This last reference contains the first mention of sheep on the farm.

75 Lamb, ed., "Census of Vancouver Island, 1855", BCHQ 4 (January 1940), pp. 56f.

76 McKenzie to Colville, 28 September 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

77 Skinner to McKenzie, 25 November 1856, "Skinner Correspondence Outward, 1854-1857", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

78 "Skinner, T. J., Inventories 1853-1855", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. "Statement of Profit or Loss for the last Four Years", F15/38, HBCA.

79 McKenzie to Colvile, 5 August and 28 September 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

80 Statement signed by A. G. Dallas, dated 10 May 1858, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Papers, 1840-1910", F26/1, HBCA.

81 It appears that the flock usually numbered approximately 1000; *ibid.* See also, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1854-1855", F15/22b, HBCA. In June 1854 Craigflower Farm had 41 head of cattle; Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1852-1854", F15/20, HBCA. By December 1854, it had 110 cattle; Lamb, ed., "Census of Vancouver Island, 1855", BCHQ 4 (January 1940), p. 56. In September 1855 it had 59 cattle; Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Account Book, 1854-1855", F15/22b, HBCA. By the following July, there were 71 head of cattle on the farm; F15/38, HBCA. The herd included both oxen and beef cattle.

82 "Day-Account Books", *passim*, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

83 "Craigflower Accounts, 1854-1857", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

CHAPTER FOUR

1 Dallas to Berens, 5 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose" entries throughout 1853-1855, BCHQ 7 (April and July 1943), pp. 124-134; 199-212. See also, "Day-Account Books", volumes for 1853-1855, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

4 For the details of the case, see Appendix III.

5 For examples of McKenzie's tendency to violence, see Dallas to Berens, 2 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA; Margary to Berens, 22 November 1855, private, and 3 March 1856, F12/3, HBCA. On the incident involving the destruction of Peter Bartleman's shop, see Appendix III and Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entry for 27 March 1855, BCHQ 7 (July 1943), p. 211.

6 McKenzie to Colvile, 5 August 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

7 Douglas to McKenzie, 7 May 1855, enclosed in *ibid.*

8 McKenzie to Colvile, 5 August 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

9 "I am much annoyed that Mr. Douglas should have interfered with Mr. Barr, it having been understood that none of the people engaged by Mr. McKenzie should be taken from him but I do not like to order Mr. Douglas to restore Mr. Barr...." (Colville to Smith, 30 September 1853, F12/2, HBCA).

10 The only version of the Barr incident is contained in Skinner to Captain Pelly (RN), 17 March 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

11 Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entry for 18 August 1855, BCHQ 7 (July 1943), p. 215.

12 Douglas cited Statutes 7 and 8 Geo. IV, c. 29, s. 72; see Douglas to McKenzie, 14 November 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

13 Douglas to Berens, 7 June 1856, addendum dated 11 June 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

14 Margary to Berens, 22 November 1855, private, F12/3, HBCA.

15 Ibid. Margary also stated that when spoken to, McKenzie "gets into a passion and will not listen to reason." (Margary to Berens, 3 March 1856, F12/3, HBCA).

16 Dallas to Berens, 5 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

17 McKenzie to Colville, 23 December 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

18 Douglas to Colville, 17 January 1855, "Miscellaneous Letters and Scrapbook, 1854-1857", James Douglas Papers, PABC.

19 McKenzie to Colville, 28 September 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

20 McKenzie claimed that the establishment of the buildings and flock put him "in possession of" the land; McKenzie to Pearse, 8 October 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

21 Pearse to McKenzie, 8 October 1855, enclosed in McKenzie to Colville, 23 December 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

22 Pearse to McKenzie, 11 October 1855, enclosed in *ibid.* "I consider it very unhandsome on the part of Mr. Douglas urging the sale of the land knowing as he does my sentiments on the subject." (McKenzie to Pearse, 9 October 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC). See also, McKenzie to Pearse, 11 October 1855, *ibid.*

23 "Pemberton used to ask us to buy land just for the money, but no one at first wanted land, and money amongst us was lacking - we were all poor!" (Blakey-Smith, ed., Reminiscences, p. 118).

- 24 Pemberton to McKenzie, 18 June 1856, "Pemberton, J. D., Correspondence to K. McKenzie", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. McKenzie to Pemberton, 21 June 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", *ibid.*
- 25 McKenzie to Pemberton, 21 June 1856, *ibid.*
- 26 McKenzie to Caleb Pike, 27 March 1857, *ibid.*
- 27 "If I had known you wished to purchase at Deadman River Of Course I should not have sold to Caleb Pike." (Pemberton to McKenzie, 19 June 1856, "Pemberton, J. D., Correspondence to K. McKenzie", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC).
- 28 McKenzie to Rear Admiral Bruce (RN), 15 August 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 29 McKenzie to Colville, 5 August 1855, F12/3, HBCA.
- 30 McKenzie to Colville, 15 December 1855, F12/3, HBCA.
- 31 McKenzie to Langford, 1 October 1855, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 32 McKenzie to Colville, 18 December 1855, F12/3, HBCA. McKenzie's objections reveal his priorities.
- 33 McKenzie to Macaulay, 20 October 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 34 McKenzie to Macaulay, 12 November 1856, *ibid.*
- 35 Douglas to Berens, 7 June 1856, F12/3, HBCA.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 *Ibid.*, addendum dated 11 June 1856.
- 38 McKenzie to Tolmie, 11 June 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.
- 39 McKenzie to Tolmie, 19 August 1854, *ibid.*
- 40 *Ibid.* See also, Skinner to the Hudson's Bay Company, 15 September 1854, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Miscellaneous Accounts, 1844-1855", F15/37, HBCA.
- 41 "...Your Bill against McKenzie for the sheep and cattle lately furnished is too high, he is in a dreadful way about it. The sheep are also very poor." (Douglas to Tolmie, 23 August 1854, Fort Victoria Correspondence Outward: Letters signed by James Douglas", PABC.

42 Tolmie to McKenzie, 16 November 1854, "Tolmie, W. F., Correspondence Outward, 1854-1871", PABC.

43 For the details of the affair, see below, pp. 68-73.

44 Douglas to Berens, 2 June 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

45 Langford complained to Douglas about the inconvenience caused by the stoppage; Langford to Douglas, 29 July 1856, F12/3, HBCA. McKenzie thought, at first, that the order to stop trading with Langford had been disregarded; McKenzie to McKay, 29 July 1856, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Craigflower Farm, 1856-1860", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

46 Douglas to McKenzie, 29 December 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

47 McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, F12/3, HBCA. A portion of this letter is quoted on p. 47 above.

48 Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 14 December 1855, F11/1, HBCA.

49 McKenzie to Colvile, 10 March 1856, private, F12/3, HBCA.

50 McKenzie to Colvile, 9 April 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

51 McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, F12/3, HBCA.

52 McKenzie stated twice that "others" had chosen the site of his farm; McKenzie to Colvile, 31 March 1854, and 10 March 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

53 Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 13 November 1854, F11/1, HBCA.

54 McKenzie to Berens, 21 May 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

55 Skinner to Captain Pelly (RN), 17 March 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

56 Clause 16, "Memorandum of Agreement Between Edward Edwards Langford and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company", dated 7 October 1850, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

57 Douglas to Colvile, 13 May 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

58 Colvile and Berens to Douglas, 24 February 1855, F11/1, HBCA. The directors made reference to criticisms of Langford which Douglas had made in his letter of 8 July 1853. They could easily have cited also his letter of 24 February 1853; both letters are in F12/2, HBCA.

59 Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 5 January 1855, F11/1, HBCA.

60 McKenzie to Berens, 1 January 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

61 Ibid. See also, McKenzie to Berens, 21 May 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

62 Enclosed in McKenzie to Berens, 21 May 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

63 The directors had instructed McKenzie to advertize Langford's farm for rent; Colvile and Berens to McKenzie, 19 July 1855, F11/1, HBCA. In three moths of advertizing, McKenzie received one reply. It came from Langford; McKenzie to Colvile and Berens, 27 March 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

64 Douglas to Berens, 2 June 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

65 Decision of Chief Justice Cameron, dated 29 May 1856, enclosed in *ibid.*

66 Crowder, Maynard, Son and Lawford to Berens, 10 September 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

67 Berens to McKenzie, 26 September 1856, F11/1, HBCA.

68 Berens to Simpson, 3 October 1856, private, F11/1, HBCA.

69 Cameron to McKenzie, 26 December 1856, F12/3, HBCA.

70 McKenzie to Berens, 1 January 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

71 Vancouver Island, "Laws, Statutes, etc., Acts, 1853-1866", microfilm copy of original, Simon Fraser University Library, Burnaby; "Warrant for appointing David Cameron to be Chief Justice", dated 5 April 1856, Great Britain, Colonial Office, 381/18.

72 Folio 148 in C. O., 381/18.

73 "...it shall be lawful for the Officer or Agent of the said Company upon giving to the said Edward Edwards Langford and delivering to him personally or causing to be left for him at his dwelling house or affixing on some conspicuous part of the principal building on the said land or farm six Calendar Months previous notice in writing to put an end to and determine this present agreement." (Clause 16 of "Memorandum of Agreement Between Edward Edwards Langford and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, dated 7 October 1850, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC).

74 McKenzie to Colvile, 10 March 1856, private, F12/3, HBCA. See also Margary to Colvile and Berens, 11 March 1856, *ibid.*

75 McKenzie to Colvile, 24 May 1854, F12/2, HBCA. McKenzie to Colvile, 23 December 1854, "Letterbook of Correspondence Outward from Kenneth McKenzie, 1854-1856", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

76 McKenzie to Colvile, 21 May 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

77 McKenzie to Colvile, 5 August 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

78 Colvile to McKenzie, 14 December 1855, F11/1, HBCA.

79 Colvile died on 3 February 1856; Berens to McKenzie, 13 March 1856, F11/1, HBCA.

- 80 Berens to McKenzie, 13 March 1856 (second letter), F11/1, HBCA.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Berens to McKenzie, 6 June 1856, F11/1, HBCA.
- 83 Berens to McKenzie, 1 August 1856, F11/1, HBCA. It was one of McKenzie's duties as agent to send the accounts and statements from Cowlitz and Nisqually.
- 84 McKenzie to Berens, 7 June 1856, F12/3, HBCA.
- 85 McKenzie to Berens, 22 September and 1 November 1856, F12/3, HBCA.
- 86 Berens to Douglas, 10 October 1856, F11/1, HBCA.
- 87 Berens to McKenzie, 12 December 1856, F11/1, HBCA. There was one source of consolation to the Company: McKenzie's reports were so confused and incomplete, it was possible to put any interpretation on them. At the shareholders' meeting in 1856, the directors first presented a gloomy picture of the prospects of the farms on Vancouver Island. They stated that in the last twelve months advances to the farms from the Hudson's Bay Company had totalled in excess of £6,600. However, even though it was true that because of the "careless and inaccurate manner" of McKenzie's preparation of reports, the real situation of the farms was unknown, nevertheless, those same reports gave reason for hopes of "brighter prospects". See Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Annual Report to the Stockholders, 1856", F23/1, HBCA.
- 88 Berens to McKenzie, 16 January 1857, F11/2, HBCA; Berens to Margary, *ibid.*
- 89 Berens to McKenzie, 3 February 1857, F12/4 (sic), HBCA.
- 90 Berens to Dallas, 8 May 1857, private, F12/4 (sic), HBCA.
- 91 Dallas to Berens, 3 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA.
- 92 Dallas to Berens, 5 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA.
- 93 McKenzie to Colvile, 5 August, 8 October and 18 December 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 Clouston to Barclay, 9 September 1850, A10/29, HBCA.
- 2 Clouston to Barclay, 20 September 1850, A10/29, HBCA.
- 3 The Kentish workers were assigned to the Hudson's Bay Company

3(cont'd) and therefore remain beyond the scope of this study.

4 Barclay to Hayward, 27 October 1850, A5/17, HBCA. Barclay referred to a letter from Hayward of the previous day which enclosed a list of men recruited. The letter is not to be found in the HBCA. See also Francis to Barclay, 4 October 1850, A10/29, HBCA.

5 Barclay to Hayward, 14 October 1850, A5/17, HBCA. The Dorsetshire workers came from a small area between Gillingham and Sturminster. The names of the men and their parishes are found in Francis to Barclay, 7 October 1850, A10/29, HBCA.

6 Douglas to Berens, 5 May 1852, B226/b/5b, HBCA.

7 Barclay to Hayward, 25 September 1850, A5/17, HBCA.

8 David Spring, The English Landed Estate, p. 47. See also, G. Kitson-Clark, The Making of Victorian England, p. 118.

9 O. Jocelyn Dunlop, The Farm Labourer: The History of a Modern Problem (London: Fisher Unwin, 1913), p. 91. See also, E. L. Jones, "The Agricultural Labour Market in England, 1793-1872", The Economic History Review, second series, 17, no. 2, (1964), pp. 322-338.

10 James Caird, English Agriculture in 1850-51 (London: first published in 1852, Frank Case & Company, 1968) second edition, p. 72.

11 The Times (London) 4 February 1846, p. 8.

12 S. G. Osborne, "How to Generate Typhus", The Times (London), 26 October 1848. The village described was Hilton, Dorsetshire. When the author asked why the inhabitants were reluctant to leave in search of healthier abodes in other parishes, the "invariable" reply was "'Tis no use, they be so scarce".

13 Richard Jefferies, Toilers of the Field (London: Longman's, Green & Company, 1892), pp. 65-100. The book is a collection of articles about rural life which appeared throughout the 1870s in Longman's Magazine.

14 The Times (London), 26 October 1848, p. 5.

15 "Sir - I take the liberty of enclosing herewith a specimen of 'tailings bread' the corn for which was received by a Dorset labourer as part of his wages, he being charged for it at the rate of 5s the bushel, or £10 the load....

Although I hope very much our farmers would scorn such dealings, I regret to state my conviction that this foul dealing with the labourer is far too common. I have only one request to make - if you happen to have a dog at your office, do not, if you value him, give the bread to him, if you are pestered by a sturdy vagrant, offer it and tell him it is what a Dorset labourer sweats for." (S. G. Osborne to The Times (London), 29 January 1849, p. 5.)

The bread was said to have had the texture of putty. See

15(cont'd) The Hungry Forties, Life under the Bread Tax (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1904). The book is a collection of descriptive letters and other testimonials from contemporary witnesses.

16 "The English labourers are chiefly from Dorsetshire. Now the wages of a Dorsetshire labourer have not for some years averaged more than 7/6 per week out of which he has to find everything for himself and his family...." (Pelly to the Right Honourable Earl Grey, 14 January 1852, A8/6, HBCA.)

Wages in Dorsetshire had risen only about eleven per cent since 1770, whereas during the same time they had risen by as much as thirty-one per cent in many other counties. Caird, English Agriculture in 1850-51, p. 475. Caird warns that the statistics can be misleading; much of the wage in Dorsetshire, as elsewhere, was paid in produce, often the poorest of the crop, at a value far exceeding the actual market price; p. 72.

17 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Agreements with Employees", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

18 See above, pp. 30f.

19 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Accounts, Outfit 1852", F15/18, HBCA. Items included 377 loaves of bread; 37 barrels and 56 bags of flour; 13 barrels, 28 pounds of salt pork; 883 pounds of fresh beef; two wild sows; one wild bullock; two wild bulls; 1 barrel of salt salmon; 13 bushels of peas; 1,927 pounds of sugar; 8 gallons of spirits (mostly rum and brandy); 24 gallons of molasses; and 207 pounds of assorted teas.

20 McKenzie to Langford, 15 October 1855, enclosed in McKenzie to Colville, 26 October 1855, F12/3, HBCA. Douglas had reduced the number of Langford's workers from thirty to twenty-four by January 1852. See Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 17 January 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

21 Dallas to Berens, 2 June 1857, F12/4, HBCA. "Accounts of Esquimalt Farm", in "Day-Account Books", volume 4, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

22 "The passengers of the labouring class...are very ignorant, few of them being able to read or write." (Barclay to Douglas, 3 November 1850, A6/28, HBCA).

23 R. F. Wearmouth, Methodism and the Working-Class Movements of England, 1800-1850 (London: Furnell & Sons, 1937), pp. 208-222.

24 In the 1870s Richard Jeffries noted that well-intentioned reformers in Wiltshire met with opposition when they tried to teach farm workers that for the same amount of money as they were spending on bacon, they could buy greater quantities of cheap cuts of beef. The workers wanted no meat but bacon. Jeffries, Toilers of the Field. pp. 213f.

25 The Royal Navy was plagued with desertions during the California gold rush and extra precautions were taken when a ship entered waters off the western coast of the continent. When Richard Blanshard, first Governor of Vancouver Island, was en route to the colony, he travelled aboard H. M. S. Driver, and when it reached Nisqually his manservant noted in his diary: "This place is not far from the diggings - about two days' march - sentries are placed about the deck - their muskets loaded with ball cartridge with orders to shoot any man who attempts to leave the ship and prevent the men looking over the ship's side." (Thomas Robinson, "Diary, 1849-1851", entry for 19 March 1850, Typescripted excerpt in PABC).

26 "Young Deans is now sent to his father with whom I trust he will behave better than he has done at this place (Victoria) and become a strong and useful man." (Douglas to Tolmie, 14 October 1852, "Fort Victoria Correspondence Outward, Letters signed by James Douglas", PABC). Douglas to Yale, 12 March 1853, *Ibid.*

27 Douglas to McKenzie, 8 October 1853, B226/b/10, HBCA.

28 McKenzie to Robert Finlayson, 14 July 1853, "Craigflower Farm, Correspondence Outward", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. Finlayson was the Chief Trader at Fort Victoria.

29 Langford to Berens, 11 February 1857, F12/4, HBCA.

30 Douglas to Yale, 6 June 1856, "Fort Victoria Correspondence Outward, Letters signed by James Douglas", PABC.

31 Douglas to Tolmie, 28 July 1852, *ibid.*

32 *Ibid.*

33 Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Agreements with Employees", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

34 Douglas to Berens, 5 May 1852, B226/b/6, HBCA.

35 Douglas to Pelly, Colville, and Simpson, 17 January and 29 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA; Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Company, 8 October 1853, *ibid.*

36 Langford to McKenzie, 5 March 1855, "Langford, E. E., Correspondence Outward to Kenneth McKenzie", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

37 At the current rate of exchange, £1 equalled \$4.80; \$1.00 equalled 4/2.

38 Enclosure #1 in McKenzie to Colville, 26 October 1855, F12/3, HBCA.

39 Langford to McKenzie, 8 and 13 November 1855, "Langford Correspondence Outward to Kenneth McKenzie", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

40 There is no trace in the HBCA of Skinner's attempts to recruit workers.

41 Colville to McKenzie, 13 and 29 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

42 "Their wives should agree to work on the farm at reasonable wages at harvest and otherwise when required." (Berens and Colville to McKenzie, 5 March 1852, F12/2, HBCA). J. Purves, "The Lothian Hinds", Longman's Magazine 1 (1882), p. 658.

43 "...large families are objectionable from the expense of the passage." (Colville to McKenzie, 5 March 1852, F12/2, HBCA).

44 The Act referred to is 53 Geo. III, c. 36. See Pelly to the Right Honourable Grey, 14 January 1852, A8/6, HBCA.

45 "Craigflower Farm, Accounts, Receipts, etc., 1844-1857", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

46 McKenzie to Boyle, 15 June 1852, "Day-Account Books", volume 39, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. See also, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, "Agreements with Employees", *ibid*.

47 At that time, East Lothian, McKenzie's home district, was the name of the region within Haddingtonshire north of the Lammermuir Hills. In 1845, it was described as "an agricultural district entirely in the strictest sense of the word, and has long been celebrated for the skill and success with which its husbandry has been conducted. The attentions of its tenantry have long been steadily directed to the improvement of what is termed the alternate system of husbandry, as the practice best suited to both their soil and climate." (New Statistical Account of Scotland, London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1845, volume 2, p. 369.

Elsewhere, it was said that "it was the Lothians and the Border country that set...some of the best examples of modern mixed farming." The examples given were taken from an East Lothian farm, Fenton Barns; C. S. Orwin and Whetham, E. H., "British Agriculture, 1846-1851", in their History of British Agriculture, 1846-1914, (London: Longman's, 1964), pp. 15-17.

48 Colville to McKenzie, 13 April 1852, F12/2, HBCA.

49 Two women were hired also; "List of Men, Women, and Children engaged to go to Vancouver's Island with Mr. McKenzie, August 1, 1852", in K. McKenzie, "Diary", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. "Papers relating to John Instant", MSS, PABC. James Deans, "Rustic Rhymes of a Rural Rhymester", unpublished MS, PABC.

50 Orwin and Whetham, History of British Agriculture, pp. 15-17. Mixed farming was characterized by the mixing of pasture lands with fields cultivated for fodder crops for the purpose of fattening cattle and sheep for market, as opposed to the breeding and raising of them. J. D. Chambers and Mingay, G. E., The Agricultural Revolution, 1750-1880 (New York, Schocken Books, 1966), p. 107.

51 W. R. Sampson, "Kenneth McKenzie and the Origins of British

51(cont'd) Columbia Agriculture", British Columbia Historical News 6 (June 1973), pp. 16-25; (pp. 18f.).

52 "The Scottish Farm Labourers", Cornhill Magazine 10 (November 1864), pp. 609-623.

53 Malcolm Grey, "Scottish Emigration: The Social Impact of Agrarian Change in the Rural Lowlands, 1775-1875", Perspectives in American History 7 (1973), pp. 99-176.

54 Ibid., p. 157.

55 Ibid., p. 155

56 "These labourers, usually termed 'Hinds', are engaged for the year and are paid chiefly in kind....There is some difference of opinion as to the advantage to the labourer, of this system, but Mr. Culley, who saw the operation, where it prevails to the greatest extent in the south-eastern counties of Scotland, has no hesitation in preferring it to the system of weekly wages. The most important benefit it yields to the labourer is the certainty of constant payment for the whole year, in health and in sickness; this insures an unfailing supply of good, wholesome food, including abundance of meal and milk for the children...." ("The Agricultural Labourer of Scotland", Fraser's Magazine, new series, 3, (May 1871), pp. 641-653). (p. 641).

57 "The Scottish Farm Labourers", p. 612; Purves, "The Lothian Hinds", p. 649.

58 In 1864 new, improved bothies began to replace the the old ones which were described as "dark and dismal, consisting of but one room with an earthen floor and damp walls, This dungeon is feebly lighted by a small window, the broken panes of which are stuffed with rags. There is no table and hardly any furniture save a bed, a stool, and a kettle; a portion of the place being filled up with fuel - coal, peat or wood." ("The Scottish Farm Labourers", p. 617). See also, Orwin and Whetham, The History of British Agriculture, p. 76.

59 Purves, "The Lothian Hinds", p. 648.

60 "While the English lad, at little more than twenty, rushes into matrimony with a girl of sweet seventeen (their whole stock in trade being love, without even the cottage to put it in), the canny Scot does not marry so soon by six or seven years; and when he does, it is with a dame quite as old, very frequently somewhat older than himself." ("The Scottish Farm Labourers", p. 614). The "canny Scot" is an East Lothian worker, said to be superior in intelligence and industry to most other Scots also.

61 It was only in the 1850s that farmers began building cottages with a wall separating the cattle from the human occupants; Purves, "The Lothian Hinds", p. 644.

62 "The Scottish Farm Labourers", p. 610

63 Purves, "The Lothian Hinds", passim.

64 Complaints about the food caused the earliest work stoppage by McKenzie's men. See K. McKenzie, "Diary", entry for 21 April 1853, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

65 Douglas noted "how very anxious you have been at all times since your arrival on Vancouver's Island to promote the comfort and well being of the people under your charge...." (Douglas to McKenzie, 27 May 1853, B226/b/7, HBCA).

66 "Day-Account Books", volume 2, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

67 The chief characteristic of the Lothian worker's diet was monotony: "Their food consisted of porridge, milk, bacon, and 'scones' made of barley, beans, or oats....Tea has nearly supplanted porridge at the evening meal, but the national dish still holds its own for breakfast. Dinner consists of broth made of barley, vegetables and pork." ("The Scottish Farm Labourer", p. 612). Twenty years later, in the 1880s, Purves noted that the fare was still much the same; "The Lothian Hinds", p. 647.

68 This order for provisions appears in "Day-Account Books", volume 2, Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. It was purchased on 19 March 1853. It was followed within two weeks by two more purchases, and shipments of provisions to the farm appear to have been quite frequent; see the following note.

69 Douglas to McKenzie, 27 May 1853, B226/b/7, HBCA. Melrose noted that in one three month period, mid-March to mid-June 1853, no less than seven scow-loads of food were shipped to the farm; in addition, numerous animals were butchered for meat. Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", BCHQ 7 (April 1943), pp. 126ff.

70 Douglas complained to London about "the Muirs, who are doing a great business at Soke (sic), in cutting down lumber for the California market have been secretly tampering with Mr. McKenzie's men, by offering much higher wages than we can afford to give...." (Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Company, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA).

71 In the latter case, a fine was the usual sentence, but it was difficult for a servant to prove that a contract had been broken because the courts were of the opinion that necessity allowed the master to extend or alter the terms of the agreement unilaterally. G. Houston, "Labour Relations in Scottish Agriculture before 1870", Agricultural History Review 6, part 1 (1958), pp. 27-41.

72 Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Company, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

73 McKenzie to Weir, 11 July 1853, "Accounts, receipts, promissory notes, etc.", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC. Weir to McKenzie,

73(cont'd) 19 November 1853, *ibid.*

74 McKenzie to Finlayson, 14 July 1853, "Craigflower Farm, Correspondence Outward", Kenneth McKenzie Collection, PABC.

75 Lamb, ed., "The Diary of Robert Melrose", entry for 6 October 1853, BCHQ 7 (April 1943), p. 132.

76 Douglas to the Agents of the Puget's Sound Company, 8 October 1853, F12/2, HBCA.

77 "So on the 7 September McKenzie put them in the Basti(o)n for a Month for breaking there (sic) engagement to the Company at fort Victoria that is the Hudson bay Companys Estiblishment (sic) here and is 10 times better off now than when we was with McKenzie for he is never one week at pease (sic) with his people it is e(i)ther one thing or another which he is promising and wont give it to them." (Annie Deans to her brother and sister, 10 September 1854, "Annie Deans, Correspondence", Typescript in PABC).

78 *Ibid.*

79 "Geordie has bought a town lot he is going to build a house it will take about 80 pounds we will (have) 5 or 6 rooms in it and as this is a promising place and us luck well our house will soon pay itself. Geordie and myself is working and saving as much as possible for it I have been busly (sic) makeing (sic) a Marriage order sowing (sic) pays beautiful the houses here is (sic) built of wood there is plenty of wood here but labour is very dear dear dear...." (Annie Deans to her brother and sister, 29 February 1854, *ibid.*)

80 "Geordie has been working all this Summer all the over time makeing (sic) doors and windows." (Annie Deans to her brother and sister, 10 September 1854, *ibid.*)

81 *Idem*, 10 September 1854, *ibid.* Later, Annie mentioned that Douglas put in charge of a large farm one James Tait who "was engaged to McKenzie but he thought it would be better to be a free man...." 24 September 1855, *ibid.*

82 *Idem*, 1 July 1855, *ibid.*

83 *Idem*, 24 September 1855, *ibid.*

84 *Idem*, 4 July 1858, *ibid.*

85 "The houses is going up like Magice (sic) there is hunerds (sic) of rich Gents just liveing (sic) in Canvass (sic) tents the rents for the houses is most awfull (sic) high Anderson in (sic) making well out with his large house tell his Mother that the y. are doing well the(y) are drawing 100 dollars a month just for rent he has taken a Farm there is nothing done to it yet he has sold his big house for 3000 dollars and to hold it for 3 Month till he puts another one yet but it will take something to build a house now the Lumber was selling yesterday at 120 dollars a thousand 4 month ago

85(cont'd) it was selling at 18 and 20 dollars a thousand." Ibid.

86 Colvile to McKenzie, 13 April 1852, addendum dated 29 April, F12/2, HBCA. Colvile to Douglas, 19 November 1852, F11/1, HBCA.

87 Colvile to Douglas, 19 November 1852, F11/1, HBCA.

88 "Statement of Servants...entitled to land at the expiration of their contracts....", F15/38, HBCA.

89 Colvile to Douglas, 14 February 1851, F11/1, HBCA.

90 "Descriptive Account of Esquimalt Farm", signed by A. G. Dallas, dated May 1858, F21/6, HBCA. See Appendix I.

91 "Descriptive Account of Craigflower Farm", signed by A. G. Dallas, F26/1, HBCA. See Appendix I.

92 For example, in September 1856, at the peak of the harvest season, McKenzie had fourteen white labourers; only five of them were engaged in harvesting, one was a shepherd, and one had charge of the horses. The others were employed at tasks such as smith-work, carpentry, milling, sawing, driving the steam engine while the Indians were set to work at the menial tasks like feeding the pigs and cutting firewood. "Labour Report of Craigflower Farm for the months of September and October, 1856", F15/38, HBCA.

93 Most of Langford's efforts seem to have been devoted to wheat production. In 1855 his crop amounted to 2000 bushels, valued at \$3.00 per bushel. Peas were worth \$2.00 per bushel. Langford to Douglas, 14 February 1856, "Langford Correspondence Outward, 1854-1857", PABC. One and one-half bushels of seed per acre was planted to yield between twenty and thirty bushels of wheat; see Appendix I.

"From the want of labour not having been able to get as much wheat sown as I should otherwise have done, I must consequently if possible sow a large (breadth?) of peas and oats, the white peas as well known (field?) very badly...." Langford to McKenzie, 28 January 1856, *ibid.*

94 Robert Weir paid £20 to the land office for twenty acres in November 1854. George Deans paid £28 towards the purchase of 112 acres in June 1857; Land Office, "Victoria Land Register", PABC.

APPENDIX I

Descriptive Account of Esquimalt Farm - May 1858*

Extent	620 acres - subdivided as follows:	
In Cultivation	Fenced and brought under the plough at heavy expense	207 acres
Open pasture capable of being brought into cultivation	Land <u>not</u> thickly timbered & capable of being brought under cultivation at a reasonable outlay (say for clearing and fencing £10/acre) at present used as pasture land	100 acres
Heavily timbered and rocky land	But affording some keep for cattle during a portion of the year (if fenced)	313 acres
Boundaries	On East by Esquimalt Harbour - east to south by unsold land & land belonging to David Cameron; from south to south west by unsold land, running parallel with the lake which is inside of & close to the boundary, & fenced off with split posts & rails, from south west to west by unsold land, separated by a split post & rail fence, from west to north by a wandering stream & on N E by lands belonging to H. B. Co.	
Fencing	All land in cultivation - chiefly by split posts & rails, rest by log & rail fencing.	
Commonage	enjoyed w others on unsold neighboring land, but it is often <u>over</u> stocked & is steadily diminishing by purchase. It is highly important that some of it be secured to the farm as an Outrun...	
Livestock	As of 31 October last:	
	Sheep	622 head
	Cattle	61 "
	Horses	11 "
	Pigs	126 "
	Poultry	27 "
Nature of Soil	About 150 acres in cultivation are light loam, on a coarse sandy subsoil, the	

* This and the following accounts are extracted from F26/1, HBCA.

Nature of Soil (cont'd)	remainder is a similar surface on a retentive clay subsoil.
Crops	Wheat, Barley, Oats, Pease, Potatoes, Turnips, Carrots: No regular rotation has yet been established: that which is considered most suitable is the four course shift, in so far as it could be carried out on land so recently brought under cultivation.
Seed per acre	For wheat, barley, oats and pease: 1½, 3, 3, and 2 bu per acre, for potatoes - from 15-20 bu. & for turnips from 2-4 lbs.
Returns	20-30 bu for wheat; app. 30 bu - barley; 30-50 bu - oats; 20-30 bu - pease; 150-200 bu - potatoes (w/o manure) & from 15-20 tons turnips
Manure	only manure hitherto used has been farmyard manure - 20-30 tons per acre. Limestone of excellent quality is abundant on the farm, but has not yet been required as manure.
Reaping & Thrashing	Hitherto - crops cut with the scythe, and thrashed by machine worked w horses, and by the flail (Dallas recommended a reaping machine be purchased by the Company).
Consumption	mostly by farm; small quantities sold from time to time to HBC and other farms.
Servants	Average # during last year - 8 (excluding Indians) 1 shepherd, 3 ploughmen, 1 live stock tender, 1 House and general servant, 2 general labourers. \$1 (4/2d) per day - <u>w/o</u> rations
Indians	3 for less skillful tasks @ three 2½ point inferior blankets per month.
Pilfering by Indians	Petty.
Damage by cattle & pigs	esp. latter, which are constantly running about & breaking into enclosures.
Injury to Stock	Stallions, Bulls, Boars of an inferior breed are allowed to roam at large, to the great detriment of our stock

Descriptive Account of Craigflower Farm - May 1858

Extent	752½ acres - less 170½ allotted to retired servants. 582 divided as follows:	
In cultivation	Fenced and brought under plough at heavy expense	80 acres
Open pasturage	some trees, but not susceptible to cultivation	70 acres
Barren	Rock & heavy timber affording little pasturage for cattle & sheep on acct of fallen timber & dense growth of underwood	432 acres
Boundaries	On south and s. e. by Constance Cove farm - (separated from it by a log fence) from s. to s.w. by Esquimalt Harbour, the Indian reservation after mentioned, and farm known as Capt. Cooper's - from S E to North and thence to west, by a winding arm of the sea. On other side of this arm are 36 acres still belonging to farm after giving allotments to retired servants consisting of rock and wood.	
Fences	All land in cultivation, partly with logs & partly with posts & rails of split and sawn timber. Rest is mainly fenced with logs.	
Scarcity of Water	induces cattle to wander in summer - causing much trouble & expense & frequent loss from accident.	
No Commonage	All surrounding lands are bought & mostly overstocked - but have secured the pasture farms of Broadmead & Lakehill - distant resp. 4 and 3 miles, containing resp. 825 acres & 457 acres.	
Livestock	As of 31 October 1857:	
	Sheep	966 head
	Cattle	96 "
	Horses	29 "
	Pigs	95 "
Nature of soil	The soil in cultivation is a light loam, with close, retentive subsoil.	

Crops	Wheat, Oats, Pease, Potatoes, Turnips This year some barley will be attempted.
Four shift - green crop or fallow, wheat, grass, oats and barley	No regular rotation has yet been established, the land not being thoroughly cleared, but a four or five shift-rotation will be entered upon as soon as practicable
Five shift - green crop or fallow, wheat, 2 years grass, oats & barley	
Seed per acre	Wheat, Oats, and Pease is 3-4 bu; for pota- toes - about 20 bushels, & for turnips $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 pounds. Returns vary 25-30 bu wheat, about 30 bu Oats, 30-35 bu pease, about 100 bu potatoes and 25-30 tons turnips.
Manure	Farmyard & lime - about 15 tons/acre of for- mer & 100 bushels per acre of latter. Soil, being light, needs a top dressing in spring of guano - but none in Island.
Mode of reaping & thrashing	Crops cut with scythe, and thrashed by a machine driven by a small steam engine.
Consumption	Mostly by farm, small quantities from time to time to HBC and other farms. Flour milled here is excellent; oats given to Horses and working bullocks.
Servants	# of regular: 14 in last year. Since August last, when contracts expired wages of ordinary labourers have been from £30 to £35/ annum <u>with</u> rations, superior servants - £50/annum <u>with</u> rations, at \$2/day (8/4).
Indians	usually about 14 employed - 2 blankets/mo & rations at 3/6 per week
Indian Reservation	cuts into farm & subjects it to much pilfering & loss of stock from Indian dogs.
Public Road	Victoria to Esquimalt divides part of the arable land, which increased the quantity of fencing required. Damage suffered by roaming cattle and pigs.

Descriptive Account of Constance Cove and
Viewfield Farms - May 1858

Extent	1195 acres, subdivided thus:	
In cultivation	Fenced and brought under plough at heavy expense	130 acres
Open pasture	with trees, but not fit for cultivation	120 acres
	Swamp	90 acres
Barrens	same as at Craigflower	<u>855</u> acres 1195
	at south end of a peninsula	
Scarcity of Water	<u>vide</u> Craigflower	
No Commonage	secured Ellendale - distance of 7 miles as sheep outrun. Farm itself could not maintain many sheep or cattle (as is true of Craigflower)	
Livestock	as of 31 October:	
	Sheep	1227 head
	Cattle	69 "
	Horses	13 "
	Pigs	32 "
Nature of soil	A black sandy loam - 10-16 in. deep - upon a strong retentive clay.	
Crops	Wheat, Oats, Pease, Potatoes, & Turnips No regular rotation has been established.	
Seed per acre	Wheat - $1\frac{1}{2}$ bu; Oats & Pease - $2\frac{1}{2}$ bu; Potatoes - 25 bu; turnips - $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.	
Returns	Wheat, Oats & Pease - 20-30 bu. Potatoes - 300-400 bushels Turnips - 10-15 tons	
Manure	Dung only - 10 one-horse cart loads per acre.	
Mode of reaping & thrashing	Cut with scythe, thrashed with the flail; a thrashing machine from England has now been obtained & will be used in future.	

Consumption	mostly by farm; Oats, pease turnips to stock (except sheep).
Servants	Varied in last year from 6-9 (except Indians) Wages 4/2 (\$1) /day w rations Usually 2 Indians employed - 2 blankets/mo & rations at 5/ per week.
Intentions: to make the farm a <u>stock farm</u>	To put land under grass & make it a stock farm, due to scarcity & cost of labour
Injury to stock	Same annoyances & damage caused as are done to Craigflower.

APPENDIX II

Extract from McKenzie's reply to his notice of appointment as the agent for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company; McKenzie to Colville, 31 March 1854, F12/3, HBCA.

...And, as to the management we have all been allowed to follow our own course, without knowing what was the principal object in view. However great allowance must be given as the proper means has not been afforded for the working of our farms. In my own case I will leave you to judge what could be done with a few young weak half starved unbroken oxen, let loose every night to the bush, and often not able to find them again for days, such has been the heart rending way operations have been carried on here, such a system will never do, every effort must be made to raise as much fodder and turnips for the keep of our cattle during winter, and that all the ploughing for our own spring crops should be done during the winter months. I may mention that there are no mature oxen to be had. What has become of them I do not know, and the breed of horses are not at all adapted for farm husbandry they being very weak and small boned - but might be much improved if we had a good stallion to crop a few selected mares, this is the only means of improving the breed for future farm purposes, However Horses are not so much wanted at present as good strong able oxen. Such I consider better for the breaking up of new land, Only a few active horses for carting purposes would be desirable (sic).

The stock of sheep in the charge of Mr. McAulay and others are the most deplorable looking stock I ever saw, all covered with scab, and the consequence one half the wool falling off there (sic) backs before the clipping season. this is of course in a great measure the want of proper management."

McKenzie then gave a brief outline of his program for the farms:

- "1. That there shall be no unnecessary buildings erected on any of the farms untill (sic) they are actually required, as there appears to have been a great portion of valuable time lost by so doing.
2. Each farm to be supplied with a sufficient number of the strongest working oxen that can be had, and that all attention and energy must be directed to the growing of crips, improving the breed of cattle and the better management of our sheep, I may mention that in the present state of our farms here, a large stock of sheep cannot be kept (sic) untill (sic) we are able to raise grass & turnips to feed them off during the winter, as I understand more than one half sometimes die from starvation if the winter is severe. The breed of bulls you mention in your letter of the 18th would be very desirable (sic) for improving our cattle. Also if possible to be sent a young Clydesdale or Suffolk Horse to crop the mares, and a Cheviot or Southdown Ram, such I think would be most suitable for our climate the winters being rather severe.

You mention that a change of wages is proposed in regard to the men employed on the farms, this I am glad is to be the case, as there is much dissatisfaction on the part of the men under contract. I shall certainly give every attention to the suggestions that Mr. Douglas may propose as to the above change, and also upon other matters.

As to my own farm I send you a small tracing, which I rec'd from Mr. Pemberton, I have little or no prairie land. What Mr. P. terms such is thickly planted with Oak. However from what I have seen the open land is not the best it being light and sandy, and that under wood a fine black loam, which will ultimately though expensive at first turn out the most profitable for our cultivation. As to the advancement of my farm the people are all housed in comfortable dwellings each with a garden, and I will have under crop this spring about 25 acres of wheat, pease (sic) & oats - all cleared and fenced and as turnips grow well I intend sowing if possible 10 or 15 acres. Also I will have 30 acres all fenced and cleared to sow wheat at the fall. I am fencing the narrow peninsula of my farm for the purpose of domesticating our calves, that we may reap more benefit than hitherto.

The machinery I have erected is all working well, viz. the circular saws and flour mill; and during the summer if the person from Mr. Stanley arrives in time I shall have the whole of the machinery under operation. But I must mention that the small steam engine I have now at work is not of sufficient power to propel all the machinery intended to be erected, and as a little surplus power being at all times very desirable (sic) I will require an engine of the following dimensions, 25 or 30 horsepower portable double cylinder Tubular Engine with a complete set of duplicate brakes, etc etc - Such if you are agreeable I should like sent by the first ship. The small engine I have at present will not be lost as I can keep it working a set of circular saws cutting fencing for the several farms, and ultimately it might be very useful with a portable thrashing machine to thrash all the crops of the P.S.C. farms which I trust ere long will be of a magnitude to require such power.

...You must excuse the hurried letter as I know it is not such a minute account as I would like to give you of all things, my having been in a bad state of health for the last two months, brought on I may say from no other cause than anxiety about our future prospects having had so many obstacles to contend with. But thank God I am now getting better, and that you may rely on having all particulars so soon as I have waited upon and examined the proceedings of the different parties in charge of the P.S.C. farms, who I trust will do everything in their power to further the views as to the ultimate prosperity of all concerned....

APPENDIX III

INFORMATION OF KENNETH MCKENZIE AGAINST PETER BARTLEMAN,
BLACKSMITH, FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT*

Plea: Guilty 12 April '55

Defendant states that the reason that he left his work was the injury Mister McKenzie doun (sic) me in pulling down that shop in which I used to work for a long time. I mean in my own time and I say that it was perfect malicious that he did so. I asked Mister McKenzie the liberty to go to the Fort and he granted (?) me the whole day likewise and after I brought up my goods back (?) out two or three o'clock he ordered me to go to my work immediately. I did not refuse to go to my work. I said I would go provided that my goods secured and by not doing so immediately this is the revenge he took by pulling down my shop.

Complainant states that the shop was erected without any permission from me and was a great grievance to me. Peter is correct with having leave to go to the Fort on the day in question upon urgent business he said to the Fort that business was to fetch coals to work in his shop with which coal he has actually refused to work in the shop belonging to the Company and that he had the impudence to write over the shop door that there was no more work (?) on account of the bad coals. It was for that cause that seeing him bringing such coals for himself I thought it high time to put a stop to such work being done on his own account on the Company's property

Bartleman sentenced on demand of McKenzie to be returned to Britain.

*Source: Vancouver Island. Supreme Court of Civil Justice. "Notes of Proceedings" in handwriting of D. Cameron, 6 October 1853 - 20 April 1857, PABC.

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