HISTORIC MÉTIS IN ONTARIO:
RAINY RIVER DISTRICT
AND
KENORA DISTRICT

Submitted to:

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October 5, 1999
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents data and interpretations of ethnohistorical data pertaining to the development of métis populations in the Rainy River and Kenora Districts of Ontario. Preliminary findings as a result of consultations with present-day métis groups in Kenora, Dryden and Wabigoon are also presented. The central findings of the research are:

- Historical data and the majority of ethnohistorical accounts concerning the early-contact period in the region west and northwest of Lake Superior indicate that the area was occupied by Assiniboine and Cree groups in the 17th century. At contact Assiniboine and Cree were engaged in a military alliance against Sioux living further south and southwest of Lake Superior, which probably stemmed from their economic interdependency in the fur trade.

- The majority of ethnohistorians agree that Ojibwa occupation of the region west of Lake Superior dates to the early 18th century. In these accounts Ojibwa join the Cree and Assiniboine alliance against the Sioux, and become the near exclusive occupants of the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region by the mid 18th century, as Cree and Assiniboine relocate further west to the Lake Winnipeg area.

- A permanent, albeit small-scale European presence in the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region dates to the establishment of French trade posts in the 1730s. Prior to that time the region was likely regularly visited by itinerant traders called coureurs de bois operating from Fort Caministiqua (near present-day Thunder Bay) established since 1678:

- By the late 18th century warfare with the Sioux had shifted further west, and the ensuing peace allowed for more stable trade relations between Aboriginal groups and Europeans. It is in this period that, under the NWC, a number of posts were established throughout the region.

- Fur trade posts at Lac la Pluie (Rainy Lake) were the centre of trade with the Ojibwa in the region west of Lake Superior. At one time or another, every major fur trade company – the North West Company (NWC), the X.Y. Company, the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) and the American Fur Company – had a post in the Rainy Lake vicinity.

- The presence of multiple posts at Rainy Lake over a prolonged period of time resulted in a high degree of contact and unions between European traders and Aboriginal women, which ultimately produced a population of mixed ancestry, or métis. Post records demonstrate the presence of a fair number of métis men (many with families) who worked and lived at post “settlements”.

A sedentary population of métis families appears to have developed around the Rainy Lake posts from at least the late 1700s. However, the data indicates that settlements associated with posts were first and foremost fur trade in character, and the fact that métis resided there was secondary. That is, these were fur trade communities, as opposed to métis communities, despite the fact the majority of the population may have been métis. No evidence has been found to indicate that these settlements were ever characterized as métis, or if they were, at what point this may have occurred.

Métis offspring of European-Aboriginal unions were more than simply a side-effect of fur trade relations. These “natives of the country” possessed cultural, social and language skills that created an occupational niche for these individuals as active participants in the fur trade. At Lac la Pluie, métis were hired as interpreters, winterers, runners, canoe-builders, and country-food providers. However, these activities were not necessarily engaged in exclusively by métis who appear to have served as “jacks-of-all-trades” often alongside non-métis apprentices, post-masters and clerks.

The métis population living in what is today the Rainy River District as enumerated in the 1901 Census totalled approximately 300 individuals. Métis represented about 9.1% of the total population of locations in which métis were enumerated. The majority (70%) of métis families in the district resided either off-reserve near Fort Frances or on the reserve at Couchiching. Continuity in the métis population from the fur trade records is evident.

The scant amount of archival data available for the Kenora District during the fur trade does not allow for conclusive findings regarding the history of métis in that area. Although HBC posts were established at Rat Portage (Kenora), Keewatin, Eagle Lake (Dryden) and Dinorwich (Wabigoon), almost none of these post journals or other records have survived. Consequently, any analysis of the development of a historic métis population in the Kenora and Dryden area must be considered within the fur trade context of the Lac la Pluie district to which these posts belonged. Nevertheless, this report presents some positive evidence for a sustained métis presence in the area.

The métis population living in what is today the Kenora District as enumerated in the 1901 Census totalled approximately 200 individuals. Métis represented about 2.4% of the total population of the locations in which métis were enumerated. The majority (60%) of métis families in the district resided in the town of what was then known as Rat Portage. At least eleven métis family names (twenty families) recorded in the 1901 Census are also found in the fur trade records.

Métis individuals from Red River, Rainy Lake and Kenora were involved in the negotiations of Treaty No. 3 as hired interpreters and facilitators. However the insistence by Chief Mawedopenais – the Ojibwa spokesman – and by Alexander Morris – the Treaty Commissioner – that the success of the negotiations in 1873 were owed “much to the Half-bred” indicates that perhaps some influence was also wielded by the métis in attendance.
There is evidence that the métis interpreter Nicholas Chatelaine wielded considerable influence during the Treaty No.3 negotiations, and that government officials hired Chatelaine specifically because of his known influence among local Ojibwa.

There appears to be no record that métis spoke on their own behalf with regard to inclusion in the Treaty provisions. On the third and final day of negotiations, Chief Mawedopenais of the Fort Frances band proposed that "the Half-breeds that are actually living amongst us" be included in the Treaty. It is probable that the nine families listed as "Halfbreeds of Fort Frances" in an 1871 Annuity Paylist were included within the group referred to by the Chief. Both Mawedopenais and Morris imply that while this group of métis were acknowledged as an "other" in racial terms, they were nevertheless considered by Ojibwa at Fort Frances as members of their community in social terms.

In response to the Ojibwa request in 1873 that ten or twenty métis families be included in the Treaty, and in light of the important role Morris believed métis had played in a difficult Treaty negotiation process, he promised to recommend that these métis be given the option to treat. In 1875, the "Adhesion by Half-breeds of Rainy River and Lake" was signed by Nicholas Chatelaine who represented the group of métis to whom Mawedopenais referred in 1873. The significance of the Adhesion is its indication of an organized and self-identifying community of métis in the Rainy River District. There is evidence that until at least 1912, the métis group living on the Couchiching reserve maintained a separate identity.

The Kenora and Rainy River Districts share much of the same history of industrial development and settlement in the 20th century. However, few local histories recognize the Aboriginal presence before European settlement or the development of a population of mixed ancestry as a result of the fur trade. This is consistent with the general lack of data on métis in Ontario in the 20th century. A serious gap of information exists about métis during the period of industrial development and relatively little is known about what happened to the métis fur-trade families associated with the HBC posts in the region.

Significant European settlement occurred in the region beginning in the 1880s when the Dawson route and Rainy River canals were completed, and particularly when the Canadian Pacific Railway reached Rat Portage. This had the effect of bringing immigrant settlers of a broad range of ethnic origins into the region.

Industrial development of the region and the growth of urban centres came as a result of commercial fishing, gold mining, forestry, and tourism. There is documented evidence of métis involved in mining, the lumber industry and commercial fishing in 1901. This is consistent with oral accounts which add that métis were (and continue to be) actively engaged in tourism-related occupations.
1.2 RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS: RAINY RIVER AND KENORA DISTRICTS

This assignment requires ethno historical research in an attempt to answer a series of questions identified by the Ministry, concerning historic métis in different time-periods. All of the research questions are common to both the Rainy River and Kenora Districts, and are categorized below according to the chapters in which groups of questions are addressed.

Chapter 2 of this report attempts to answer the following five research questions related to the early contact history of the Rainy River / Kenora region:

1. When did Europeans first arrive in the Rainy River / Kenora region?

2. When did Europeans first establish a semi-permanent or permanent presence in the Rainy River / Kenora region?

3. What, if any, Aboriginal group inhabited or made regular use of the Rainy River / Kenora region area at the times mentioned in (1) and (2) above?

4. What, if any, were the harvesting practices of these aboriginal groups at the times referred to above?

5. What was the relative significance to these aboriginal groups of any harvesting / hunting practices at the times referred to above?

Questions 6, 7 and 8 directly address the development and character of populations of mixed ancestry in the Rainy River / Kenora Districts. The majority of primary historical data collected for this assignment – derived mainly from 19th century HBC records – pertain to these three questions. Data and analysis specific to the Rainy River District are presented in Chapter 3, while data relevant to the Kenora District are presented in Chapter 4.

6. Did a local, identifiable population of mixed European/Aboriginal ancestry arise from European contact with these local Aboriginal groups?

7. If a local population of mixed ancestry did develop:
   a. When did it do so?
   b. What was the relationship/interaction between this population and the local Aboriginal and European populations?
   c. Did the local "mixed" population come to be seen as having some form of distinctive communal identity or existence?
   d. Did the local population of mixed ancestry develop any distinctive traditions, customs, and practices, and if so, what were these?
   e. What, if any, were the harvesting/hunting practices of these people?
   f. What was the relative significance of their harvesting / hunting practices over time?
Fur Trade Papers, Crown Land Agency and Mining Lands Branch records, and Irving Papers at Archives of Ontario (AO) in Toronto;

Missionary Journals (Jesuit Relations) and the Anglican Church General Synod Archives (Ottawa, Toronto).

An Index of Primary Documents cited is included in Appendix B, and copies of these documents are attached in a Supplement. Within the text of this report, these documents are referenced by “Doc.#.”

The study of métis population and/or community development in the Rainy River / Kenora Districts required a thorough review and analysis of fur trade records for posts established by the North West Company (NWC), the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) as well as references to the American Fur Company at Lac la Pluie/Rainy Lake. An exhaustive search and review of post records from Rat Portage – which was part of the HBC’s Lac la Pluie District for most of its existence – was also conducted. Likewise a thorough search and review was conducted of records for outposts such as Eagle Lake, Dinorwic, Dalles, North West Angle, Whitefish Bay, and Hungry Hall.

It is important to note that journals and other records from the Lac la Pluie post have survived to provide an abundant source of information about the post for an almost 200 year period. In the course of this assignment, all of the Lac la Pluie post journals were reviewed for data relevant to métis, but relative to the volume of journal material only a small amount was found to be useful. However, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, some of this data is rich in substance. In contrast, surviving fur trade records for the Rat Portage post and surrounding outposts are sparse, and the context in which these documents are analysed must be provided by the Lac la Pluie records.

A review of publications on the development of a métis population in the Great Lakes region provided indicators by which to identify métis in archival records. Following is a list of indicators (with examples) used to guide the search for métis presence and activity recorded in fur trade records:

- Terms used to refer directly to métis individuals or groups (eg., halfbreed; bois brûlé; country-born);

- Ambiguous terms which may refer indirectly to métis, depending on the context in which the term is used (eg., canadien; coureurs de bois as “half-French”);

- References by post employees to native/métis partners and children (eg., my woman; his girl; mother of my children; daughter/son of an Englishman or trader by name; references to marriage as à la façon du pays);

- Occupations commonly held by métis (eg., interpreter; winterer; voyageur; guide)

- References to métis settlement (eg., traders’ families living near posts in “cabins”; log houses; log cabins).
In addition to searching HBCA documents, published diaries of fur traders who worked for the Northwest Company (pre-1821 HBC amalgamation) at Lac la Pluie were examined for relevant information. As well, several Indian Affairs (RG10) files were reviewed for information on the métis group at Fort Frances who, under the 1875 Adhesion to Treaty No.3, subsequently lived on the Reserve at Couchiching. For example, Treaty payment files from 1876-1877 and Commercial Fishing files from 1898-1963 contain indicators of a separate identity maintained by the Fort Frances métis despite their amalgamation with Little Eagle's band at Couchiching. Also, a "Personnel File" on Nicholas Chatelaine dated 1889-1890 provides some insight into the role of this métis individual in the negotiation of Treaty No.3.

Census records from 1881, 1891 and 1901 were reviewed in order to trace known fur trade métis family names through the latter decades of the 19th century. Close attention was paid to the 1901 Census records (NAC) for Algoma (District No.44) which provides quantitative data on the métis population in the Rainy River / Kenora Districts at the turn of the century. This particular set of census records is a potentially rich source of data because enumerators were instructed to identify individuals by both colour and racial or tribal origin. The code "W" (White) indicated persons of European descent; the code "R" (Red) indicated persons of Aboriginal descent. A separate code for persons of mixed "white and red blood" or "Breeds" ("B") was further categorized to differentiate between French ("F.B."), English ("E.B."), Scotch ("S.B.") and Irish ("I.B.") descent (Canada 1902: xvii). Although enumerators were also instructed to indicate the tribal origin of a Breed's Indian descent - for example "Cree F.B." - such codes were seldom used in the returns studied for this assignment.

Unfortunately, the 1901 Census database also has several serious methodological limitations. The first limitation relates to the absence of a census map by which researchers may identify the geographic location of towns and villages visited by enumerators (Hillman 1992:x). Many locations cannot be identified on present-day maps. A thorough search for historic maps around the 1901 time period did not produce a map on which many of the place-names could be geographically located. This prevented any complete assessment of the métis population within a general geographic region. Furthermore, special enumerators were also employed to collect records for "sparsely inhabited regions" which was termed "unorganized territory" and included "mining camps, fishing grounds, trading posts [and] mission stations" (Canada 1902:xi, xiii). Again, no indication is given as to the geographic locations represented in this category.

The 1901 Census "Instructions to Enumerators" state that Treaty Indians were to be enumerated by "officials and other agents in place of the regular enumerators" (ibid.:xv). However, this method resulted in a haphazard record of Reserve populations and it appears that not all Indian Reserves were enumerated in the 1901 Census. For example, lists were found for the Couchiching Agency - including the métis group living on Reserve at Rainy Lake - but no comparable lists were found for reserves at or near Michipicoten (as may have been relevant to the Wawa métis population, cf. Praxis 1999b).

Another limitation of the 1901 Census records relates to the sometimes large geographic area
assigned to each enumerator which needed to be covered in a relatively short period of time. Enumerators were instructed to visit a settlement once and to record information only for those who were at home at the time. While "inquiries in special form" were apparently used to obtain "the record of persons temporarily absent", there is no indication of what these consisted, or of their results (Canada 1902:x). It is possible that population figures are not accurate, and in some cases may be seriously underestimated, especially for populations who maintained a lifestyle in "the bush." The final limitation relates to the time of year at which the Census was taken. Enumerators visited settlements from the end of March to the beginning of May, when it is possible that some Indian and métis families were away at sugar bushes or spring fishing camps.

1.3.3 Consultation with Local Métis Representatives

A preliminary review of the literature revealed that a relatively scant amount of information exists about métis in Ontario in comparison to, for example, the Red River métis. Furthermore, it was evident that a gap exists in the ethnographic literature concerning métis in Ontario from approximately 1900 to the present. This led Praxis to recommend to the Ministry that sufficient rapport be established with local métis organizations, métis research materials and perspectives would add important substance and balance to the study. To this end, Praxis travelled to Kenora, Dryden and Wabigoon in order to consult with local métis representatives who were willing to share information about their history within the Rainy River / Kenora region.¹

Letters of introduction sent prior to the meetings between Praxis and métis groups included the following list of general topics for discussion during the consultations:

- The local history of the origins of métis and the establishment of a métis community;
- The significance of resource harvesting by métis in the area, both past and present;
- The criteria used to determine who is métis and who is not; that is, local criteria of métis identity;
- The formation of local métis organizations in the area.

Overall, the consultations were successful in that most representatives were receptive to the questions posed by Praxis, and were willing to share concerns, issues and ideas which had not emerged from the literature reviews conducted prior to field research. However, it should be noted that this research was exploratory in nature, and the results of the consultations are neither definitive nor representative.

¹ Consultations were held with the following organizations: Kenora Métis Community Council (Kenora); Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario (Dryden), and; Wesakwete - OMAA Zone 1 (Wabigoon). Sunset Country Métis Council (Fort Frances) declined participation in this research.

2. **THE EARLY-CONTACT PERIOD, ca. 1670s-1730s**

This chapter presents historical data and ethnohistorical interpretations concerning the identity of the Aboriginal peoples occupying the Kenora and Rainy River Districts of present-day Ontario during the first decades of indirect and direct contact with Europeans. The analysis then shifts to an examination of the process of this contact, involving exploration and the establishment of fur trade posts in the Lake of Woods and Rainy River region. This is followed by a description of Aboriginal involvement in the establishment of these posts, participation in the fur trade and the scope and relative significance of Aboriginal resource harvesting activities.

### 2.1 ABORIGINAL OCCUPIANTS IN THE 17th AND EARLY 18th CENTURIES

With the exception of Greenberg and Morrison (1982), historians and ethnohistorians are in general agreement that the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River regions were occupied by Assiniboine and, to some extent, Cree peoples during the 17th century and up to the 1730s, when the first fur trade posts were established by the French (Hickerson 1976:44-46; Ray 1998:4-23; Bishop 1976:44, 1981, 1994:276-278; Ritzenhaler 1978:744; Christianson 1984:95-102; Stone and Chaput 1978:602). Greenberg and Morrison question a Cree presence in the region on the basis of their interpretation of the identity of a group named Monsoni, and of one document by French explorer Lavérendrye describing Christinaux as speaking Saulteaux.

#### 2.1.1 Early Written Accounts from 17th Century Records

The French were the first Europeans to visit the northwestern shore of Lake Superior, and the first direct (first-hand) information on the geography and Aboriginal population of the region probably dates to a 1667 voyage by Jesuit Father Allouez to Lake Nipigon (Ray 1998:9). However, the Jesuits had collected second- and third-hand information (from Aboriginal informants) about the region and its peoples at least a decade prior to Allouez’s trip.

The French possessed vague knowledge of the existence of lands and various peoples living beyond the western shore of Lake Michigan since explorer Jean Nicollet’s 1634 voyage to the Winnebago (cf. *Praxis* Research Associates 1999b:30). A listing of peoples living beyond Lake Huron by Father Dablou in a 1640 *Jesuit Relation*, based on Nicollet’s information, presents the first mention of Assiniboine in French records. Immediately following a description of the rapids at Sault Ste. Marie, the *Relation* describes shorelines that match those of Lake Michigan:

*Beyond this rapid we find the little lake, upon the shores of which, to the North, are the Mandoue, people who navigate very little, living upon the fruits of the earth. Passing this smaller lake, we enter the second fresh-water sea, upon the shores of*
which are the Maroumine; and still farther, upon the same banks, dwell the
Ouinipigou, a sedentary people, who are very numerous; some of the French call
them the "Nation of the Stinkards", because the Algonquin word "ouinipeg"
signifies "bad-smelling water", and they apply this name to the water of the salt sea,
so that these people are called Ouinipigou because they come from the shores of
a sea about which we have no knowledge; and hence they ought not to be called the
nation of the Stinkards, but the nation of the sea. In the neighborhood of this nation
are the Naduesiu, the Assinipour, the Eriniovi, the Rasaouakouetion, and the
Pououtouatami. These are the names of a part of the nations which are beyond the
shores of the great river Saint Lawrence and of the great lakes of the Hurons on the
North. (Thwaites 1959[18]:231)

R.G. Thwaites, editor of the multi-volume compilation of Jesuit Relations, provides a more
contemporary identification of these group names in a footnote placed following ‘Pououtouatami’ in
the text quoted above. The footnote reads:

Ouinipigou = Winnebagoes; Naduesiu = Sioux; Assinipour = Assiniboine. All these
are branches of the Dakota stock.

Maroumine = Menommonees(sic); Eriniovi = Illinois; Pououtouatami =
Pottawatomies, all Algonkin tribes. Rasouakovetion[sic] is probably equivalent to
Mascoutins, R being a misprint for M. (Ibid.:259)

By 1658 the Jesuit Relations present some information on the geographic location of at least some
of the Assiniboine (named Assinipoualak), as living “thirty-five leagues or thereabout from Lake
Alimibeg...” (Thwaites 1959[44]:249). Given that Lake Alimibeg is Lake Nipigon², according to Ray
(1998:6) this information places Assiniboine approximately 100 miles west of that lake in the mid-17th
century:

Considering that the league was a rough time-distance measurement (the amount of
territory canoeists could travel in an hour, approximately three miles), it follows
from this account that the Assiniboine lived some one to two days travel, or a
hundred miles to the west of Lake Nipigon. This would put the eastern limit of their
territory somewhere in the vicinity of the Pigeon and Kaministiquia rivers on the
northwest shore of Lake Superior and Sturgeon Lake in northern Ontario.

As documented in Ray (ibid:8-10, 17), maps dated from the mid-17th century to the mid-18th century
directly and indirectly place Assiniboine in the vicinity of the Kaministiquia and Pigeon Rivers. The
four historical maps from Ray (1998) and portions of two additional maps (Baudrand 1680, Mitchell
1755) are reproduced in Appendix ‘A’ of this report (Maps A.1 - A.6).

² In the 17th century Lake Nipigon was frequently referred to as ‘Alemipigon’.

2.1.2 Cartographic Data

A cursory examination of the historical maps in chronological order of their publication dates attests to the progression in the accuracy of geographic knowledge of the Lake Superior region (and outlying western and northern regions) by Europeans between 1660 and the mid-18th century. Nevertheless it is also clear that all of these maps contain, by contemporary standards, gross errors of scale and contour of certain features, although there is a general tendency for these errors to become less pronounced over time. It is also apparent that several features, specifically lakes and rivers, have undergone name changes over the past three centuries.

A map by Father Du Creux published in 1660 (Map A.1) places Lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior in their relatively correct positions, while Lake Nipigon (Lacus Atrimihegec [sic]) is incorrectly located above Sault Ste. Marie. At the time of publication the French only had second-hand information concerning the area north and west of Lake Superior from Aboriginal informants, and problems in interpretation and understanding, coupled with gaps in information, probably account for the geographical errors evident on the map.

Lake Nipigon, however, is correctly linked to Lake Superior by a river (Kilistonum, or river of the Crees3). While Assiniboine people are not located directly on this map, Lake Nipigon is considered to be connected to another lake to the west by a river named Assinipoualacus (or river of the Assiniboine). As Ray (1998:8) speculates:

The river was probably given this name because it was one of the key routes which led to Assiniboine country, and the Assiniboine were considered to live along its course.

As Ray (ibid:10) remarks, all maps produced after Father Allouez 1667 journey to Lake Nipigon that identify the Assinipoualacus river by name show it flowing into western Lake Superior, instead of Lake Nipigon (see maps A.2, A.3, A.4 and A.5). Ray considers Du Creux’s error as stemming from a misunderstanding concerning the travel route of Assiniboine to Lake Nipigon:

The mistaken connection of this river to Lake Nipigon on the du Creux map was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Assiniboine travelled to the latter via the Pigeon River, Lake Superior, and the Nipigon River. From Lake Nipigon, they could also reach James Bay via the Ogoki-Albany river system. (ibid.:8)

This latter route is likely simplified on du Creux’s map by the single river flowing northeasterly, connecting Lake Nipigon to James Bay (Sinus Kilistonum).

The 1699 map by Franquelin (Map. A.2) shows Lake Nipigon connected by a river to a much

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3 With the exception of Greenberg and Morrison (1982) sources reviewed for this assignment agree that 17th century terms ‘Kilistiona’, ‘Cristinaux’ and other variants designate Cree peoples.
larger lake to north named *Lac des Cristinaux* (Lake of the Crees). On this map, a river called *Riviere des deux Lacs* (River of two Lakes) is shown flowing into the *Lac des Cristinaux* from the west, while a third river (called *Bourbon*) connects the Lake to Hudson's Bay at *Fort Bourbon* (the French name for York Factory). Only Mitchell's map of 1755 reproduces a large *Christinaux Lake* north of Nipigon (Map A.6). Mitchell's map is, cartographically, interesting and somewhat unique for its time as it represents a composite of a number of features and selected information from maps published decades earlier, mixed with (what was then) contemporary toponymic information (cf. *PRAXIS* Research Associates 1999a:15-16). On Mitchell's map, the *Christinaux Lake* is connected by river to a western *Lake Assenapouals*, while the easterly river connecting the lake to Hudson's Bay is now identified as the *Albany*.

There is evidence suggesting that the *Lac des Christinaux* in Franquelin's 1699 map is probably Rainy Lake, and that Franquelin incorrectly placed the lake north of Nipigon due to a misunderstanding of information concerning the location of this lake. Other late 17th century data indicates that Rainy Lake was labelled 'Lac des Christinaux' by the French explorer and trader Jacques de Noyon in a 1688 account. As Ray (1998:11) documents:

> Jacques de Noyon travelled from Kaninistikwa to Lake of the Woods and met the Assiniboine and Cree in the vicinity of Rainy Lake. He reported that the latter was called 'Lac des Christinaux' and Lake of the Woods, 'Lac des Assinibois'.

Furthermore, according to de Noyon's account these lakes are connected by a river (Voorhis 1930:8-9), which would explain Franquelin's designating it *Riviere des deux Lacs*, while Mitchell shows *Christinaux Lake* connected to *Lake Assenapouals*.

The large size of the *Lac des Christinaux* in Franquelin's 1699 map (reproduced on Mitchell's map, see A.6) is likely due to de Noyon's description of the length of its shoreline, reported in Voorhis (1930:9) as "1500 miles around". This is clearly an exaggeration of Rainy Lake's shoreline length, and it is in fact doubtful that de Noyon's original description reported a measurement in miles since the French typically reported distances during leagues in the 17th century. Alternatively, the number 1,500 may be a transcription or conversion error. It is entirely possible, however, that de Noyon reported an exaggerated shoreline length given Rainy Lake's highly irregular shape, involving countless bays and inlets. Finally, Franquelin's description of a *Riviere de Bourbon* connecting *Lac*
des Christinaux to Fort Bourbon (York Factory) may reflect accounts of long-distance fur trade expeditions by Assiniboine and Cree in the Lake of the Woods area to York Factory in the first decades following the establishment of HBC posts on Hudson’s Bay (Greenberg and Morrison 1982: 83; Ray 1998).\textsuperscript{5}

2.1.3 Early-Contact Alliances, Warfare and Problems of Group Identity

Jacques de Noyon’s 1688 travel to Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods occurred ten years after the first direct French contact with the Assiniboine, when Daniel Greysolon du Lhut met them along the northwestern shore of Lake Superior and attempted to arrange a peace between them and their Sioux neighbors living southwest of Lake Superior (Ray 1998:11). The date of origin and motive for the development of conflict between Assiniboine and other Siouan (mainly Dakota) groups are subject to different and conflicting interpretations (Ray 1998:5-6; Hickerson 1967:44-45).

Although closely related culturally and linguistically to the Dakota and other Siouan-speaking peoples, the Assiniboine involvement in the fur trade during the proto-historic and early-contact periods likely encouraged the development of closer trade relations with neighbouring Algonquian-speaking groups who occupied territories between them and European traders (Ray 1998:6). The establishment of HBC posts on Hudson and James Bay after 1670, particularly the establishment of York Factory as the main post in the early years of the HBC fur trade would have encouraged the development of trade alliances between Assiniboine occupying the Lake of the Woods and Lake Winnipeg regions, and Cree occupying the area from the northern and northwestern shores of Lake Superior to the Hudson Bay Coast (see Map A.7). The growing interdependency and trade alliances between Assiniboine and Cree may have resulted in creating tensions escalating to open warfare with their Siouan neighbours (Bishop 1981, 1994:277; Ray 1998:5-6).

The few sources describing the hostilities in the late 17\textsuperscript{th} and early 18\textsuperscript{th} centuries describes an original alliance between Assiniboine and Cree, later joined by Monsoni, at war with Dakota Sioux. The Sioux were also involved in sporadic warfare with Ojibwa who, along with Ottawa refugees, settled at Chequamegon Bay\textsuperscript{6} in the 1660s, but Ojibwa and Dakota reached a truce in 1679 that lasted until 1736, during which they became trading allies. Hostilities resumed by the mid-1730s as another Ojibwa group called Ouace (likely the descendants of a 17\textsuperscript{th} century proto-Ojibwa group then called Ouasouarini) settled on the northwestern shore of Lake Superior and allied itself with Monsoni, Cree,

\footnote{\textsuperscript{5} Although requiring numerous portages, it is possible to travel from Lake of Woods and Rainy Lake to both York Factory and Fort Albany via, respectively, the Winnipeg River / Lake Winnipeg / Nelson-Hayes River system, and the English River / Lac Seul / Lake St. Joseph / Albany River route (see Map A.8). Greenberg and Morrison (1982:83) note that the Lake of the Woods area is roughly equidistant from York Factory and Fort Albany. Such long-distance travels by Indian trading parties were not uncommon in the late 17\textsuperscript{th} century (PRAXIS Research Associates 1998). The French in fact established trade posts in the interior of northern Ontario in order to intercept Indian trading parties en route to English (HBC) posts established along the shorelines of Hudson and James Bay (PRAXIS Research Associates 1999b:38-40).}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{6} Chequamegon Bay is at the southwest of Lake Superior, forming the northeastern shoreline of the present State of Wisconsin (Stone and Chapt 1978:604).}

The references to the Monsoni in western Lake Superior in the early 1700s are ethnohistorically problematic since a group of people considered to be Cree had been identified by that name near James Bay at the Moose River in 1672 (Bishop 1981:159). Apart from a handful of sources dating to the early 1700s, the Moose river area appears to form the regular territory of these people (Geographic Board of Canada 1913:312). On the other hand, the references describing Monsoni living in the vicinity of Rainy Lake in the early 1700s are too specific and consistent to be dismissed as erroneous. Adding to debates concerning their identity are the facts that Monsoni are invariably identified separately from Cree in western Lake Superior, and that La Vérendrye describes them as “speaking Sauteux” in the 1730s. Some scholars have suggested on this basis that they were one of the groups comprising the early-contact Ojibwa (Greenberg and Morrison 1982:80, 88-90; Dawson 1976).

Greenberg and Morrison (1982) make this determination solely on the basis of linguistic data supplemented by a statement from an origin myth presented in the 1850s by William Warren (1974:87-88). However, neither type of data provide definitive evidence of their Ojibwa identity. The fact that La Vérendrye describes them as speaking Sauteux does not preclude the possibility that they spoke other languages (cf. Praxis Research Associates 1998:62). Bilingualism (or multi-lingualism) seems likely in a context in which groups would either live in close proximity, come into contact during trade voyages to European posts, or serve as economic middlemen between Europeans and other Aboriginal groups residing further inland. For example, some Assiniboine are recorded as speaking Cree, while some Cree are recorded as speaking Assiniboine (Tyrell 1968:123, in Ray 1998:24). While La Vérendrye identifies Ojibwa speakers when reaching Lake of Woods in 1733, he mentions no Ojibwa people living in the area and suggests that the Assiniboine had removed further west:

_We are with the Cree and near the Assiniboine. None of them has yet come to the Fort as they have in some way been made afraid of us._ (In: Burpee 1927:45)

However, by this time a people identified as Ouace were found residing near the Kaministiqua river (near present-day Thunder Bay), and these people were almost certainly descendants of the Ouasaurini ‘nation’ described in 1640 as residing on the northern shore of Lake Huron (Thwaites 1959[18]:229-233), and known to be one of the proto-Ojibwa groups. La Vérendrye’s description of the Monsoni speaking Sauteux may be explained by the appearance and settlement of the (Ojibwa) Ouace people next to them on the western shore of Lake Superior (Bishop 1981:159-160; see Map A.7).

An additional fact inconsistent with identifying the Monsoni as Ojibwa is that the former were clearly allied with Kilistinos and Senipoets (Cree and Assiniboine), while Chippewa settled at Chequamegon since the 1660s had, after reaching a truce in 1679, allied themselves economically as trading partners with Dakota (Hickerson 1967:45). It appears unlikely that one group of Ojibwa...
would ally itself with known enemies of a fellow group of Ojibwa; the Chequamegon-Chippewa and Dakota alliance is ignored by Greenberg and Morrison (1982).

However, the fact that *Monsoni* are consistently distinguished from Cree in original historical documents from the early 1700s (cf. Hickerson 1967:45; Christianson 1984:101-102) is also inconsistent with interpretations attributing them a clear-cut Cree identity. As Bishop (1981:159) remarks, there is no direct evidence linking the western Lake Superior *Monsoni* of the early 1700s to the Moose River / James Bay Monsoni of the late 1600s. Historical sources suggesting wide-ranging relocations of *Monsoni* may be explained by a confusion between *Monsoni* and *Maskagon Cree* (cf. Bishop 1981:159; Geographic Board of Canada 1913:276). The identity of the *Monsoni* has been subject to a long-standing debate between ethnohistorians and anthropologists (Geographic Board of Canada 1913:312; Dawson 1976) and as Ritzenthaler (1978:743) remarks, there may be insufficient data to settle the question definitively. At face value, historical descriptions from the early 1700s suggest they formed a politically autonomous group. This makes a third interpretation of their identity possible, namely, that the western Lake Superior *Monsoni* formed their own ‘nation’ and were simply neither Ojibwa nor Cree in the early 18th century.

### 2.1.4 Western Expansion and Settlement of Ojibwa

While established at Chequamegon on the southern shore of Lake Superior since the latter part of the 17th century, Ojibwa were involved only indirectly in the Dakota / Assiniboine and Cree warfare as the fur trade allies of Dakota between 1679 and 1736 (Hickerson 1967:45). French exploration of western Lake Superior, and French efforts to secure the trade loyalty of Assiniboine and Cree in the area involved a delicate political balancing act given that the French had a well established alliance with Ojibwa dating back to the mid-17th century. A permanent French presence at Chequamegon dates to the establishment of a Jesuit mission there in the 1660s (Stone and Chaput 1978:603).

Within four years of the reporting of *Ouace* settling at the Kaministiqua River, a group of Chippewa was reportedly settled in the Vermillion River area near Rainy Lake (Burpee 1927:233-234, 238). The expansion of Ojibwa west of Lake Superior took place as the result of a break in their trade relations with Dakota in the late 1700s, and their joining the Assiniboine/Cree/Monsoni alliance. The Chippewa establishment at Vermillion River:

> ...was the first reference to Chippewa occupying any area west of Lake Superior, a movement which resulted, by the late 18th century, in Chippewa occupying such major regions as northern Minnesota and western Wisconsin and, by the 19th century, prairie and plains areas even farther west. (Hickerson 1967:45)

This southwestern geographical expansion took place through intermittent warfare with Dakota which lasted beyond the mid-19th century (Ritzenthaler 1978:744; Hickerson 1967:45). Beginning in the mid-18th century, however, the Rainy Lake / Lake of the Woods region would become permanently occupied by Ojibwa as Cree and Assiniboine populations relocated north and northwest

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to the Lake Winnipeg and Nelson River system areas (Ray 1998:20-23; Hickerson 1967:46). The western expansion of Ojibwa and the resumption of war against the Dakota in the mid-1730s is intrinsically linked to the western expansion of the French fur trade, itself resulting from the establishment of HBC posts on Hudson's and James Bay after 1670 (Bishop 1976, 1981:160; Ritzenthaler 1978:744; Christianson 1984:97-98). The establishment of French trade posts west of Lake Superior and of a permanent presence of Europeans in the 18th century are the subject of the following section.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUR TRADE WEST OF SUPERIOR

2.2.1 The French Period (1678-1750s)

Prior to 1670 the Assiniboine and Cree living west and north of Lake Superior were taking part in the French fur trade indirectly, by trading furs for European goods with Ojibwa and Ottawa middlemen (Ray 1978, 1998). As Christianson (1984:96) reports:

*It is difficult to determine exactly when Indians from the Boundary Waters area became involved in the acquisition of European trade goods. There appears to have been a long-range trade in furs as early as 1615 (Waisberg 1977:30-31). The westward movement of the Huron, after their 1649 dispersal from southern Ontario, accelerated trade with Indians to the north and west, that had been conducted since before 1641 (Darziiger 1978). Presumably some French trade goods were reaching Rainy River by this date.*

Before the establishment of HBC posts, the French held a near monopoly of the fur trade in the Upper Great Lakes region and the main fur trade route to French posts along the St. Lawrence followed the northern shores of Lake Superior and Lake Huron (Ray 1998:5; see Map A.8).

The creation of HBC posts presented Cree and Assiniboine groups west of Superior with alternative trade possibilities (Christianson 1984:96). This is particularly true for the Cree who occupied the areas near the Hudson’s and James Bay coasts and who could therefore engage in direct trade with the English. Although distant from any HBC posts in the late 17th century, Cree and Assiniboine in the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region nevertheless had access to York Factory, the largest HBC post at the time - through the Winnipeg River / Lake Winnipeg and Nelson River route (*ibid*). Several examples of long-distance travels by Indian trading parties are recorded in journals of HBC posts during the late 17th century and early 18th century suggesting that the

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7 The exact reasons for these relocations cannot be established definitively. They occurred in a broader context of warfare, population movement, and economic change brought about by the expanding fur trade. Ray (1998) and Bishop (1976, 1981, 1994) have argued that the western relocation of Cree was motivated by their desire to control access to fur trade routes leading to western Hudson Bay. If this is correct the Assiniboine may have followed them due to their political and military alliance and trade dependency.

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practice was occasionally followed by some bands. Examples of occasional long-distance trade are more common for this period than for later periods of the fur trade. As reported in Christianson (1984:97):

_French traders at Green Bay in 1683, reported meeting Indians who had traded for hatchets at the mouth of the Nelson River._

The periphery of the French trade had in fact expanded westward to Lake Superior before the establishment of HBC posts, in the context of the Fur Trade or Beaver Wars of the mid-17th century. Sporadic raids by Iroquois after the destruction of Huronia in 1649 eventually led to the western relocation of Ottawa (originally from Manitoulin and the Georgian Bay area) and some Ojibwa to the area around Lake Superior (mainly the southern shore) and Lake Michigan (ibid). A Jesuit mission and later a trade post were established at Chequamegon in the 1660s, for example, in order to maintain contact with (and continue profiting from) Ottawa and Ojibwa refugees and French allies originally from the Lake Huron region (Stone and Chaput 1978:603; Ritzenthaler 1978:744).

The French trade was based on an itinerant peddling system (en dérouine trade) in which coureurs de bois regularly came into contact with bands residing far from actual trade posts (cf. Foster 1995:417-419). It is likely that the French trade first expanded westward as coureurs de bois attempted to maintain or resume contact with their trading bands (Christianson 1984:98). However after 1670 the French realized that they needed to build trade posts north and west of Lake Superior in order to prevent furs from reaching HBC posts. It is in this context that Lake Superior acquired a strategic importance and that systematic French exploration of the region began (cf. PRAXIS Research Associates 1999b:38-40).

Fort Camanistigoyan, near present-day Thunder Bay, was established in 1678 and the French were exploring the interior region north of Lake Superior by the early 1680s. Realizing that Cree and Assiniboine, among other peoples, could reach the English on James Bay via Lake Nipigon and the Ogoki-Albany river system, Greysolon du Lhut established a fort at Lake Nipigon which successfully intercepted fur trade parties destined for Fort Albany. A letter from du Lhut dated September 10, 1684 explains the importance of establishing the Nipigon trade post:

...all the Savages of the North trust me very much, and on this basis I can promise you that not one of the Savages will be going down to trade with the English on Hudson Bay in the next two years. They all promised me this and are bound to their promise by the presents I gave them. The Kilistinos, the Assinipoulac, the Peoples of the Fir Trees, the Oremens d’Acheliny, the Ointoulbys and the Tabitibis, who comprise all the nations to the west of the North Sea, have promised me that they will come next spring to the fort I had built at the River Mane, at the end of Lake Alempigon, and next summer I will have another built in the country of the Kilistinos, which will block their way entirely. (In Mairgry 1888[6]:51; translated from original French - Aboriginal names original)
It is in this context of western and inland expansion of the French fur trade that explorer-trader Jacques de Noyon travelled to Rainy Lake in 1688.

De Noyon reached the Lac des Christinaux (Rainy Lake) from Fort Caministigoyan and the Kaministiquia River by an inland route that, although seemingly tortuous, presented a more efficient alternative to the Grand Portage - Pigeon River route later adopted by the NWC. De Noyon’s route came to be called the Kaministiquia route and served as the principal trade route to Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods throughout the French period (i.e., until the late 1750s when France abandoned its trade efforts to concentrate on military defences against English attacks). According to Voorhis (1930:8) the Kaministiquia route was ‘forgotten’ (perhaps remained unknown) by the English for about 50 years until it was ‘rediscovered’ by Roderick McKenzie in 1798.8

The French attempted to establish trade posts at both Rainy Lake and Lake of Woods in 1717 but these efforts failed owing to ongoing warfare between Cree and Sioux (Christianson 1984:99). By this time the French were well aware of the existence of a ‘western sea’ (Lake Winnipeg) and hoped to use the posts in part as bases for its direct exploration. However, the Rainy River area was also valued economically in its own right for its rich supply of beaver. A letter by Governor de Vaudreuil written in 1720 reveals that:

If they could establish a post [Rainy River] it would be very advantageous for the trade of this colony, with the “castor gros” which they would obtaim and which is there in abundance. This quality of beaver being necessary for the consumption of the hat trade, they would have their furs which consist principally in the most beautiful martens and “loups cerviers”, and they should engage (the Indians) imperceptibly to come to trade at Kaministiquia and turn them from going to trade at Hudson Bay (Innis 1956:90, in Christianson 1984:100; insert original)

The lack of development in establishing posts in the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region during the 1720s is attributable to the ongoing warfare, because of which the Rainy River area:

...had become essentially a no-man’s land where battles were frequently fought between the Assiniboine-Cree-Ojibwa and the Sioux. (Ray and Freeman 1978:44)

Continued interest in exploring the ‘western sea’ eventually led La Vérendrye to embark in another expedition to Lake of the Woods in 1731. While La Vérendrye himself was forced to winter at Grand Portage that year he successfully sent:

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8 Arthur (1990:13-14) indicates that there were two men working for the Hudsons Bay Company with the name Roderick McKenzie. The first is likely the man referred to above who held a fairly responsible position with the Company. The second was the métis son of Charles McKenzie—a North West Company clerk hired on by the HBC after amalgamation to manage the post at Lac Suel—and his métis wife. This Roderick was educated in Montreal and Red River and was rated by officials as “tolerably steady for a half-breed, but has no right to look higher. He was eventually dismissed from the service and died “a lonely death in a shack near Mattawa.”
...his nephew La Jemeraye to establish a post at the western end of Rainy Lake. La Jemeraye, accompanied by a son of Lavérendrye, one other Frenchman and an Indian guide, erected Fort St. Pierre at present-day Pithers Point, a strategic position at the head of the Rainy River transportation corridor. (Christianson 1984:100)

In the spring of 1732 they were joined by the rest of the expedition and made their way to Lake of the Woods where they established Fort St. Charles on the western shore, which was to become the major French post in the region, and which served as La Vérendrye's headquarters for western explorations (ibid:101).

2.2.2 The Independent / NWC Trade Posts

Records of the French posts have not survived and little data are available concerning the nature and extent of trade involvement by Indians in the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region, or of Indian-European relations. The fact that the region continued to experience sporadic warfare between the Siciux and the Cree/Assiniboine/Monsoni/Chippewa alliance seems to preclude the development of stable trade activities and of Indian-French relations. A report by La Vérendrye dating to 1744 confirms that the four main Indian groups continued to inhabit the region (Hickerson 1967:46).

However, by 1767, when the next information on group distributions is available, the Monsoni are no longer reported in the region and references to this group disappear from historical documents. Given that the Monsoni were considered to have close relations with Cree in the area, it is possible that they became assimilated into Cree bands. An alternative explanation is that the Monsoni and Cree became treated as the same people by English traders arriving in the area, who simply referred to both groups as Cree for convenience (ibid).

The 1767 data are from the journals and memoirs of explorer Jonathan Carver who visited Grand Portage post during a voyage around Lake Superior. At Grand Portage, Carver:

...consulted traders and Indians to get an impression of the interior country. At Rainy Lake (Lac La Phye) there was in residence "a considerable band of Chippewa". Farther west, at Lake of the Woods, Red River, and Lake Winnipeg were Cree and Assiniboine. There is no mention of Monsoni who may well have merged in the traders' minds with Cree. Chippewa, then, by the mid-1760s, had replaced Cree as far west as Rainy Lake, and the history of Chippewa residence in the Rainy Lake region must be considered as dating from Carver's visit. (Ibid; insert original)

A trade post affiliated with the NWC had been established at Grand Portage in 1765, as the gateway to Rainy Lake and Lake of Woods. As presented above, with the French abandonment of the region after 1760, knowledge of the more efficient Kaministiquia trade route appears to have been lost until
Roderick McKenzie’s rediscovery at the end of the century.

The Grand Portage route (and the hardship it involved) is described in an account of a trip to Lake of the Woods by explorer and NWC-trader Alexander Henry (the elder) in 1775:

_The transportation of the goods at this grand portage, or great carrying-place, was a work of seven days of severe and dangerous exertion, at the end of which we encamped on the river Aux Groseilles [Pigeon River]. On the eighth, we ascended the Groseilles, to the carrying place called Portage du Perdrix, where the river falls down a precipice of the height of a hundred feet. Next day, at the Portage aux Outardes, we left the Groseilles, and carrying our canoes and merchandise three miles, over a mountain, came at length to a small lake. This was the beginning of a chain of lakes, extending fifteen leagues, and separated by carrying places of from half a mile to three miles in length. At the end of this chain we reached the heads of small streams which flow to the north-westward. The region of the lakes is called the Hauteur de Terre, or Land’s Height. By the twelfth, we arrived where the streams were large enough to float the canoes. On the twentieth, we reached Lake Sagunac, or Saginaga, distant sixty leagues from Grand Portage. My men were by this time almost exhausted with fatigue; but, the chief part of the labour was fortunately past. We now entered Lake a la Pluie, which is fifteen leagues long, by five broad._ (Henry 1966:239-241; insert added)

At Lake Saginaga⁹, Henry (1966:241) reported that near the site of French post was a former village of Chipewas “destroyed by the Nadowessies” (the Sioux). In its place he found “three lodges, filled with poor, dirty and almost naked inhabitants” from which he traded fish and wild rice (ibid.:241). Passing Rainy Lake, Henry’s expedition next camped at a place called Les Fourches (the Forks) on Rainy River, at another village of Chipewas comprised “of fifty lodges” (ibid.:242).

Thirty days after leaving Grand Portage, Henry finally reached Lake of the Woods:

_...at the entrance of which was an Indian village, of a hundred souls, where we obtained a further supply of fish. Fish appeared to be the summer food._ (Ibid.:242-243)

After describing general trading rituals between Indians and European visitors, Henry reports the specifics of his trade experience with this group. His account demonstrates the importance of wild rice in the local diet, but is unusual in that he describes the village women as active traders (possibly on account of the intoxicated state of the men):

_In a short time, the men began to drink, while the women brought me a further and_

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⁹ This lake forms part of a chain of lakes linking the Pigeon River to Rainy Lake, and is located about 100 kilometers west of Grand Portage.

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very valuable present, of twenty bags of rice. This I returned with goods and rum, and at the same time offered more, for an additional quantity of rice. A trade was opened, the women bartering rice, while the men were drinking. Before morning I had purchased a hundred bags, of nearly a bushel measure each. Without a large quantity of rice, the voyage could not have been prosecuted to its completion... The rice grows in shallow water, and the Indians gather it by shaking the ears into their canoes. (Ibid.:244)

Henry’s account suggests that the trading of rice for goods and rum continued through the night, so that by morning the entire village was intoxicated (women, presumably included). The Canadians in his party took advantage of this situation, creating sufficient tension and potential conflict that Henry considered it safer to leave:

When morning arrived, all the village was inebriated; and the danger of misunderstanding was increased by the facility with which the women abandoned themselves to my Canadians. In consequence, I lost no time in leaving the place. (Ibid.)

Touring Lake of the Woods, Henry described visiting an old French fort and trading-house on the west shore which he says was “formerly frequented by numerous bands of Chipeways” (Ibid.). This was likely Fort St. Charles established in 1732 by La Vérendrye (see above). The only Indians reported encountered by Henry in his travel throughout the Rainy Lake / Lake of the Woods region were Ojibwa, suggesting that Assiniboine and Cree had relocated permanently further west and northwest to Lake Winnipeg by 1775. This is in fact confirmed for the Cree by Henry’s further description of the expedition’s voyage.

Henry eventually reached Lake Winnipeg in this voyage, where at its entrance from the Winnipeg River he met a “large village of Christinaux, a nation which I had not previously seen” (Ibid.:246). His account of these people definitively shows, contrary to Greenberg and Morrison’s (1982) interpretation, that the Christinaux were clearly distinct from Ojibwa:

The name is variously written; as, Cristinaux, Kinisteneaux, Killistinoes and Killistinaux. Lake Winnipegon is sometimes called the Lake of the Killisthions, or Cristinaux. The dress and other exterior appearances of the Cristinaux are very distinguishable from those of the Chipeways and the Wood Indians. (Ibid:247)

Following a lengthy description of male and female forms of dress, and of selective customs, Henry remarks:

The language of the Christinaux is a dialect of the Algonquin, and therefore bears some affinity to that of the Chipeway, which is another dialect of the same. In the north-west, it is commonly called Cree, or Cris. (Ibid:250)
With the permanent occupation of the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region by Ojibwa, warfare with the Sioux shifted further west, and the ensuing stability in the late 18th and early 19th centuries encouraged the NWC to establish additional posts and further develop the fur trade. New trade posts were built at Lac La Pluie next to the old Fort St. Pierre (ca. 1780; Christianson 1984:95), at Portage de l’Isle (1789; near Rat Portage), Escabitchewan (1796) and at Eagle Lake (near present-day Dryden) in 1809 (Ray 1988:338-339). The NWC also established two posts inland at Red Lake (1790) and Lac Seul (1803) (ibid).

The Hudson’s Bay Company began providing direct competition to the NWC in the Rainy Lake area in 1790 with its establishment of ‘Rainy Lake Fort’ near Fort Lac La Pluie. Direct competition between the companies in this area lasted until 1816 when the NWC surrendered its fort to its rival. The HBC would erect a new fort in 1820 which was renamed Fort Frances in 1830. The Fort Frances post would remain in operation until ca. 1900 (Voorhis 1930:157). On Lake of the Woods, the HBC would establish a post at Shoal Lake in 1831 (Ray 1988:338-339).
la Plue fort was the central exchange point between Montreal and the far northwest. In later years, Rainy Lake was a popular stop-over location for various expeditions – as it was along the major transportation route between Lake Superior and the Red River – including Franklin’s Arctic Expedition in 1825 and Dawson’s Red River Expedition in 1858 to survey a route for immigration and settlement of the west in the late 1850s (Doc.#12; Hind 1969; cf. Keating 1959).

The Rainy Lake area was also significant for its natural and abundant growth of canoe birch, and posts in this district became the centre of canoe building for a wide area (Gates 1965:192-3). This canoe manufacture, along with the Lake of the Woods’/Rainy River’s rich resources of wild rice and sturgeon fisheries, further added to the attraction of the area as a prime location for fur trade forts which depended largely on local provisions. Finally, the fact that Ojibwa traditionally gathered along the Rainy River in large numbers for the spring and summer fisheries, and at Manitou Rapids for social, ceremonial and political gatherings, meant that the Rainy Lake site was a natural location for hunters to bring the furs they had trapped during the winter at hunting grounds further afield, or to cement alliances between traders and hunting families (see PRAXIS Research Associates 1996:10-13).

The significance of these factors was the presence of multiple posts in the Rainy Lake vicinity. Throughout the 1800s, several groups contended for furs at various times in the Lac la Plue district: the North West Company (NWC); the X.Y. Company; the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC); the American Fur Company; independent American traders, and; independent traders from the Red River (Gates 1965:190-191). Fur trade records provide evidence pointing to the development of a resident mixed population at each post. As will be discussed throughout this chapter, journals and diaries of North West Company traders, Hudson’s Bay Company journals and reports, and narratives of expeditions contain numerous indicators of men with Aboriginal or métis wives and country-born children. Records also contain references to women and families “of the fort”, as well as direct references to half-breed Company employees or independent fur traders.

3.1.1 Direct References to Métis in the Lac la Plue District

Use of the term ‘half breed’ in the HBC Lac la Plue journals begins in 1817-1818. Before this time, the use of the ambiguous term “Canadian” is frequent, and positive identification of a métis presence is implied, but not certain. Donald McPherson first uses the term ‘half breed’ in relation to his search for a good interpreter, an occupation commonly held by métis (see Section 3.3.2, below):

I have three half Breeds but none of them are capable to interpret three words with those Indians to perfection and indeed what they understand they are too bashful to speak... (Doc.#5, fo.33d)

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10 With the establishment of fur trade posts, missionaries also saw opportunity in the Rainy Lake area. However, missionary activity by both Catholics and Wesleyans was intermittent and generally unsuccessful. Apparently there is little historical information available on this subject, and Moss (1979:15-16) indicates that the only mention of métis is the presence in the 1840s of two métis missionaries, Peter Jacobs (Pate-tah-se-gay) and Henry Steinham.

In his District report for the same Outfit, McPherson identifies Edward McKay as "a Half Breed" (Doc.#6, fo.1). The term half breed was also used by Robert McKenzie in his reference to Louis Cadotte, who was both "Clerk and Interpreter at War Road" in 1820 (Doc.#9, fos.58d-59). In 1822, John McLoughlin reported that the American Fur Company "engaged a half Breed of the place" to help at their Rainy Lake post on the other side of the river (Doc.#11, fos.4-4d).

By 1825, the phrase "native of the country" is frequently used to identify métis, particularly in the more official District Reports in which servants were listed and evaluated. This is evident in the report by J.D. Cameron dated 1825-26 (quoted in Section 3.3.1 below). Cameron also used this terminology in his journal, on January 14, 1826, for example:

...That the two men sent to Red River have perished there can be no longer any doubt, but whether in going to or coming from R.R. and whether they have been lost on the ice of Lake of the Woods, in the Riviere aux Roseaux, or in the Plains – we have got to learn... these two lads were both natives of the country. One was brought up in Canada, the other at St. Maries – The latter whose name was Louis Goullez I had taken last summer at Y.F. [York Factory] thinking he might prove an useful man with Indians... The other whose name was Louis Rivet... was Steersman of my Boat. Goullez was a middleman. (Doc.#14, fos.17-17d, emphasis and insert added)

In 1828, Cameron notes that four men, "all Natives of the Country," were accompanying McMurray to his winter post at Bois Blanc (Doc.#18, fo.2). While it is possible that Cameron preferred this phrasing to the more pejorative term 'half-breed' (he was the father of two half breed sons), it is more likely that 'half-breed' was used to denote racial origin, while 'native of the/this country' identified geographic origin – for example, within the local area. On at least one occasion Cameron combined the two terms, reporting on the American Fur Company in 1832:

... Their force is Messrs LaRose, Le Combe, Cadotte Masters, Crebassa BookKeeper, and Jos. Montinelle Interpreter. Two half Breeds Natives of this Place and four Canadians... (Doc.#22, fo.3d, emphasis added)

Only one instance of the term brulé was found, used in an anecdotal account, as follows:

March 27 [1830] ...Yesterday morning I saw Guimont's Dog on the other side. This evening the Man went across & asked for his dog – but was refused, the Interpreter telling him that he traded the dog from Guimont's mother or Lapin. As we knew that Beaulieu was sending off his Interpreter to M[?], Guimont asked one of his

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11 In 1850, a métis man by the name of Louis Cadotte was listed as a member of the Batchewana Band; he was also an interpreter at the negotiations of the Robinson-Huron Treaty (PRAXIS Research Associates 1999b:76,80).

12 Goullez and Rivet were both soon found, alive and well.

...comrades to accompany him and they would go & pass the night above the rapids in order to meet the others tomorrow morning...
March 28. My two lads met the Yank party of three men & a woman (the Yank Interpreter's wife)... [a "scuffle" ensued] ...I do not know what my neighbour [Beaulieu] will think of the business when he hears of it. As for myself I look upon it in no other light than a trifling quarrel between two Brutés with which the Interest of the companies had nothing to do. (Doc.#19, fo.39d, emphasis added)

3.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEDENTARY MÉTIS POPULATION

Instances are found in the earliest HBC Lac la Pluie journals in which the trading post is referred to as a "settlement." For example, when John McKay first arrived to establish a HBC post at Rainy Lake, in the months which followed in the first Outfit of 1793-94 he makes several references to the North West Company post as the "French" or "Canadian" settlement. While the term "settlement" should not be construed as synonymous with "community", it does connote a recognizably sedentary resident population:

September 23: Campd at the foot of the last (?) between here and the French Settlement.
September 28: ...An hour after I arrived 3 Canoes of Indians came to me from Lake du Bos, I traded from two of them... they then proceeded on their Journey to the Canadian Settlement, two Canadians likewise came from the Settlement above to learn where I intended to Settle, they stade [sic] about two hours with me then Returned. (Doc.#1, fos.5d,6d)

McKay then built his post somewhere "below" the Canadian settlement and was soon in business trading with and giving debt to Indians and by winter, he had a full crew of servants.

The diary of Hugh Faries\(^\text{13}\) written in 1804-05 indicates that approximately thirty men regarded the NWC Lac la Pluie post as their residence. Besides the men there were Indian or half breed women, partners of the clerks and men, and also younger offspring of these unions, all members of what Nute terms a "community" (Gates 1965:192). In total, the North West Company was supporting twelve to fifteen hundred women and children in their various settlements, who according to Reverend Daniel Haskell, were wholly, or in part, of Indian extraction (in ibid.). The NWC eventually encouraged a policy of what Brown (1980:70) labels "fur trade endogamy" in which the Company was the endogamous unit:

\(\text{They have become so numerous, as to be a burden to the concern; and a rule has}\)

\(\text{13 It is uncertain whether Hugh Faries or Thomas McMurray was the author of this diary. According to Grace Nute who wrote the "Introductory Note" to the diary, certainty of the author "matters little... since he was obviously in charge only when his superior, [Archibald] McLellan, was absent" (Gates 1965:190).}\)

\(\text{PRAXIS Research Associates 1999: Historic MÉTIS – Rainy River / Kenora}\)
been established, that no person, in the service of the company, shall hereafter take a woman from among the Natives to reside with him, as a sufficient number, of mixed blood, can be found, who are already connected with the company. There are, also, in the N.W. country, many superannuated Canadians, who have spent the flower of their days in the service of the company, who have families that they are unwilling to leave. (In Lamb 1957:5).

By 1817, Rainy Lake was targeted by the NWC as the favoured location for a settlement where retired servants and their native families could establish permanent homes, farms, industry, and schools, a plan with an apparent long-term goal of self-sufficiency (ibid.:5-6; Giraud 1986:271). However, this plan was never fully realized due to the bitter trade struggles between the NWC and the HBC, and the subsequent amalgamation into the HBC in 1821 (Van Kirk 1980:51).

Economically and politically, post masters relied on their Aboriginal or métis wives to perform the important task of cementing relations between the Aboriginal society which produced the furs, and the European society which traded for furs. Such alliances were important to both sides of the fur trade, and there are known instances of Aboriginal fathers purposefully seeking white or métis husbands for their daughters as a means of securing family ties with a post and its supplies. One such case is recorded by J.D. Cameron at Lac la Pluie in a journal entry dated October 6, 1831:

...The only one that does [the Indians] a little credit is the Little Deer one of our grander Chiefs – he is a good hunter and an honest Indian but expensive – finding an Interpreter on the opposite side for a son in law is his principle motive for changing sides – He does not like to give his daughters to Indians... (Doc.#21, fo.5, insert added)

However, as Arthur (1990) argues, a social and family life was also a necessary part of personal and emotional survival for men in isolated fur trade environments. Both NWC and HBC records provide evidence of resident populations of fur traders and their Aboriginal or métis wives and children, and of social interaction among and between families belonging to competing posts. In his introduction to the journal of Daniel William Harmon – NWC post manager ca. 1820 – Lamb (1957:xviii) notes that “to counteract this loneliness, letters were exchanged at every opportunity, and frequent visits were paid to neighbouring trading-posts.” Nute characterizes this social life as follows:

The long days of work were relieved by diversions and amusements in which the voyageurs found whole-hearted enjoyment. Dances, frequently held on Sunday evenings, are mentioned again and again. There was a special celebration on New Year’s Day, as was customary among French Canadians. Even feuds were forgotten during festivities; the daily rivals of two companies played together and their clerks dined together on Sundays, just as though they did not on other occasions use bodily violence to gain ascendancy in the gathering of furs. (In Gates 1965:193)

The following section (3.2.1) provides a description of domestic life and social interaction
among and between fur trade families and examples are presented as indicators of a sense of community possibly shared by these families. Section 3.2.2 focuses on the role of women identified as members of the post or fort ‘community.’

3.2.1 Social Interaction among Post Families

In 1794, a Mr. Boyer14 and his family established a competing trading house near to where McKay had built the Hudson’s Bay Company post. Over the following months, McKay records several instances of social interaction between the two families, beginning with Boyer’s first visit:

_April 8-9: ...Mr. Boyer and family arrived here on a visit... Early this morning Mr. Boyer went away, he means to Settle here Next fall, his men is already begun Squaring timber for the house, which they intend to bring Down in a raft... (Doc.#1, fo.16d-17)_

_October 22-23: ...[Boyer] fixed on a spot for his house which is about 200 yds below mine exactly in the road of the Indians... the Canadians clearing a place for their house about 50 yards lower than the place fixed on yesterday, last night Mr Boyer changed his mind... set the men to work to cut a path between the two houses which Mr. Boyer took very kindly... October 29: ...invited Mr. Boyer & family to breakfast & dinner they are six in number. (Doc.#2, fos.6, 7, insert added)_

On All Saints Day, and then again on Christmas Day in 1794, the two post settlements celebrated together, during the latter of which McKay draws attention to a “Negroe” fiddler:

_November 1: ...gave the men my bottles on account of their inviting my neighbours [Boyer’s?] men to a feast they had prepared on purpose for them. I think it was very pretty & neighbourly in the men it is an example to many in this Country. (Doc.#2, fo.7)_

_December 25: ...I invited [Mr. Boyer] & family to breakfast & Dinner. my men invited his at 10 am... Mr. Boyer invited me & men to a dance but the Negroe [sic] who played on the fiddles got beastly drunk and spoiled our diversion... (Doc.#2, fo.13, inserts added)_

During the rivalry between the NWC and X.Y. Company at Rainy Lake in the early 1800s, Fairies’ diary documents numerous instances of Sunday dinners and dances shared by both post populations, as well as celebrations on days such as All Saints Day, Christmas and New Years Day. Numerous examples of such activity which took place between December 1804 and May 1805,

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14 It is uncertain from the information available in the HBCA records whether Boyer was with one of other fur companies or whether he was an independent trader. However, McKay’s references to the “Canadian settlement” and to Boyer as the “master” there, suggests that this may have been a relocation of the NWC post which was already established in the Rainy Lake area. After 1794, Boyer is no longer mentioned, and by 1796 Peter Grant was the NWC master at Lac la Pluie.

Tuesday [Dec.] 25th ...Some of the X.Y men came down, Mr. Lacombe came down at 1 o'clock and went home about dusk...

Tuesday 1st Jan 7th The men paid me a visit very early. I treated them as usual on such a day. They went up to the X.Y.'s and came home to breakfast. All the X.Y. men came down to our house and remain'd all day. The men were very quarrelsome and had 4 or 5 battles.

Sunday [Feb.] 3rd ...2 of Mr. Grant's men... had a dance and bought some rum...

Sunday [Feb.] 10th ...Mr. Lacombe invited me to dinner...

Sunday [Feb.] 24th In the evening Mr. Lacombe paid me a visit. The men had a frolick, and kept up till 3 o'clock in the morning.

Sunday [March] 31st In the evening had a visit from the X.Y. people and Mrs. Lacombe. They danced till near 12 o'clock...

Sunday [May] 12th We had a visit from Mr. Lacombe and his wife. The latter remain'd untill about 12 o'clock at night dancing.

Friday [May] 17th ...four of the X.Y. Clerks, & as many of their men paid us a visit. They danced with our people till near day light.

Dances hosted by one post and to which the opposing post personnel and families were invited, were a common event throughout the early 1800s as well. In October 1818, HBC post manager Donald McPherson wrote that there was "a dance at the NW Fort, several of our Mens Wives went to it" (Doc.#8, fo.6d). In the spring of 1825, then post manager J.D. Cameron recorded a farewell dance again hosted by the NWC post. It is also evident that at times the posts helped each other with the transport of family members:

May 19: ...Mr. Morrison came and invited us to a Ball as he intends going off Saturday. He is to take my [Cameron's] two Sons to St. Maries and put them to a Yankee School there...

May 21: Morrison took his Departure about 12 OClock for Mackinac. His Canoe came across and embarked my two boys. (Doc.#12, fo.17d, insert added)

In October 1831, Cameron describes another dance at which a "Yankee fiddler" was invited to provide the music. This dance was attended by the personnel of the HBC and the American Fur Company "on the other side" of Rainy River. Cameron specifically mentions the attendance of

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15 Members of both the Red Sky Métis Independent Nation (Thunder Bay) and the Kenora Métis Community Council spoke of fiddle music and dances (rendezvous) as characteristically métis. While métis today might suggest that the presence of fiddle music implies that this dance in 1831 was a métis event, this factor alone is insufficient to draw such a conclusion. The fiddle was a popular musical instrument among a variety of culture groups, as is evident in the quote cited earlier (dated December 25, 1794) in which the fiddler is identified as "the Negroe" (Doc.#2).

LaRose and LeComble [LeCombe?] – both of whom were family members of a local freeman (Doc.#19. fo.29d), and probably métis:

...My Bucks got over the Yankee fiddler tonight along with Messrs. LaRose & LeComble also three or four of their men, and their ladies of course. I allowed them to dance the greater part of the night... (Doc.#21, fo.9)

3.2.2 “Women of the Fort”

North West Company and Hudson’s Bay Company records from the first half of the 19th century indicate that Aboriginal or métis wives of traders and post employees were considered as members of the post settlement at Rainy Lake. The women associated with their respective posts were either the wives or partners of men currently serving at the post, or they may have been the wives of retired servants’ who had left them in the care of the post. As indicated earlier, “in most cases when traders retired or even when transferred to a distant post, it was considered best for all concerned that some modest provision should be made for the woman and their children, and that they remain in the surroundings to which they were accustomed. According to Lamb (1957:xv), “Half-breed wives rarely left the Indian country.” It is possible that in some cases these women were actually hired on as servants of the post, as was seemingly done by J.D. Cameron in 1828:

...We have an Indian whom we call Akeewaince who has been brought up in and about our Forts since his infancy. He has sometimes served as a hired servant, and every summer is always employed to go above with the Interpreter... His mother (a half Breed), a hired Servant and one of my present Fishermen... (Doc.#18, fo.10d, emphasis added)

There are numerous references to these women collectively as “the women of the fort” and to their engaging as a group in activities aimed at provisioning the post families. Women are specifically mentioned in relation to three seasonal activities: maple sugar harvesting in the spring; gardening – specifically hoeing and digging potatoes – in late summer and autumn, and; snaring rabbits in the winter. While the first seems to have been a job almost exclusive to the women, the latter two appear to have been activities engaged in by both women and men of the post. In some instances women seem to have been assigned certain tasks by the post-master – digging potatoes, for example. Other activities – such as sugar-making and rabbit snaring – appear to have been voluntary. These latter two tasks are consistent with the types of work performed by women in the traditional Ojibwa division of labour, and indicate that the fort women learned these skills from Aboriginal mothers.

In early spring, the women would typically be out making maple sugar. For example, at the

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16 There are also cases in which traders refused to leave their families behind, and they either took them along to their new posting – as did Daniel Harmon when he moved with his métis wife Elizabeth Duval and their children from New Caledonia to Lac la Pluie in 1819 – or upon retirement they found means to settle in fur trade country (Lamb 1957:xiii-xv).

following provisions: "This week 107 White Fish, 50 Suckers, 26 Sturgeon and 85 Hares [in]
exclusion of the Hares taken by the women which is nigh about 200 since they began..." (Doc.#12,
fo.5d). On the 25th of November 1826, J.D. Cameron recorded that his family had snared a total of
80 hares; in the same month the following year, he reports that his family snared 150 hares (Doc.#17,
fos.7, 30). In 1829 and again in 1830, Cameron attributes the success of the family’s rabbit-meat
resources to the snaring skills of his Aboriginal wife: "My old Lady was out all day setting
Snares...", and "In this week my old Huntress had taken 200 Hares..." (Doc.#19, fos.26, 39d).

Occasional references are made to "the women" engaged in other odd jobs around the post.
In November 1804, the manager of the NWC post "gave a few parchment Skins, to the women to
dress" and in December "the women netted 3 p" Snow Shoes (Gates 1965:219; 221). At the HBC
post in the summer of 1829, "the women of the fort" are reported to have "gone for berries (Doc.#19,
fo.9). In January 1830, the women were apparently out ice fishing: "Chatelin & a man went to the
little Peche to if the women there have gathered any fish. They came with about a dozen of Pikes"
(Doc.#19, fo.31).

3.3 MÉTIS WINTERERS, OCCUPATIONS AND HARVESTING ACTIVITIES

Métis offspring of European-Aboriginal unions were more than simply a side-effect of fur
trade relations. It was soon apparent that these "natives of the country" possessed cultural, social and
language skills that created a unique role or niche for these individuals as active participants in the
fur trade. Not only were métis able to communicate between and hence bridge the two cultures, they
were also socialized into and acquired the specific skills of each culture which were solely fur-trade
related. This is particularly true for first-generation métis who, unlike their fathers and mothers,
experienced life only within the context of the fur trade. From an occupational point of view, this
made métis desirable for hire as interpreters, winterers, runners, canoe-builders, and country-food
providers. In 1818, Donald McPherson rated métis and "Canadians" as the fur trade’s most excellent
employees:

The Canadians in general are excellent good men, active and capable, most
particularly in the management of a Canoe. I even find them (?) to satisfy with
respect of provisioning than those poor people that comes now from the Orkney... I
find them for my part, far superior to all our people / the Half Breeds excepted /
(Doc.#6, fo.9d)

HBC Chief Factor James Tate recommended in 1819, the hiring of métis men as key to competing
against the Northwest Company traders (the 'Canadians') at Long Lake:

...having only one man [Jacob Daniel] who could search for and find out Indians to
oppose to a number of Canadians who were equally capable of that duty, little could

17 Arthur (1990:11) states that unlike most HBC officers who took métis wives, Cameron's wife was Indian.
be expected... It is true I had some good men besides J. Daniel but none who could find their way through the woods, etc. but him. In my opinion the trade of this District might be greatly increased by sending a sufficient number of half-breeds who would be able to [comp?] with those of the Canadians. (Doc.#7, fo.7d, insert and emphasis added)

The following sections present evidence of métis as winterers, of the particular occupational niche métis held at Lac la Pluie, and of the harvesting activities in which métis engaged on behalf of the post.

### 3.3.1 Métis Winterers in the Lac La Pluie District

Lac la Pluie Post journals and Rainy Lake District reports contain references to a group of individuals labelled as ‘winterers’ and to post activities related specifically to “wintering.” The ‘winterer’ designation is historically more restrictive as it was used to refer to a specific occupational ‘class’ of fur hunters and trappers comprised largely of French Canadians and including some persons of mixed European and Aboriginal descent.

As discussed by Peterson (1981:145), the term is a direct translation of the French word *hivernants* used to describe an occupational class of “experienced voyageurs handling the bow and stern of the canoes who were sufficiently familiar with Indians and their languages as to follow hunters to their winter camps.” Fur trade companies hired winterers who were then allocated sufficient provisions to last the winter while residing at isolated outposts. Generally, records indicate that winterers were sent to outposts in October, returning to the main post sometime in May or June with the season’s “returns” (furs collected). At Lac la Pluie it appears that the term “wintering” was applied more generally to anyone who spent the winter at the main post or who was assigned to outposts for the winter. There is evidence that in some cases winterers took their families with them to the outpost, while in others they left their families in the security of the main post.

Only occasional reference to wintering was found in the earlier HBC journals for Lac la Pluie, revealing little to no information about who wintered or what the job entailed. In September 1793, John McKay camped “a little below the house Mr. Sutherland [a competing trader] Wintered in last year about a mile From the Indians” (Doc.#1, fo.2, insert added). In October 1795, an “old woman & sons” served as guides to “the Trader that Winters on [Eagle] Lake... he is a Brother in law to Cameron of Red Lake...” (Doc.#3, fo.3d, insert added).

However, for the HBC Outfit 1818-1819, the journal provides a list of families wintering at Lake la Pluie and its dependencies. In addition to 35 single men, the list shows a total of seven families including fourteen children:

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18 In the 19th century the term ‘winterers’ was commonly used in reference to the practice by Plains métis of ‘wintering over’ in hunting and fur trapping camps in the course of annual migrations to summer buffalo hunting grounds (Burley et al. 1992:22).

*PRAXIS Research Associates 1999: Historic Métis – Rainy River / Kenora*
Lac la Pluie:  Albert Logan: Chief Master (& wife + 6 children)
Donald McPherson: Master (& wife + 1 child)
Mr. Godin: Clerk (& wife)
George Yarns: Interpreter (& wife + 1 child)
Ambros Martineau: Carpenter (& wife + 5 children)
Bands [sp?]: Laborer, (& wife)
Dudley: Laborer (& wife + 1 child)

Whitefish Lake: Mr. Bouck [Buck?]: Clerk in charge (& wife). (Doc.#8, fo.3d)

At this point in the fur trade history, it can be assumed that the wives of these men were either Aboriginal or métis (cf. Brown 1980). While it is also possible that some of the men were métis and/or Aboriginal themselves, certainly a majority, if not all, of the fourteen children were of mixed parentage.

In October 1824, both HBC and American winterers set out from their respective posts at Rainy Lake. “Mr. McGillivray” – possibly the métis son of Archibald McGillivray (cf. Lamb 1957:111) – had apparently taken his family with him, but when his canoe “broke” along the way, he sent them back to the HBC post. Morrison – master of the American post – sent several men to War Road:

...On last Sunday Mr. McGillivray started for his wintering grounds. He did not go far that day. The next morning he broke his canoe at the Grand Detroit when of course he was obliged to put ashore from thence he sent two men with a letter to Me wherein he offers me his Services to pass the Winter here... McG’y sent back his family on the 6th... McMurray started this morning for his Wintering Post... On Thursday Mr. Morrison [rival trader] sent off Davenport with four men in a Laden Canoe to Winter at War Road... (Doc.#12, fo.4)

In his district report for Outfit 1825-26, J.D. Cameron identifies the following winterers as ‘native of the country’ (i.e. métis):

William Sinclair is a native of this country... A wife & and infant daughter besides a son of Chief Factor McKenzie’s going on three years. Winters with myself.

Nicholas Chatelain Interpreter. This man is the first of his class in the indian country because he is a very sober man, a rare virtue among Interpreters... Has a wife & two children. Winters with myself.

Jean Bte. Augee Interpreter, Guide, Canoe Maker and indeed everything else that is wanted of him about a Fort. Born in Red River brought up in Canada & returned to the Country in 18[70?]2... Has an active old wife & a useful woman for the Fort. Winters with myself.

Praxis Research Associates 1999: Historic Métis - Rainy River / Kenora 34
William McKay. A Native of the country... a wife and infant son. Winters with Mr. Clousten [at "the mouth of the river" or Hungry Hall].

For the Outfit 1832-33, Chatailain was sent to winter at "the mouth of the river" and a man by the name of Primeau was sent to Shoal Lake, each with two assistants (Doc.#22, fo.3). In 1837-38, J. Ibister arrived back at the rain post in June after a winter spent at Lac des Bois Blanc (Lake of the Woods), and in July a Mr. Taylor and his family left for the Southern Department where he was "appointed to winter" (Doc.#26, fos.1,4).

There is a gap in the Lac la Plue journals between 1838 and 1875, and the only evidence of winterers is found in a miscellaneous file which contains the following list of "Advances in Lake Superior District... Winterers of Lac la Plue, North Dept., Oct. 3, 1858" (Doc.#27):

To: Louis Chastellain
Joseph Chastellain
Ogeustron [sp?] Gemo
Frs. Gemo
John Jordan
Robert Pither

The surname "Chastellain" is a variant spelling of "Chatelain". It is possible that Louis and Joseph are offspring of metis Nicholas Chatelain who was the Interpreter at Lac la Plue from 1824 until at least 1838, and who in 1825 is recorded to have had a family of two children (Doc.#15, fo.13d). That Chatelain's name is spelled "Chastellain" in the 1834 journal, and the fact that Nicholas remained in the area representing the Rainy River half breeds at the 1875 Treaty negotiations, increases the probability that Louis and Joseph might be family members (Doc.#25, fo.12d; Doc.#29).

The HBC journal covering the years 1875 to 1884 does not refer to employees as winterers (HBCA B.105/a/22). However, frequent references are made to post servants doing "winterer" types of work. In December 1879 and January 1880, Louis Jourdain was almost constantly on the move between Lac la Plue and "the Long Sault" and "Mickinackaboans" [sp?] to collect furs. Likewise, Scott Taylor and Josie Grineau worked as a team collecting furs during the winter of 1879. In June 1880, Joseph Jourdain with 13 men started to the Long Sault with the Returns received from the 1879-80 Outfit. In November 1880, Charlie Grineau travelled to the Long Sault and in May 1882

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19 Apparently the outpost "at the mouth of the river" was officially named Fort Louise, but later came to be generally known as Hungry Hall (HBCA SF Rat Portage n.d.:15). Cameron's journal for 1825-26 indicates that this was a nickname given by William Clousten, the master of that outpost: "...In the afternoon arrived Mr. McMurray's family from White Fish Lake & McKay's wife and child. A Canadian & and Indian brought them up. This is the 5th day since they left Hungry Bay Hall as Clousten humorously calls his House" (Doc.#14, fo.29d).

20 This journal is not page or folio numbered, and is difficult to read. Hand notes were taken, but photocopies were not ordered, and hence are not appended to this report.

he accompanied William Morriseau to “visit the Indians in the Lake to the North.” In April 1882 W. Morriseau returned from Hungry Hall, and in May 1884 he and Joe Bissinous [sp?] left “to visit the Indians in the Lake” (ibid.).

3.3.2 Métis Occupations and Harvesting Activities

One of the first roles for which métis were recognized as particularly suited, was that of interpreter. Having learned English or French from their fathers, and the local Aboriginal language from their mothers, métis children acquired both the linguistic and social skills to communicate between the two groups. Of the eleven men identified as interpreters at Lac la Pluie, three are positively métis, and the journals suggest that most, if not all of the remainder were probably métis. Nicholas Chatelain was likely the most well known and highly regarded of HBC interpreters at Lac la Pluie:

*Nicholas Chatelin /a Half-Breed / Interpreter is an acquisition to the Post – Speaks the Saulteux Language well and is feared by the Natives, and is perfectly acquainted with the Geographical part of the Country, more particularly to the North (?) of Lac La Pluie, in that he is a man that ought not to be lost sight of.* (Doc.#13, fos.4d-5)

Individuals such as “Young Roy” and “Vincent Roy” were hired by the American Fur Company as interpreters. While not explicitly identified as métis, these two men — along with LaRose and LeCombe — belonged to the extended family of “Old Roy”, a freeman who lived near the Lac la Pluie posts (Doc.#19, fo.29d). “Young Roy” apparently worked as interpreter for both the HBC and American posts at different times, and there is a sense that he was a local man available for hire by whomever needed him or could offer the best wages. The idea that posts in the same location competed for good interpreters is evident also in the case of François Mainville, who in 1826 is described by Cameron as the American’s “best Interpreter” (Doc.#16, fo.1). In 1828, Cameron announced that “Mr. McMurray”, the HBC master of the White Fish Lake outpost, “hired Mainville as an Interpreter – He was, without exception, the best Servant the Americans had” (Doc.#18, fo.12d).

Interpreter duties were not necessarily exclusive to a single man at the post, nor was interpreting the only job an “Interpreter” performed. Logically, if several métis were working at a post at any particular point in time, those with good language skills would be called upon to act as interpreter when needed. This seemed to be the case in 1794 when Donald McPherson “appointed Thomas Norm, master at the River Mouth [and] left Thomas Favill with him for an Interpreter” (Doc.#2, fo.2). In October 1795, McPherson sent Norm and Favill “off in pairs to collect furs from Indians’ tents” (Doc.#3, fo.26).

A number of journal entries made between the years 1797 and 1837 describe resource harvesting activities in which interpreters were engaged:

*December 2-8 [1796] ...Tom Favill came home with 14 Pheasants, 1 Rabbit, and 6*
Partridges... Tom Favill got 1 fox and 6 rabbits. Tom Norn 10 Rabbits and Willm Tullauch 7 Rabbits... (Doc.#4, fo.12)

April 16 [1897]... Tom Favill shooting 20 ducks and 2 Gray Geese... (Doc.#4, fo.21)

February 18 [1826]... Châtealin brought 14 White fish... (Doc.#14, fo.19d)

October 3-15 [1831]... The two Interpreters making nets...; Interpreters making nets – Auger repairing & making harnesses, the others with the women at the potatoes...; got a small outfit made up for the mouth of the river to be under the charge of Chasteilain the Interpreter... (Doc.#21, fos.4d,5,9)

June 19 [1837]... Mr. J. Isbister [Interpreter] returned from a Sturgeon Trade at River la Seine, bringing with him a tolerable supply of dried pounded Sturgeon and oil – caught 24 Sturgeons with our Seines. (Doc.#26, fo.2)

As mentioned previously, the Rainy Lake region was known for its canoe-birch resources, and posts in the area employed men who were skilled in canoe manufacture to build the craft for use in the entire district. In 1805, the North West Company had on staff a man by the name of “old Amelle” who was “hired primarily, it would seem to make canoes. The frames for ninety canoes were constructed by him, according to one entry in [Hugh Faries'] diary” (Nute, in Gates 1965:193). At the HBC post in 1822, Jean Baptiste Auger [Auger?] – a métis – was the resident canoe builder, as well as cooper (Doc.#10, fo.3; cf. Doc.#15). In 1832, Auger was sent off on other duties, and Jourdain – also métis – replaced him as canoe builder:

Auger started early this morning for Mr. Stuart’s at Bas de La Riviere where he remains until the Governor leaves Red River and is to be his guide to Fort William this season. [...] Jourdain who is to be employed this spring as canoe maker, in the place of Auger, arrived with his wife from White Fish Lake... (Doc.#21, fo.21, cf. Doc.#15)

Throughout the 19th century, métis employees such as Thomas Favill, J.B. Auger, Nicholas Chatelin [sic], William Sinclair, William McKay, Louis Rivet, Louis Goulez, Bte. Jourdain, Jos. Grineau, and Joseph Guimont [Guimond?] are recorded as engaged in a variety of post-related activities such as: fishery operation, net making, subsistence hunting, cord-wood cutting, squaring lumber, house and store-room construction, keg making, canoe building, as well as harvesting grain and vegetables. However, these activities were not engaged in exclusively by métis who appear to have served as “jacks-of-all-trades” often alongside non-métis apprentices, post-masters and clerks.

While the evidence of the development of distinctive self-identity possessed by métis in the Rainy Lake district is indirect and vague for much of the fur-trade period, by 1875 when the Adhesion to Treaty No. 3 was signed, it is clear that a strong sense of distinctiveness and community had emerged among at least one group of métis under the leadership of Nicholas Chatelaine. This
emergence of métis distinctiveness in the Fort Frances area is the focus of discussion in the following section.

3.4 TREATY NO. 3, THE HALF-BREED ADHESION, AND MÉTIS DISTINCTIVENESS

In 1871 the Privy Council of Canada authorized a commission to treat with the Ojibwa living along the Rainy River and on Lake of the Woods for the surrender of their lands to the Crown. According to Alexander Morris, the Treaty No.3 chief commissioner (1991[original 1880]:44):

_This step had become necessary in order to make the route known as “the Dawson route... secure for the passage of emigrants and of the people of the Dominion generally,” and also to enable the Government to throw open for settlement any portion of the land which might be susceptible of improvement and profitable occupation._

(quotations marks original)

Although the Rainy River/Lake of the Woods Ojibwa did not sign a treaty with the Crown until 1873, the Dawson Route was already under construction in 1871 when the Wolseley Military Expedition passed through the area on its way to Red River to deal with the Riel uprisings. At this time, a number of “Indians of Rainy Lake” were paid annuities for allowing the Expedition to pass through their lands. In his report on the North-West Angle Treaty (No.3), Morris makes reference to these payments as “having been paid the Indians the first year the Dawson route was used” (ibid.:49). Of significance to the present discussion is that included among these “Indians”, was a separate and clearly identified list of nine families (49 individuals) called the “Halfbreeds of Fort Frances” who were also paid annuities in October 1871. Five of the families listed share the surname “Jourdain”; other family names listed are “Mainville”, “Morriseau”, “Linklater” and “Ritchot” (Doc.#28, p.71). This indicates that in the nascent period of treaty discussions in the region, there already existed a distinct and to some extent recognized métis group at Fort Frances.

Analyses of métis involvement in North West Angle Treaty (No.3) negotiations in 1873, and of the Half-Breed Adhesion in 1875 have been provided to the Ministry in previous reports (Moss 1979; McNab 1984). The full detail of these analyses will not be repeated here; rather, the following sections discuss how these two events further demonstrate the emergence of a distinct métis identity as well as the development of métis community beyond the fur trade.

3.4.1 Indicators of Métis Identity: Treaty No. 3 Negotiations

Parties to Treaty No.3 acknowledged that an important role had been played by the métis in attendance during the negotiation process. However, McNab (1984:24) concludes that their role was “as facilitators rather than direct participants in the final negotiations.” Despite the fact that métis had accepted annuity payments in 1871, there is no evidence that this group attempted to negotiate directly with Alexander Morris, nor is there any indication that the métis individuals who attended represented a collective aimed at inclusion within the treaty. Rather, métis individuals acted as...
interpreters, reporters and witnesses, and – according to McNab – did not directly influence the decisions made by either the Ojibwa or Government signatories.

However, the seeming forcefulness of the chief Ojibwa spokesman Mawedopenais’ statement at the end of three difficult days of negotiation, that “I wish you to understand you owe the treaty much to the Half-breeds” implies that métis had some real influence, although the extent and nature of this influence is not explained (Morris 1991:65). The fact that several métis delegates were invited to the ultimate Ojibwa council that resulted in breaking the stalemate between the Ojibwa and the Commissioners, and that allowed an agreement to be reached the following day, reinforces such an interpretation. Governor Morris’ reply to Mawedopenais that, “I know it,” may imply that this influence was felt by both sides of the negotiation table. Considering that this was at least the third attempt in as many years to get a treaty with the Saulteaux Ojibwa east of Manitoba, Taylor (1983:161) suggests that the influence of the métis was “a crucial factor.” In his official report, Commissioner Morris states:

Before closing this despatch, I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the hearty co-operation and efficient aid the Commissioners received from the Metis [sic] who were present at the Angle, and who, with one accord, whether of French or English origin, used the influence which their relationships to the Indians gave them, to impress them with the necessity of their entering into the treaty. (Morris 1991[1880:51])

Métis from both the new province of Manitoba and from the Rainy Lake / Rainy River areas attended the North West Angle negotiations. Those from Manitoba included Charles, August and Joseph Nolin (the latter authored what is known as the “Paypom” document), Pierre Levaillier, a Mr. Genton (otherwise unidentified), and the Hon. James (Rat) McKay.21 Commissioner Morris considered métis men such as Charles Nolin and Pierre Levaillier effective facilitators among Ojibwa because “as men of their own blood, [they can] give them friendly advice” (ibid.:49).

The two métis men in attendance from Rainy River/Lake region were both long-time members of the Lac la Pluie district fur trade community. George McPherson – post manager at Rat Portage, 1858-1871 – was in 1873 the Indian Agent for the Assabaska Agency in Lake of the Woods. McPherson was the personal interpreter for Alexander Morris, the Chief Treaty Commissioner for Treaty No.3. Nicholas Chatelaine – interpreter at the Lac la Pluie post for many years (and mentioned frequently in the HBCA journals, see above) – was of mixed French and Ojibwa descent. In 1871 Chatelaine – then an 80-year old man – was seconded from his service to the Hudson’s Bay Company and appointed as “Government interpreter” to assist in discussions leading up to Treaty No.3. This government appointment may explain the absence of Chatelaine’s name on the list of métis at Fort Frances who accepted annuity payments in 1871 (Doc.#28, see above).

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21 McKay was born at HBC Edmonton House, Alberta in 1828 and educated in Red River, and it is unknown whether he was any relation to John McKay, the manager of the HBC post at Lac la Pluie during the 1790s.
McNab (1984:11) states that Chatelaine "seems to have been a spokesman for the métis community at Fort Frances and Rainy River" since "the 1820s". While the historical basis for this statement is not made explicit by McNab, it may be strong indication of emerging métis identity in the Rainy River District at a period prior to, or simultaneous with that at the Red River. Chatelaine was also a veteran of the War of 1812, and as a member of the Fort William band, he participated in the 1850 Robinson Superior Treaty.

A "Personnel File" of "N. Chastellaine" consisting of correspondence dated 1889-1890 indicates that Chatelaine was considered by government officials as very influential among the Indians during Treaty No.3 negotiations. A letter dated November 18, 1889 from E. McColl (Inspector of Indian Agencies at Winnipeg) gives the impression that Chatelaine was paid a type of pension for his contributions to the Dominion:

_I always understood that the amount of $250.00 was given to this veteran of the war of 1812 as acknowledgement of the great services he had rendered to his country, not only during the invasion of Canada in that year by the Americans, but also for his great influence over the Indians of the District, in their allowing the volunteers to pass through their territory in 1870 and afterwards in inducing the Indians to make a Treaty with the Government in 1873. (Doc.#33, 18 November 1889, emphasis added)_

McColl added: "Even now, neither agent nor any other person within the District has greater influence over the Indians than this remarkable man" (ibid.). While a memorandum from S. Stewart (Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, Ottawa) dated November 29, 1889 indicates that the $250 payment to Chatelaine was his annual salary as Indian Interpreter, Stewart’s explanation indicates that Chatelaine’s employment was directly related to his influence with the Indians in the area:

...by letter of 17th Decr. 1869 [Chatelaine’s] employment was recommended by S.J. Dawson in conjunction with that of Mr. Pither [Indian Agent] to counteract any evil influence that might be brought to bear upon the Saulteaux Inds. in connection with the troubles at Red River and also to prepare the mind of the Inds. for the negotiation of a treaty with them. [...] On the 11th March 1871 Mr Pither was informed of the intention of the Govt. to send a Commissioner to treat with the Saulteaux Inds. and that in the meantime it would be the duty of himself and Mr. Chatelain to do everything in their power by friendly intercourse with the Inds. to secure a favorable reception for the Govt. Commr. on his arrival. By Order-in-Council of 16th March 1871 Mr. Chatelaine was appointed Indian Interpreter at Fort Frances at a salary of $250 per annum. The same amount to be paid him for his past services (Doc.#33, 29 November 1889, inserts added)

Hence, it appears that Chatelaine may have exercised considerable influence on the Treaty No.3 negotiations. McNab (1984:13) speculates that "Nicholas Chatelain and the Métis at Fort Frances" may have been motivated to influence the Treaty No.3 negotiations because of their "interests in the
economic development of Fort Frances and the Rainy River and Rainy Lake country, particularly in the fur and timber trades and in the development of the Dawson Route."

It is significant also to note that the Ojibwa employed their own "Indian reporter, whose duty was to commit to memory all that was said" (Morris 1991 [1880]:48). McNab (1984:19) suggests that the Ojibwa chiefs’ action in bringing their own reporter indicates that they did not consider local métis such as McPherson and Chatelaine as spokespersons for Ojibwa interests, owing to "a different world view and not trusting the 'Canadians' or the Metis." This interpretation implies a strong sense of "other ascription" to métis by their Aboriginal progenitors, a sense shared by the British delegates who not only specifically identified the métis participants as "half-breeds", but also indicated that these men were purposefully brought along in order to bridge the two cultures. However, there is a second interpretation to consider with regard to the Indian reporter. Knowing that both McPherson and Chatelaine were government employees, and that in this situation they were present as representatives or agents of the government, the Ojibwa astutely decided that hiring their own reporter to fully represent the Ojibwa interests, was necessary. If this were the case, it will have been the role of individuals that was key, rather than their racial origin or cultural world view. This second interpretation is reinforced by the fact that the Ojibwa also secured Joseph Nolin – a half-breed from Point du Chene – "to take notes in French of the negotiations" on the Ojibwa's behalf (Morris 1991 [1880]:48).

According to McNab, there is no record that any métis spoke on behalf of the Ojibwa – or for that matter on the behalf of métis in the region – during the three days of intensive negotiation, October 1-3, 1873. It was Chief Mawedopenais from Fort Frances who represented the métis from that area (McNab 1984:20). Mawedopenais also acted as the "chief speaker" at the Treaty No.3 negotiations. Métis were not included in any of the demands made by the Ojibwa until the third day of negotiations when Chief Mawedopenais made a specific proposal that certain métis be admitted to the Treaty, implying in his statement that some métis lived among the Ojibwa, while others did not:

CHIEF – "I should not feel happy if I was not to mess with some of my children that are around me – those children that we call the Half-breed – those that have been born of our women of Indian blood. We wish that they should be counted with us, and have their share of what you have promised. We wish you to accept our demands. It is the Half-breeds that are actually living amongst us – those that are married to our women." (In Morris 1991 [1880]:69, emphasis added)

Morris later reported that these métis numbered "ten to twenty families of half-breeds who were recognized as Indians" (ibid.:50). While there is no direct evidence to indicate a link between these families and those named in the 1871 annuity list, the fact that the 1871 list is appended at the end of the "Indians of Rainy Lake" account suggests that those nine families likely belonged to the métis group to whom Chief Mawedopenais referred (see Doc.#28). Both Morris and Mawedopenais...

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22 The Ojibwa will likely have engaged a note-taker if no-one in their group was literate, while half-breeds – due to their European parentage and education – had the writing skills that Ojibwa lacked.
imply that while this group of métis were acknowledged as an “other” in racial terms, they were nevertheless considered by Ojibwa at Fort Frances as members of their community in social terms (cf. Taylor 1983:159). While the demand for métis inclusion in the Treaty may have been influenced by Manitoba métis who were invited to the Ojibwa council the night before, there is no direct evidence to that effect, and there is no evidence that local métis such as McPherson or Chatelaine attended that council.

3.4.2 Indicators of Métis Community: “Adhesion by Half-breeds of Rainy River and Lake”

According to Moss (1979) and Taylor (1983), the great majority of métis in Canada were not included in treaties, and the 1875 Adhesion for métis in the Rainy River and Lake region was an exception to government policy at the time. In most cases, métis were required to choose between an “Indian” or “White” identity, and those who chose the latter were granted land or provided with other concessions. Taylor (1983:160-161) considers the Half-Breed Adhesion an “anomaly” that is best explained by the circumstances in which Treaty No. 3 was negotiated. This view is somewhat consistent with the analysis by Moss (1979) that the Adhesion was an expedient act, rather than a sign of changing policy regarding métis. This idea is confirmed by the passing of the 1875 Indian Act which generally excluded métis from Indian treaties.

In response to the Ojibwa request in 1873 that ten or twenty métis families be included in the Treaty, and in light of the important role Morris believed métis had played in a difficult Treaty negotiation process now in its third attempt, he promised to recommend that these métis be given the option to treat. It is evident that Morris thought highly of métis with whom he worked and lived, attributing to them skills of communication between Aboriginal and European cultures possessed by no other group:

There is no doubt that a great deal of the good feeling thus subsisting between the red men and ourselves is due to the influence and interposition of that invaluable class of men the Half-breed settlers and pioneers of Manitoba, who, combining as they do the hardihood, the endurance and love of enterprise generated by the strain of Indian blood within their veins, with the civilization, the instruction, and the intellectual power derived from their fathers, have preached the Gospel of peace and good will, and mutual respect, with equally beneficent results to the Indian chieftain in his lodge and to the British settler in the shanty. They have been the ambassadors between east and west; the interpreters of civilization and its exigencies to the dwellers on the prairie as well as the exponents to the white men of the consideration justly due to the susceptibilities, the sensitive self-respect, the prejudices, the innate craving for justice, of the Indian race. In fact they have done for the [Red River] colony what otherwise would have been left unaccomplished, and have introduced between the white population and the red man a traditional feeling of amity and friendship which but for them it might have been impossible to establish. (Morris 1991 [1880]:293-294, insert added)
In Taylor’s view, Morris’ promise and the subsequent Adhesion was not only situational, but also a reflection of the Government’s nascent Indian policy in the North West, an area and its people about which the Government still knew little. Taylor (1983:161) suggests that the Adhesion was restricted to individuals belonging to those “ten to twenty families of half-breeds”, arguing that the size of the reserve allotted to them (approximately 18 square miles) is appropriate to that number.

For the purposes of this report, the significance of the Adhesion is its indication of an organized and self-identifying community of métis in the Rainy River District. As suggested above, Nicholas Chatelaine may have been a spokesman for métis in the region since the 1820s, indicating that some form of métis community existed at this early date. This report has demonstrated that data about the possible social and occupational development of this community is available in the fur trade journals. However, these records provide only a few indirect clues about a distinctive sense of identity shared by métis, and no information about the emergence of a political consciousness under the leadership of Chatelaine. Nevertheless, it is documented that by 1875, Chatelaine was the so-titled “Chief” of a definite and distinct group of métis in the Fort Frances and Rainy River area. Taken from the copy held at the Archives of Ontario copy, the Adhesion reads as follows:

This memorandum of Agreement made & entered into this twelfth day of September one thousand eight hundred and seventy five - Between Nicholas Chatelaine, Indian Interpreter at Fort Francis and the Rainy River and acting herein solely in the latter capacity for and as representing the said Halfbreeds, on the one part – And John Noughton Dennis, Surveyor General of Dominion Lands as representing Her Majesty the Queen, through the government of the Dominion on the other part.

...whereas having fully and deliberately discussed and considered the matter, the said Halfbreeds have elected to join in the treaty made between the Indians and Her Majesty at the North Western Angle of the Lake of the Woods, on the third day of October, 1873...

The Halfbreeds through Nicholas Chatelaine, their Chief above named, as representing them herein agree as follows... (Doc.#29, 12 September 1875; emphasis added)

Ironically, Chatelain did not enlist as a beneficiary of the Treaty No. 3 Adhesion. As late as 1877, there is evidence that Chatelain had not taken any annuity money and hence was not admitted into the Treaty:

The Half Breeds of Fort Frances who have not taken pay as Indians are Nicholas Chastellain, Louis Chastellain, John Linklater, Wife and six children. There are other Half Breeds here but they belong to Red River or Winnipeg and are entitled to Land in that Vicinity. (Doc.#30, 28 February 1877)

Although the Ojibwa in 1873 had originally intended that the métis would join one of their bands upon entering Treaty No.3, in 1874 the métis sent a request through Dawson that they wished...
to form a separate Half-breed band with their own Chief (Moss 1979:22). In 1875 when John Noughton Dennis came to settle the question of reserves for the Treaty No.3 area, he told Chatelaine that their petition had been approved. Moss (ibid:23) suggests that taken together, the métis petition in 1874, the subsequent correspondence between Dawson and the Minister of the Interior on the matter, and the Adhesion signed in 1875, all reflect the métis desire to retain a distinct identity as well as an acceptance by Government of that distinct identity. Moreover, métis insisted that their distinct status be legally reflected in treaty provisions which recognized specific métis rights, benefits and relations with the government, and which granted them a territorial base or reserve. Moss fairly argues that the Adhesion itself is “the strongest evidence supporting the Métis viewpoint”:

It is entitled, “Adhesion by Halfbreeds of Rainy River and Rainy Lake” and throughout the text the Métis are always referred to as “Halfbreeds,” indicating that before or at the time of signing, the Métis belonged to no Indian band. The terms of the agreement do not give any indication that the Métis, in the future would be required to join an Indian band in order to receive the consideration offered for the relinquishment of their territorial rights... “by virtue of their Indian blood...” (Ibid.:24)

In 1876, the same year the new Indian Act was passed and less than a year after the Adhesion had been signed, Chatelaine petitioned the Government concerning the lack of action to set aside a reserve for the métis of Fort Frances for whom he reluctantly continued to act as Chief:

The Half Breed of Fort Frances intend to remove on their reserve, but it will not be easy for them to live on their Reserve, to cultivate them if the [sic] have no cattle, – and you will confer a favor on the Half Breed of Fort Frances by laying our request before the Government for my part, since I hold an official position, I would not like to be appointed Chief of the Fort Frances Half Bread... (Doc.#30, 10 August: 1876)

J.N.A. Provencher (Acting Indian Superintendent, Winnipeg) responded to this petition by instructing Indian Agent Pither submit a report on the number of half-breeds at Fort Frances who were admitted into the Treaty; and “whether they would be willing to join Little Eagle’s Band (Doc.#30, 30 August 1876). Provencher recommended the amalgamation in light of Chatelaine’s request that he not be appointed as chief, adding that “the Department cannot recognize a separate Halfbreed Band” (ibid.). About a month later, Pither reported that seven métis families (48 individuals) had received annuity money (Doc.#30, 15 October 1876).

The idea that the Fort Frances métis join Little Eagle’s band was supported by “Mawintoobiness” (Mawedopenaaii) in a deposition sent in January 1877:

When I requested the Half Breeds to be taken into the Treaty it was not as a separate band but to join whichever band they chose. (Doc.#30, 3 January 1877)
Moss (1979:26) reports that sometime between the years 1877 and 1885—a seven year period for which no correspondence is archived—the métis demand for recognition distinct from Indians and for a separate reserve disappears. A note by Prime Minister Macdonald (who also acted as Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs) in response to a métis petition received in 1885 is apparently the "last reference to the issue of the petitioners retaining their Metis identity":

It does not appear whether these people claim under Treaty as Indians or as Halfbreeds. I had better ask the matter over with Burgess. (In ibid.:30)

By 1892 the métis of Fort Frances appear to have set aside efforts to regain status as a separate band and instead acquiesced to the Government stance that they belonged to the Couchiching band. Correspondence from 1901 states that Little Eagle's Couchiching band and the métis group lived together on the combined reserve lands set aside for each in Treaty No.3 and in the Adhesion. According to this report, Treaty paylists showed that the métis had always been paid with the Couchiching band (in ibid.:31-32). However, according to the Indian Commissioner in 1901, there still existed a separateness among the two groups, evident in their physical residence patterns: the Indians lived on Little Eagle's reserve (#18B), while the métis group was scattered over all three sections of the combined reserve, #16A, 16D and 18B (ibid.32). As well, a petition submitted in 1909 by the métis group at Couchiching regarding fishing rights and land issues demonstrates their sense of identity with the land on which they now lived.

We the half-breeds of Couchiching reservation (Fort Frances) would like to submit to your special consideration the following points: [...] 3. We are also well aware of the following fact. "Business men" in Fort Frances made a petition to get the tract of land which our school, our buildings, cemetery and church are occupying at present... We are born here, our relatives are buried here, our school and church are here, hereto we like to stay and to live and die. (Doc.#48, 23 September 1909)

This information also suggests that for this particular métis group, the Adhesion allowed them a "common territory or geographical location", considered a criterion of community as conventionally defined within the social sciences (Bell 1991:398; PRAXIS Research Associates 1997).

There are also social indicators of an ongoing distinction between the métis group and the Indians sharing these Reserve lands. Indian Affairs Annual Reports published in Sessional Papers from 1885 through to 1912 consistently distinguish the "half-breeds" from other bands in the Couchiching Agency. For example, in 1885 Indian Agent Pither reported that:

The half-breeds hauled wood for a school house; but the Indians and half-breeds do not agree, so the building has not been put up. (Doc.#32, p.62)

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23 Only Treaty paylists from 1871 were accessible. Paylists dated 1880 through to 1953 are subject to restricted access rules and were not available for review for this assignment.
In 1902, of a total population of 134 at Couchiching, the “majority of this band” are described as “French half-breeds” (Doc.#46, p.84). From a description of religious affiliation, it is likely that the “one hundred and two Roman Catholics” represent the French métis reserve population, while the “twenty-nine pagans” represent the Ojibwa population (plus there were “three Anglicans”) (ibid.). In 1904 the population was 138, repeating that “the majority of this band are Roman Catholics” and that “these Indians are principally French half-breeds” (Doc.#47, p.88). The 1912 Report shows that the population at Couchiching had grown to 188 and again there is specific mention of the Fort Frances métis, stating that “the greater portion of this band are smart, intelligent half-breeds, they make a good living” (Doc.#49, p.86).

As a final note, it may be appropriate to mention here that the Ontario view of the métis issue — as represented by E.B. Borron in his report on Treaty No.3 Indian Claims submitted to Amelius Irving in 1891 in anticipation of the Unsettled Accounts Arbitrations — was that the admission of métis into the Treaty was “a great mistake” (in Moss 1979:37:37). Borron emphasized the Province’s stand that the métis were allowed to enter the Treaty merely as a result of the pressure put on representatives of the Dominion to finally get a treaty signed in 1873 in order to complete the Dawson route. Consequently, the Province should not be obligated to pay for expenses incurred primarily for the benefit of the Dominion.

3.5 1901 CENSUS: MÉTIS POPULATION — RAINY RIVER DISTRICT

The métis population living in what is today the Rainy River District as enumerated in the 1901 Census totalled approximately 300 individuals, as follows (Doc.#45, pp.314-315):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Frances &amp; environs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Frances</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McIrvine</td>
<td>211^24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aylesworth</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberton</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>225</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainy River &amp; environs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaudro Fishery (Hungry Hall)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Mills</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinewood</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MÉTIS POPULATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>298</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^24 98 individuals were enumerated as “Breeds” at McIrvine, and this number represents those métis living off the Couchiching reserve (Doc.#40). Another 114 French and English half breeds were enumerated at “Rainy Lake” and this number represents the on-reserve métis population (Doc.#44). The Rainy Lake reserve enumeration was cross-listed with and added to the McIrvine sub-district enumeration, and hence Table 2: “Origins of the People” contained in Vol. I of the Census of Canada, 1901 shows a total population of 211 métis at McIrvine (Doc.#45).
The total population of these locations was approximately 3,275 in 1901, and métis represented about 9.1% of that population. The greater majority (70%) of métis families in the district resided on the reserve at Rainy Lake or at McIrvine, a town just outside Fort Frances, annexed by the latter in 1948 (see Chapter 5). The Aboriginal population enumerated in these locations totalled to 703 persons, or 21.5% of the population.

Métis family names recorded in the 1901 Census at off-reserve locations, which are also found in the fur trade records include the following (Docs. #36, 37, 40):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fur Trade Name</th>
<th># Households</th>
<th>Origin*</th>
<th>Residence (Off-Reserve)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morrison</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>B. Fishery (Hungry Hall) &amp; Beaver Mills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinclair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Beaver Mills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maggrah (McGraw)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>IB</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* FB = French Breed; IB = Irish Breed; SB = Scotish Breed

Métis fur trade family names recorded by the Couchiching Indian Agency living on reserve at Rainy Lake, include (Doc. #44):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fur Trade Name</th>
<th># Households</th>
<th>Origin*</th>
<th>Residence (On-Reserve)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gimmond (Guimond)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jourdain</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainville</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morriseau (Morrison)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chastlaine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A different coding system was used in this enumeration, and no explanation is provided for “FHO”. Since Indians are coded using “O” for “Ojibwa,” FHO likely refers to “French Half Ojibwa.” Some family members belonging to French métis households (e.g., Alex Mainville’s wife Mary) are coded “EHO” or “English Half Ojibwa.”

It should be noted that the Morrison families listed in the Rainy River area are all identified as “French Breeds”; in the Rainy Lake record Morrison and Morriseau appear within the same household. Hence, it is likely that Morrison is an anglicized form of Morriseau, a surname mentioned on several occasions in the fur trade record. A Clara Linklater is listed as a ‘Sister’ immediately following the Michel Morrison family in Beaudro Fishery, but it is unclear to whom this relationship refers (Doc. #36).

In addition to those surnames which can be linked to fur trade families in the Rainy River/Fort Frances area, there are 18 other families in which the entire household is métis, as listed below.
(Doc.#36,37,40,44; Canada 1901:44/q1):25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Métis Family Name</th>
<th># Households</th>
<th>Origin*</th>
<th>Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apetauquoit [sp?]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruyere</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calder</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carron</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Beaudro Fishery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyr/Cyar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>McIrvine; Fort Frances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffiths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Beaver Mills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locke</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mertens [Martens?]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pero [Perreault?]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Fort Frances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Pierre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Beaudro Fishery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasawanaquab [sp?]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FHO</td>
<td>Rainy Lake Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woods</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB (Cree)</td>
<td>McIrvine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* EB = English Breed; FB = French Breed; FHO = French Half Ojibwa; SB = Scotch Breed

Of interest here is the number of métis in McIrvine who identify their Aboriginal ancestry as Cree and not Ojibwa. An analysis of birthplaces indicates that many of these mixed-blood Cree families — Calder, Cyr, Locke, Lyons, and McDonald — left Manitoba and moved into the Fort Frances area during the 1880s and 1890s. A total of 14 families living in the Rainy River District show that all or some of their métis family members were born in Manitoba. Several cases show that one or both métis parents were born in Manitoba, while their children were born in Ontario. If these families originated at Red River, this finding may indicate that in the era of Louis Riel and events involving métis in the West, couples believed that Ontario offered a more secure place to raise their family. However, it should be pointed out that in 1872-1879 this area was in the “disputed territory” being claimed by the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba, only becoming a part of Ontario in 1889. Hence, individuals may have stated Manitoba as their birthplace while actually referring to locations which by 1901 were in Ontario.

In many instances, métis belonging to other families listed in the 1901 Census are the wives and children of a White man; for example, the Cutler family at Beaudro Fishery consists of a Swiss head of the household, a ‘Chippewa’ wife, and a son who is identified as ‘OB’ (Other Breed) (Doc.#36). This type of mixed family origins is evident in a total of 18 households in the Rainy River

25 Enumerations for Fort Frances (Canada 1901:44/q1) were not photocopied and are not included in the document supplement. Details about the three métis families enumerated in Fort Frances were recorded in hand notes.

This completes the analysis of archival data pertinent to métis in the Rainy River District throughout the 19th century. Chapter 4 which follows presents an analysis of historical data specific to métis in the Kenora District during the same time-period. Discussion of the brief amount of available information about métis in both regions during the 20th century and up to the present time, is provided in Chapter 5.
4. Métis in the Kenora District, 19th Century

Very little archival data are available on the Kenora District during the fur trade. Although HBC posts were established at Rat Portage (Kenora), Keewatin, Eagle Lake (Dryden) and Dinorwic (Wabigoon), almost none of these post journals or other records have survived. Hence, analysis of the development of a historic métis population in the Kenora and Dryden area must be considered within the fur trade context of the Lac la Pluie district to which these posts belonged.

4.1 The Fur Trade at Rat Portage and Outposts

Rat Portage was the main post north of Lake of the Woods in the Lac la Pluie District. Keewatin, Eagle Lake, Dinorwic/Wabigoon, North West Angle, Shoal Lake and White Dog were outposts of Rat Portage (HBCA, Post History - Rat Portage). Whitesfish Bay and Hungry Hall are also listed as outposts of Rat Portage, but as noted in the previous chapter, these two outposts seem to have operated—at least in the early 1800s—as extensions of the Rainy Lake post.

Prior to ca. 1836, the “rat carrying place” was referred to as the major portage linking the Rainy Lake region via Lake of the Woods to Winnipeg River and the west. The portage held strategic importance and was frequently sabotaged by competing trade companies:

September 19 [1794]. We arrived at the rat carrying place. Where we found Canadian Industry by their burning all the Rollers in the path it rained just as we finished Carrying the Goods the men however got new rollers & launch'd the Battaux... (Doc.#2, fo.1d)

September 19 [1796] ...we arrived at the Rat Carrying Place when we found as usual the rollers [sic] burned by the Canadians the people carried the goods first then roled the path a fresh and launched the Boats, and put up. (Doc.#4, fos.6,26)

Because the Rat Carrying Place was a necessary portage on the route between Lake Superior and Winnipeg River, documentation of its history is available from travellers diaries, expedition journals, and from journals of other HBC posts in the vicinity.

The HBC established a small post at Rat Portage ca. 1836, possibly to replace the Dalles post located to the north on the Winnipeg River which closed in 1836 (HBCA SF Rat Portage, n.d.). The Rat Portage post operated as a fur trade post until the 1890s when it was reorganized as a Saleshop. In the early years, the Rat Portage post was managed by a series of métis individuals identified in the previous discussion of Lac la Pluie. For example, James Isbister (HBC Interpreter) managed the post in 1836, and François Mainville (HBC Interpreter at Lac la Pluie) took temporary charge in the
summer of 1838 and again in 1850. Other surnames found in both the Rat Portage and Lac la Pluie records include McPherson (George, at Rat Portage from 1858-1871) and Sinclair (Peter, at Rat Portage in 1874). Two McPherson families, both métis, are listed in the 1901 Census for Rat Portage (Doc.#42) and at least one current member of the Kenora Métis Community Council traces her ancestry to George McPherson.²⁶ Sinclair families are identified as métis in the 1901 Census for Rat Portage and Beaver Mills (Docs.#37,41). Charles Goulait – also an interpreter and possibly métis – took temporary charge of Rat Portage in 1844-45 (HBCA, Post History - Rat Portage; S.F. - Rat Portage). One métis Goulet family is recorded in the 1901 Census for Rat Portage (Doc.#42).

Colonel Wolseley’s military expedition passed through Rat Portage on their return from Fort Garry after restoring “the authority of the Queen at Red River” following the Riel rebellion. In the opinion of Captain Huyshe – a member of that expedition – the post was small and isolated. Huyshe’s description of the Rat Portage post identifies George McPherson as métis:

_The Hudson’s Bay Company's post at Rat Portage is but a small affair, three log-houses roofed with bark and enclosed by a high wooden palisading. The Company maintain thirteen men at this post, but nine of them are employed at small outlying posts in the vicinity. Mr. Macpherson, the official in charge, was most civil and obliging. He is a Scotch half-breed, a quiet, gentlemanly, elderly man, who has received a good education in Montreal. He had been for thirteen years buried alive at this post! Is it not a most extra-ordinary thing, that a man of any education can be found to stand a life like that, utterly cut off from the rest of mankind, receiving news from the outside world only once or twice a year, to all intents or purposes dead or sleeping? ...I ventured to question Mr. Macpherson on this subject, and he replied simply, that he had long since ceased to feel anything of the kind; he had his little farm and his wife and family and was quite happy and contented... (HBCA, S.F. - Rat Portage, pp.7-8, emphasis added)._

It is possible that Robert Laureenson²⁷ (or Lawrenson) who replaced McPherson ca. 1871, was also métis. Laureenson is described as having great influence with the Indians at Rat Portage and was “connected with the principal chiefs in Lac Seul” (ibid.:8). Over the next several years, Laureenson moved between the North West Angle and Rat Portage posts, taking charge of either as circumstances required. By the mid-1870s, railway construction was underway in the area, and “retail trade on the railway works” became of greater concern than fur trading.

The North West Angle, Keewatin, Eagle Lake and Dinorwic/Wabigoon posts were all established as outposts of Rat Portage in the mid to late 19th century. In 1870, the Shoal Lake post


²⁷ A Laureenson family is listed in the 1901 Census for Rat Portage, but the head of the household is identified as “White” (Scotch), his wife as “Cree” and his four children as “Scotch Breed” (Doc.#42). A small lake at the eastern end of Kenora is named “Laureenson Lake".
was dismantled and operations moved to North West Angle, the explicit purpose being the need for a terminus on the Dawson road from the Red River (HBCA, S.F. - North West Angle). By 1878 the Dawson route was abandoned as a thoroughfare (in favour of the railway passing through Rat Portage) and the North West Angle post was closed. Keewatin was established as an outpost of Rat Portage in 1886 aimed at opposing a general merchant there (HBCA, Post History - Keewatin). In 1892 it was placed in the Saleshop Division of the HBC, but this was closed in 1894.

The history of the Eagle Lake post near present day Dryden is somewhat vague. Surviving HBCA records for Eagle Lake cover only a short period, from 1881–1884. A local history of the area states that the HBC operated an outpost at Eagle Lake from the mid-1800s, supplied and managed from North West Angle and later from Rat Portage (Melander 1988:3). Apparently the Dinorwic/Wabigoon post was established on the mouth of the Wabigoon River as an outpost of Eagle Lake, but this relationship was reversed when the Canadian Pacific Railway line went through the area in the 1880s (HBCA, Post History – Dinorwic). Because of Wabigoon’s proximity to the CPR it became the main post and ran Eagle Lake as an outpost until 1903. In 1899 the Wabigoon/Dinorwic post was moved a mile west and records indicate that the post operated intermittently at a varying capacity until 1940 (ibid.).

The following section presents the few archival references available which may be relevant to the development of a métis population at the posts described above.

4.2 REFERENCES TO MÉTIS IN FUR TRADE RECORDS, KENORA DISTRICT

The earliest fur trade records for the Kenora District are from the Dalles (pronounced “doll’s”) post journals beginning in 1832. Although Van Kirk (1980:frontice piece) locates Dalles on her map of HBC posts ca.1832, there is otherwise little information about this post. However, journals indicate that it was on the Winnipeg River north of the Rat Carrying Place, en route to Fort Alexander: “...the Indians who assented [sic] up in the Boats to Lac-la-Pluie from Fort Alexander on their return passed here this afternoon...” (Doc.#23, fo.2). The post manager in 1832-33 was a Mr. Taylor whose entries reveal that the post was a relatively small one, with a population of at least two families, one belonging to Taylor, the other to St. Denis:

...I have not anything in the House but one Bag a quarter of rice and a Half a Bag of Pemican which is nothing at all amongst us that is at the House. We are at present 2 men and myself - my Wife & child - St. Denis’ Wife, an Old Indian Woman and a Boy which makes altogether [sic] 6 persons - Duncan is to remain at Fort Alexander until I go there... (Doc.#23, fo.20d).

While there are numerous references to an Indian named “Little English Man” as well as to his family members, there is no indication that he is métis and Taylor’s entries speak of him as an Aboriginal fur trapper who came to the post to sell his furs.

After the Dalles journal 1833-34, no records are available until 1875 when Gilbert Hackland kept a journal while in temporary charge of the Rat Portage post. Of interest is Hackland’s reference to “Old Taylor”, although there is no way of linking this man with the Taylor (or family) of Dalles in the 1830s (HBCA E.52/1, April 7). Hackland’s diary offers no direct indication of métis living or working at the Rat Portage post in 1875, except for the mention of a P.M. Sinclair as one of the servants (William Sinclair is positively identified as métis at Lac la Pluie in 1825, see previous chapter). Other names of servants include: John Daniel, Jacob Henry, and R. Henderson. Thomas Lindsay appeared to work casually for the post, and when finished “making a Sleigh for hauling goods from N.W. Angle”, he is reported to have “left for his house” (HBCA E.52/1, March 25, 29). Rat Portage Inspectorate Records for 1885, positively identify James Swan as “Half Breed” (Doc.#31, p.548).

Scattered references to individuals such as Joseph Morriseau (Trader) and Jonathan Morriseau (Trapper) appear in Rat Portage post reports from the 1890s (HBCA B.175/e/5&7). The Inspection Report for Hungry Hall in 1890 lists outstanding balances for Michel Morrison (Farmer) and Jno [sic] Morrison (?Lumberman) (Doc.#34, fo.6). It should be noted here that the names “Morriseau” and “Morrison” are often difficult to distinguish in the archival record and may refer to the same surname. A “Mr. Morrison” was manager of the North West Company post at Lac la Pluie ca. 1825 (Docs.#12,13,15). While none of these records indicate racial origin, Lac la Pluie records from the late 1880s refer frequently to William and Michel Morriseau (HBCA B.105/a/22). A local historical review of Kenora records that “the late Jonathan Morriseau, who died aged 108 years, was one of the guides of the Wolsey Expedition” adding that he was also one of the light-house keepers on the Big Traverse (Jubilee Jamboree Ctte. 1952:5, 16). Members of the Kenora Métis Community Council referred to Jonathan Morriseau as a well-known local métis man who had once worked at the Hungry Hall post (Personal Communication, May 1999).

A letter from the Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Ottawa to Rat Portage in 1892 indicates that there continued to be McPhersons and McKays in the area:

The following [fishing license] application already received at the department are to be entertained:

Geo. Tweed
Geo. McPherson
D.W. McKay
W. McCarthy
Ed. Kippling
A. McIver
Rat Portage
Gill Nets.

Jos. Kean of Keewatin has applied for permission to fish without stating what kinds of nets. (Doc.#35, p.5; insert added)

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The original of Hackland’s diary (HBCA E.52/1) was examined at the HBCA in Winnipeg. Hand notes were taken, and no photocopies are included in the Supplement to this report. The same is true for several journal entries cited in the next several pages, including the following: HBCA B.105/a/22; B.175/e/5&7; B.273/a/1; B.273/b/16; B.273/e/2; B.363/e/1.

As will be seen below, the name McIver (or McIvor) is also frequently associated with post business, and there is some indication that this name might also be associated with a métis family. As well, two "Kipling" families are identified as métis in the 1901 Census for the Rat Portage Village and Township (Docs.#41,42). Members of the Kenora Métis Community Council identified "Kipling" as a recognizably métis name in the area (Personal Communication, May 1999).

When W.H. Adams inspected the HBC post at Rat Portage in 1899, he reported that John Fiddler, Alexander Mainville and Alexander Moar each occupied a dwelling house. Mainville is already identified as métis in the Lac la Pluie records. Alex Moar is identified as métis in the 1901 census for Dryden, apparently living in the same household as his son John's family (Doc.#38). During his inspection of the White Dog outpost in 1890, E.K. Beeston reported that, "there was no one at this Post at the time of my visit... The temporary Servant in charge had gone to the Treaty payments" (HBCA B.363/e1, fo.3). Later in the report this servant is identified as "John Fiddler; Temporary Servant... married, 5 children; ordinarily employed as Storesman at Rat Portage" (ibid.: fo.5). The 1901 Census for Rat Portage identifies John Fiddler as métis; a Henry Fiddler family was enumerated in Keewatin (Docs.#39,42).

From the Dinorwic post, some data are available for the years 1899-1939, albeit intermittently. In 1899, Inspector Beeston remarked that competition with other traders could best be met by hiring "runners" an occupation consistent with that performed by métis in Lac la Pluie, although here none are identified:

R.S. Robertson of Wabigoon Station employs runners to go out among Indians, but along the line of Railway there are many Traders and Buyers and at the time of my visit as much as $7.00 was being offered for good Marten... (HBCA B.273/e2, p.8)

The only direct reference to a métis individual at Dinorwic is in a letter from post manager S.A. King to J.J. Barker in Nipigon, in 1907:

Do you know of a fellow around there a Breed called Isaac Ritch, I heard he was around Nipigon, the young Rouge [sic] owes us $57.45, I wish you would try and locate him. (HBCA B.273/b/16, fo.22d)

In July, King refers to a servant "McGraw" – a well known métis name ("Maggrah") in the Wabigoon/Dryden area today29 – who was apparently a reliable guide:

...I will arrange for the two canoes and the three Indians and send them to Dryden ready to start on your arrival. As to wages they are all getting $45.00 and $50.00 per mont [sic] this year, owing to so much work going they are readily picked up. In fact I cannot get enough of them. as McGraw is away at present I cannot give you a definite answer as to him going, but will try and get him, in any event I shall get you

---


the best possible men... (HBCA B.273/a/16, fo.147d)

In September, King was unable to send McGraw to guide Frederick Gillett from Dryden, informing him that "...I have now seen Jno McIver who is going with you, you will find him a first class man, him and ANNAWAY [sic] are both two our best men" (ibid.:fo.256d). The only post journals available from Diorwic are dated 1938-1940 when E.E. Bates was post manager. The context in which Bates makes references to the following men indicates that some may have been métis involved in trapping:

October 21 ...Phillip Garneau left for his trapping grounds, also John Kooshit.
April 19. Phillip Garneau, Tom Williams and Don McIvor came in with beaver and paid accounts. Many Indians around... (HBCA B.273/a/1, fos.14,18,43)

4.3 1901 CENSUS: MÉTIS POPULATION – KENORA DISTRICT

The métis population living in what is today the Kenora District as enumerated in the 1901 Census totalled approximately 200 individuals, as follows (Doc.#45, pp.314-315):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kenora &amp; environs:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rat Portage (Outside)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rat Portage - Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keewatin (Township)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikado Mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultana Mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dryden &amp; environs:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dryden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabigoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MÉTIS POPULATION</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total population enumerated in these locations was 8,361, and métis represented about 2.4% of that population. The greater majority (60%) of métis families in the district resided in the town of what was then known as Rat Portage (Kenora). The Aboriginal (primarily Ojibwa) population enumerated in these locations totalled to 568 persons, or 6.8% of the population

Métis family names recorded in the 1901 Census which are also found in the fur trade records include the following (Docs.#38,39,41,42,43):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fur Trade Name</th>
<th># Households</th>
<th>Origin*</th>
<th>Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auger</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>OB</td>
<td>Dryden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begg</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiddler</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Keewatin (Tp.) &amp; Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finlayson</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town) &amp; Wabigoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goulet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kipling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Outside &amp; Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkletter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacPherson</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Outside)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Dryden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrison</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinclair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* FB = French Breed; OB = Other Breed; SB = Scotch Breed

There are also several family names which are reminiscent of the fur trade era and in which the place of birth is indicated as Ontario or Manitoba, but where individuals and their offspring have identified themselves as "White": Roy (French), Guerin (French), Goulet (French), Cameron (Scottish). Whether some or all of these were métis who decided to claim the identity of their fathers is unknown. A Laurenson family is also listed, but the head of the household is identified as Scotch (W-White) with a Cree wife (R - Red) and four children (OB - Other Breed).

In addition to those surnames which can be linked to fur trade families in the Kenora area, there are 16 other families in which the entire household is métis, as listed below (Docs.#38,39,41,42):

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30 Charles Begg is identified as métis in the Michipicoten post records. In the 1901 Census for Rat Portage (Town), John Begg is listed as born in Ontario in 1855; James Begg is listed as born in Manitoba in 1867. Both had several children, all Ontario born. "Magnus Begg" was Indian Agent in the Couchiching Agency in 1901 (SP No.27, 1901:82-83). A member of the Kenora Métis Community Council has the surname "Biggs"; additional research would be required to determine if there is a connection with the "Begg" name.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Métis Family Name</th>
<th># Households</th>
<th>Origin*</th>
<th>Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camble</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>EB &amp; SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Keewatin (Tp.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>IB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savoyard</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Outside)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sermette [sp?]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Dryden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Outside)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiggins</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EB</td>
<td>Rat Portage (Town)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* EB = English Breed; FB = French Breed; IB = Irish Breed; SB = Scotch Breed

In at least 23 households, métis listed in the 1901 Census for the Kenora District are the wives and children of a White man. For example, the Hanson family at Rat Portage (Town) consists of a German head of the household, an "Indian" wife, and 7 children all identified as "OB" (German Breed) (Doc.#42, No.5). In two of these households — "Calder" (Keewatin Township) and "Lyons" (Rat Portage - Town) — the family names are also found in the Rainy River District where they are identified as entirely métis (i.e. the head of the household is also métis).

Of significance is the number of métis families in the Kenora area in 1901 in which one or both of the parents were born in Manitoba. This is consistent with oral accounts provided by several members of the Kenora Métis Community Council who related that many of the métis families in the area today are descendants of Red River métis who moved east into Ontario as tensions in the west increased due to the Riel uprisings (Personal Communication, May 3, 1999). A local historical review of the Kenora District provides information which may support this argument:

It is at Northwest Angle where the triangle in Minnesota is the most northerly part of the United States, except Alaska, and it was here that the "Metis" or half-breeds came to settle after the rebellion of Riel. (Jubilee Jamboree Ctte. 1952:28)

A total of 30 families living in the Kenora area (the majority in the town of Kenora) in 1901 had at least one member of their household born in Manitoba. In many cases, the parents of families were born in Manitoba, while some or all of their children were born in Ontario. An analysis of the dates of birth of the Ontario-born children indicates that most families moved into the Kenora area sometime in the 1880s - 1890s. However, as indicated in the previous chapter, it was not until 1889 that the boundary between the provinces was settled, and some overlap of Ontario / Manitoba birth locations may be the result of uncertainty on the part of individuals who may have been born in the "disputed territory."
In the following chapter, the data available about the population development of both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts is analysed with attention to implications about the métis population during the 20th century. As well, Chapter 5 presents the results of consultations with métis groups located in the Kenora District.
sent to Manitoba to quell the Riel resistance, the post-Treaty years saw more permanent road, bridge and portage construction, as well as construction of a canal and locks that would eliminate the portage around Koochiching Falls. It was at this same time that steamboat transportation began to appear on the Rainy River, and at its peak, an estimated 21 steamboats travelled between Fort Frances and Kenora on a regular basis. However, with the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1884, work on the canal was discontinued and the water-borne trade between the two Districts discontinued (Fort Frances Public Library 1973:6; Jubilee Jamboree Ctce. 1952:23). In 1902, the Canadian Northern Railroad (CNR) reached Fort Frances and for the first time this community had year round access to the rest of the continent. This had the effect of bringing immigrant settlers of a broad range of ethnic origins into the region (Fort Frances Public Library 1973:8).

5.1.2 Commercial Fishing, Tourism, Mining, and Forestry

Commercial Fishing

According to Van West (1990:35), non-Aboriginal fishermen began harvesting Lake of the Woods on a commercial basis by 1884, involving mainly American interests. However, in the absence of transportation facilities in Minnesota, the fish products were barged to Rat Portage for packing, freezing and shipping via the CPR. One such fishery was the “Beaudro Fishery” enumerated in the 1901 Census, a settlement with a population of almost 500, including about 8 métis families comprised of 39 individuals (Doc.#35).

In light of decreasing sturgeon stocks and in an effort to protect Ojibwa fisheries, a commercial closure of Canadian fisheries was effected in 1889 but American-based fisheries continued to exploit the Lake of the Woods and Rainy Lake and Rainy River. Predictably, Rat Portage’s commercial fishing interests lobbied adamantly to re-open Canadian waters, and in 1892 the Department of Marine and Fisheries acquiesced, issuing three “experimental” commercial fishing licences. From this point on, the commercial fishing interests at Rat Portage expanded at an “unprecedented rate” (Van West 1990:40). However, by the end of the first decade of the 20th century the sturgeon fisheries on Lake of the Woods had collapsed due to overfishing, and whitefish followed by yellow pickerel (walleye) became the primary species fished commercially in the Lake (Macins 1972:16). In 1909, the “half-breeds of Couchiching reservation” petitioned the government for special consideration with regard to their treaty fishing rights, which they claimed “amounts to nothing because the Rainy Lake in front of our reservation is nearly depopulated... by American companies...” (Doc.#48).

In light of this history, it is interesting to note that none of the local histories reviewed for this assignment discuss commercial fishing as a significant aspect of their towns’ development. However, when asked what occupations were common among métis in the Kenora area, members of the Kenora Métis Community Council included commercial fishing as one of the key resource harvesting activities in which local métis were involved (Personal Communication, May 3, 1999). Recreational fishing is mentioned in the context of tourism development in the region.
Tourism

By the late 1890s, the Hudson’s Bay Company was reporting that tourism was benefitting its trade at Rat Portage:

...The new Steamer, which was sanctioned by the [HBC] Board and completed within the appropriation, did successful service during this Summer [1896-97] in visiting the camps of Tourists and the Mines, and will, it is hoped, be very beneficial in assisting the business of the Store... (HBCA SF Rat Portage, n.d.:17, inserts added)

In 1916, the HBC reported that “Kenora depends largely on its summer visitors” but that the permanent population was dwindling (ibid.:19).

Local histories from the District document tourism as an important sector of the regional economy. From 1912 to the 1960s, the completion of highways between Fort Frances and the USA, between Fort Frances and Kenora, west to Winnipeg, and east to Atikokan and Thunder Bay, opened the Northwestern Ontario vacation lands to tourists from all directions. Already early in the 20th century, tourism was an important part of the economy of both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts (Fort Frances Public Library 1973:10). Consultations with members of métis groups in Kenora and Wabigoon indicate that tourism-related occupations such as guiding, are common among local métis (Personal Communication, May 1999).

Mining

The Kenora District experienced a gold mining boom beginning around 1890 and ending in 1901 when much richer sources of gold were discovered in Alaska and the Yukon. During the last decade of the 19th century, the Hudson’s Bay Company post at Rat Portage capitalized on the mining activity in the region:

Many of the Mines in the neighbourhood of the Lake of the Woods have during the past year [1896-97] shown very successful results, and a great deal of attention on the part of the Capitalists is now being directed to this section of the country. As Rat Portage is the distributing point for the greater part of the country in which the mines are situated, it may be hoped that business may be more successful than it has been in the past. (HBCA SF Rat Portage, n.d.:17, insert added)

1901 Census records for mines such as the Mikado and Sultana indicate that relatively few métis were involved in mining occupations: 3 métis were listed at Mikado Mine; 16 métis were enumerated at Sultana Mine (Canada 1901: 44/ b², u²).

Wabigoon prospered briefly as a result of gold mining, but quickly dwindled once gold was discovered in the far north. The village later established itself in the renewable forestry industry, supporting a paper mill in Dryden and lumber mills in the region. Several prominent métis families
in Wabigoon today – eg., the Watelainens – trace their European ancestry to those miners who chose to stay in the area (Personal Communication, May 5, 1999).

Prospecting for gold in the early days of mining development in the region was limited mainly to the Lake of the Woods. By mid-century, other discoveries extended the mining industry 200 miles to the north and east, and placed Kenora in the centre of a gold mining district (Jubilee Jamboree Ctte. 1952:24).

Forestry

Lumbering on a fairly extensive scale was established a decade before the turn of the 20th century. By 1890, two sawmills were in operation at Rat Portage and several others were operating elsewhere on Lake of the Woods and on the Rainy River. Much of the lumber was cut from the American side of the boundary line and some from Indian lands. Logs were driven down to Lake of the Woods where they were formed into rafts and towed to Rat Portage, Norman and Keewatin and to the railway. The historical review of Kenora claims that lumbering – more than any other industrial development – was responsible for the town’s permanent establishment (ibid.:20). At Fort Frances, the dam at Koochiching Falls was completed in 1910, providing a reliable power source for the mills and other industry (Fort Frances Public Library 1973:7, 9-10).

Several métis men listed in the 1901 Census for Rat Portage and Keewatin are identified occupationally as a “mill labourer,” “lumberman” or “woodman.” In the petition submitted by the Fort Frances métis to Frank Oliver (Superintendent General of Indian Affairs) in 1909, the “half-breeds of Couchiching reservation” indicated that their men were also involved in the forestry industry:

_We are neither idle people; our men are always working in the mills in the lumber camps and make in many instances more money then the whites around us._

(Doc.#48)

Indian Affairs Annual Reports (Sessional Papers) from 1902 to 1912 also report that the occupations of the Couchiching half-breeds consisted principally of “working in lumber camps,” “saw-mills,” “river-driving,” “making ties,” “cutting and hauling cord-wood,” and “selling large quantities of dry cord-wood” (Docs.#46,47,49).

5.2 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

5.2.1 Fort Frances and Rainy River

Fort Frances was given its name in 1830 when the HBC post and settlement at Rainy Lake (Lac la Pluie) was renamed for Frances Simpson, the British wife of Governor George Simpson. From 1859 to 1871, it was part of the judicial district of Algoma and in 1871 it was included in the district of Thunder Bay. Fort Frances officially became part of Ontario in 1889 when the boundary
dispute with Manitoba was settled. In 1909 Fort Frances became the centre of the provincial Judicial District of Rainy River (Fort Frances Public Library 1973).

Shortly after Treaty No.3, the lands between Lake Superior and Lake of the Woods were surveyed, twenty townships were created, and land was granted free of charge to bona fide settlers in blocks of 160 acres per person, with an option to buy an additional 80 acres of adjoining land at a dollar per acre (ibid.:7). The availability of land, and the subsequent development of commercial fishing, lumbering and mining industries all served to attract a permanent population of immigrants into the region.

The municipality of Alberton – comprised of Fort Frances, McIrvine, and Crozier – was established in 1891 bringing organized government to a population of 146 residents. In 1898 the township of McIrvine and the village of Fort Frances withdrew from the municipality of Alberton. By this time, Fort Frances and McIrvine had a combined population of 1,163 (Doc.#45). As indicated in Chapter 3, the majority of métis living off-reserve in the region were resident in McIrvine. In 1903, Fort Frances was incorporated as a town; McIrvine remained a separate township until 1948 when it was annexed by Fort Frances (Fort Frances Public Library 1973:8).

The town of Rainy River developed as a direct result of the completion of the International Railway Bridge between Canada and the USA (at Baudette) in 1901. Until this time, the majority of the settler population in this area lived at the lumbering settlement at Beaver Mills located a few miles away. In 1901, 27 métis were enumerated at Beaver Mills. The town of Rainy River was incorporated in 1903, and most of the homes at Beaver Mills – presumably those belonging to métis as well – were moved to the new town site (Thompson 1979:12-15).

As discussed in Chapter 3, it is apparent that the “Fort Frances métis” went to live on the Couchiching Reserve. Métis in the Fort Frances area represented by the Sunset Country Métis Council (MNO) declined participation in the present research, and hence little beyond what is discussed above, can be said about off-reserve métis in the Rainy River District in the present era.

5.2.2 Kenora, Dryden and Wabigoon

By 1880, the completion of the Railway between Thunder Bay and Rat Portage, and the establishment of lumber mills, prompted the Hudson’s Bay Company to increasingly shift its emphasis at Rat Portage away from the fur trade and toward general merchandising and sales. In order to accommodate this shift, the HBC purchased a store from E.M. Rideout “about forty feet from the Hotel” built during the construction of the CPR (HBCA: SF Rat Portage n.d.:12; Jubilee Jamboree Ctte. 1952:18). Of significance here are statements by members of the Kenora Métis Community Council indicated that they grew up in “Rideout”, and that this location is considered by them as historically a “métis settlement” (Personal Communication, May 3, 1999). That this neighbourhood is close to an HBC post where métis families historically settled as a result of their fur trade
involvement, may add to the significance of this oral account.

An overview of population growth in the Kenora District demonstrates the influence of resource discoveries and industrialization. In 1871 the non-Aboriginal population was mainly limited to a few scattered fur traders. A decade later the CPR and lumbering industry resulted in a growth of the population to 4,564. By 1901, the population had grown to 10,369, representing not only the growth of the town of Kenora but also of smaller towns established elsewhere along the CPR and CNR, established primarily by the gold mining activity. As railways continued to open the northern areas, and as mines were established further north, immigration into the area continued, reaching approximately 40,000 by mid-century (Jubilee Jamboree Ctte. 1952:24).

No published information about the urban development of Dryden has been found to date, although it is known that the area developed as a direct result of the forestry industry, and today Dryden’s economy is driven mainly by the large paper mill in that town. In comparison with Wabigoon, Dryden is a relatively “new” town, and many métis residents in the area are actually connected with the history of the fur trade, railway and mining activity at Wabigoon/Dinorwic. The only documented source of oral histories is provided in a local history of Wabigoon published ca. 1988. This book contains submissions by many local families who can trace back several generations to the Wabigoon/Dryden area. In several instances, families specifically connect their ancestry to mixed Aboriginal/European marriages. Some family names are familiar from the fur trade, including for example: Garneau, McIvor, and Maggrah (Melander 1988).

5.3 MÉTIS POPULATION AND IDENTITY IN THE KENORA DISTRICT TODAY

The only potential source of systematic quantitative data on the métis population in Ontario is the 1985 survey conducted by the Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association. Published analyses from this data-base are not community-specific, and hence figures on métis in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts are not available (Peters et al. 1991a & b). The following discussion is based on consultations with métis groups and representatives in the Kenora District, conducted in May 1999.

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32 The oral accounts are preliminary and the analysis would benefit from additional details and confirmation obtained from systematic oral historical research.

33 According to Peters et al. (1991b:83, note 4), one copy of the database is deposited at Queen’s University, the only condition of use being that OMNSIA be acknowledged in publications. This may be a source worth investigating for community-specific data in future research.

34 Consultation sessions were held as follows: Kenora Métis Community Council (MNO) - May 3, 1999; Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario in Dryden (MNO) - May 4, 1999, and; Wesakwete (OMAA - Zone 1) in Wabigoon, May 5, 1999. As mentioned above, the Sunset Country Métis (MNO) in Fort Frances declined participation in the present research.

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5.3.1 Métis Organizations in the Kenora District

Métis in the Kenora District are represented by two provincial organizations: Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association (OMAA), and Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).

The OMAA - Zone 1 office (Wesakwete, literally translated, “half and half”) is located in Wabigoon and since 1971 has represented and served métis, off-reserve and non-status Aboriginal persons in northwestern Ontario. Reportedly OMAA-Zone 1 originally had a membership of approximately 350-375, but since the passing of Bill C-31 (when many women and their children were re-admitted into band membership), and with the recent formation of the MNO in Dryden and Kenora, membership has declined. Membership requirements are relatively broad, requiring individuals to self-identify as métis or of Aboriginal ancestry and to provide documentation of their Aboriginal ancestry. Applications are reviewed by the OMAA board, and according to local Wabigoon representatives, community recognition and acceptance of an applicant as métis is vital. Consistent with OMAA’s mandate, the issue of separate identities as métis, status or non-status Aboriginal was viewed by several members of Wesakwete as illogical, unproductive, and impractical in an area where people with Aboriginal ancestry and culture belong to one community comprised of a few extended families. This sentiment was clearly expressed by a leader of Wesakwete who considered this a colonial phenomenon which he termed, "Indian sectoralism" (Personal Communication, May 5, 1999).

The local councils of the Métis Nation of Ontario in Kenora and Dryden have been in existence since the mid to late 1990s (MNO was established in 1994). The Kenora Métis Community Council represents over 500 members (including individuals whose applications are in process of verification) in its zone, while the more recently established Dryden office of the Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario reported a membership of approximately 150. Membership requirements as per the MNO guidelines are more stringent than those of OMAA, requiring individuals to provide authenticated documentation as proof of Aboriginal ancestry, a baptismal certificate and long-form birth certificate including names of parents, and the community of origin of parents and grandparents. In Kenora, several members produced copies of their genealogical charts and documentation (e.g., HBCA records, treaty paylists, etc.) during the research consultation session (Personal Communication, May 3, 1999). MNO members must self-identify as métis, and must be accepted by MNO as members. In contrast to OMAA, local MNO members express a métis identity that is more exclusive and one that is associated with a distinct métis history and culture. MNO local councils lobby for métis-specific services. For example, the Dryden group reportedly responded to the offer of an Aboriginal health institute to which métis could subscribe, by replying that it was a métis institute they required, not an Aboriginal one.

---35 The number of current members was not provided.---

5.3.2 Issues of Identity Expressed by Métis Groups in the Kenora District

For the most part, métis representatives in the Kenora District agreed that the fur trade was the historic root of métis cultural identity. This was true particularly among métis consulted in Kenora and Dryden, where groups defined themselves as a people with a distinct cultural heritage that began in the fur trade. In several instances, members of the Kenora group produced genealogical charts showing their relation to NWC or HBC employees such as, for example, George McPherson, or the Kipling family. However, members at both Kenora and Dryden also clearly stated that while the fur trade was a fundamental element in métis history, they did not consider ancestry in the fur trade period as essential for identification as métis today. Indeed, several prominent Kenora Council members trace their ancestry to Norwegian or Swedish paternity beginning in the industrial era of the late 19th early 20th centuries.

Members at both Kenora and Dryden viewed events such as that at Red River and the Riel Resistance as significant to the history of métis people, particularly those who live in north-western Ontario. As discussed in previous chapters (3 and 4), some métis fled Manitoba during this time, and many moved east into Ontario. In particular, the Kenora Métis Community Council stressed the strong connection between many of their members and the Red River métis settlement, adding that for a time the Kenora métis were an extension of the Red River métis. Because of this link to the Red River settlement, members reported that often the genealogical data necessary to fulfill their membership requirements could be found at the archives in St. Boniface (Winnipeg).

As suggested above, métis viewed the interaction between persons of European and Aboriginal races after the fur trade – i.e. after Confederation and during the period of white settlement and industrialization – as an extension of the métis heritage. This was true for all groups consulted in the Kenora District, but to differing degrees. While the Wesakwete group in Wabigoon acknowledged the history and role of métis in the fur trade in that area, this was not emphasized as the cultural root of métis identity. In several cases, the gold mining era which brought many Scandinavians to the locality, who subsequently married Aboriginal or métis women, and whose families have remained in Wabigoon, was considered as important a part of their heritage as the fur trade. Seemingly, it was their continuous connection to the local Aboriginal community and ancestry that more importantly defined the identity of the Wesakwete group.

Among each of the groups consulted in the Kenora District, there was an apparent sense of shared life-style among those who self-identified as métis. In Kenora, Dryden and Wabigoon this was expressed in the significance of resource harvesting – hunting, fishing, berry picking, gathering of herbs and medicines, guiding, forestry, fire-fighting, etc. – which individuals connected to their Aboriginal heritage. When asked about unique features of the métis way of life, one individual from Kenora replied, “All we do is resource-oriented!” This statement is consistent with the historical record in which the 1901 Census for example, lists métis occupations as including “trapper”, “hunter”, “fisherman”, as well as forestry and mining occupations referred to above.

In both Dryden and Wabigoon, members described gatherings of métis families at blue-berry
camps for several weeks of each summer. Blueberries are picked as a cash crop, and in one instance, a family from Wabigoon had established a "store" near the camp to sell their produce. Wesakwete members also described "crew bosses" who organized wild rice harvests, not unlike the buffalo hunt brigades organized by métis further west. Members at Kenora spoke of feasts among métis families who hunted and fished for subsistence, and among all groups, the importance of sharing harvested resources among and between métis families was repeatedly emphasized.

The Kenora group claimed that a significant percentage of métis in the locality were currently involved in tourist camps as cooks, guides, etc. Individuals from the Kenora group indicated that the shared lifestyle among métis frequently led to endogamous marriage patterns, in which métis married métis. A representative from Dryden reiterated this point, but added that in most families, some in-laws were métis, while other were not, and that the general marriage pattern was "mixed." When asked if their children considered themselves "métis", the representative from Dryden gave an unqualified "yes", adding that parents "pass that sense of métis-ness down to their kids."

With regard to conventional social scientific definitions of community which generally include a common territory or geographical location as an important criterion\(^34\), members of métis groups consulted for this present research unanimously considered the concept of territoriality irrelevant and inappropriate when speaking about métis community. In every instance, métis representatives characterized themselves historically as a highly mobile people who moved from place to place with the fur trade, or the buffalo hunt, or wherever their occupations or subsistence livelihood led them. Hence, speaking of métis in terms of a "traditional territory" was seemingly antithetical to the métis way of life.

Consistent with stories told by members of other métis organizations consulted by \textit{Praxis},\(^37\) the métis groups in the Kenora District confirmed that a "silent period" occurred during the early to mid-1900s when parents hid their Aboriginal and métis ancestry from their children in order to protect them from prejudice and discrimination. In Kenora, this phenomenon was given particular emphasis, and more than any other group consulted, Kenora métis spoke of serious problems of racism that have continued to the present time. As a result, persons who are "known to be métis" reportedly continue to identify themselves solely with their European ancestry.

Most groups agreed that it is only in the past two decades that the younger generation of métis have vocalized their desire to know their Aboriginal ancestry and to openly investigate and acknowledge their métis identity. Several factors were listed as influential in this development, including: the media, especially "television and movies" (perhaps because Aboriginal people began to be portrayed in a more positive light in the 1980s); "songs" (possibly also the growth of an

\(^{36}\) See \textit{Praxis} Research Associates 1997 (also Bell 1991:398 - International Commission of Jurists criteria of who constitutes as a "people").

\(^{37}\) In addition to the groups at Kenora, Dryden and Wabigoon (listed above), \textit{Praxis} also consulted with Red Sky Métis Independent Nation (Thunder Bay), and the Wawa Native Network (Wawa).

Aboriginal artistic community); “better educational opportunities” (which presumably has prompted young people to question the status quo and to take pride in their ancestry), and; the inclusion of métis as Aboriginal people in the 1982 Constitution. It might also be speculated that the growth of provincial and national Aboriginal organizations which have raised the profile of Aboriginal people and culture in Canada and the USA has also had an influence in this regard.

The so-called “silent period” and almost complete lack of data on métis in northwestern Ontario in the 20th century, is a problem acknowledged by each of the métis groups as they attempt to gain recognition by governments. It became apparent in the course of ‘field-research’ that there is a need for systematic oral historical interview research among elders in an attempt to give voice to this period of métis history, and a willingness to pursue such research should it be conducted in a collaborative manner.

The concluding chapter which follows presents a summary of findings based on the data and analysis regarding métis in the Rainy River and Kenora Districts provided throughout this report.
6. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter outlines the general findings established from the historical and ethnohistorical data and interpretations pertaining to the development of a métis population in the Rainy River and Kenora Districts.

6.1 ABOREDINAL GROUPS IN THE REGION: EARLY CONTACT PERIOD

- Historical data and the majority of ethnohistorical accounts concerning the early-contact period in the region west and northwest of Lake Superior indicate that the area was occupied by Assiniboine and Cree groups in the 17th century. At contact Assiniboine and Cree were engaged in a military alliance against Sioux living further south and southwest of Lake Superior, which probably stemmed from their economic interdependency in the fur trade:

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This interpretation is supported by both written accounts and cartographic data from the 17th century, although both types of sources present some problems and limitations for ethnohistorical reconstructions of the population groups in the area;

- Problems and limitations with the data stem from the fact that until the late 17th century, French records were based on second-hand or third-hand information collected from Aboriginal informants;

- Maps from this time period which attempt to place distinct Aboriginal groups often contain (by present standards) gross errors of scale and feature location and contour.

- French explorer-trader Jacques de Noyon is generally credited as being the first European to reach Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods in 1688. The inland route he followed from Fort Kaministikwa (near present-day Thunder Bay) became the standard route utilised by French fur traders until the demise of the French fur trade in the 1750s:

  - De Noyon likely met both Assiniboine and Cree in the vicinity of Rainy Lake, which he termed Lac des Christinaux while he considered Lake of the Woods as the Lac des Assinibois;

  - Some scholars have drawn on this account to claim that the territorial limit between Cree and Assiniboine was somewhere between Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods;

  - Given that the region experienced ongoing warfare between Cree, Assiniboine, and Sioux, it seems doubtful that precise and definitive territorial limits can be established
for the early-contact period.

- The majority of ethnohistorians agree that Ojibwa occupation of the region west of Lake Superior dates to the early 18th century. In these accounts Ojibwa join the Cree and Assiniboine alliance against the Sioux, and become the near exclusive occupants of the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region by the mid 18th century, as Cree and Assiniboine relocate further west to the Lake Winnipeg area.

6.2 EMERGENCE OF A MIXED POPULATION: 17TH - 18TH CENTURIES

- A permanent, albeit small-scale European presence in the Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods region dates to the establishment of French trade posts in the 1730s. Prior to that time the region was likely regularly visited by itinerant traders called coureurs de bois operating from Fort Caministiqua (near present-day Thunder Bay) established since 1678:
  - It is likely that persons of mixed Aboriginal and European (French) descent date from early contacts between the coureurs de bois and Aboriginal groups in the late 17th century, although direct evidence to support this hypothesis is lacking:

  - An account of a voyage from Grand Portage to Lake Winnipeg in the late 18th century by Alexander Henry describes an incident involving sexual relations between Chippewa women and Canadian men at Lake of the Woods;

- By the late 18th century warfare with the Sioux has shifted further west, and the ensuing peace allowed for more stable trade relations between Aboriginal groups and Europeans. It is in this period that, under the NWC, a number of posts were established throughout the region:
  - The HBC began to provide direct competition to the NWC in the Rainy Lake area by establishing a post there in 1790; the competing NWC post was surrendered to the HBC by 1816, and the HBC gained a near trade monopoly throughout the region by absorbing the NWC in 1821.

6.3 MÉTIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE FUR TRADE: 19TH CENTURY

- Fur trade posts at Lac la Pluie (Rainy Lake) were the centre of trade with the Ojibwa in the region west of Lake Superior. At one time or another, every major fur trade company – the North West Company (NWC), the X.Y. Company, the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) and the American Fur Company – had a post in the Rainy Lake vicinity.

- The presence of multiple posts at Rainy Lake over a prolonged period of time resulted in a high degree of contact and unions between European traders and Aboriginal women, which
ultimately produced a population of mixed ancestry, or métis. Post records demonstrate the presence of a fair number of métis men (many with families) who worked and lived at post “settlements”.

6.3.1 Métis at Lac la Pluie / Fort Frances

- Direct references to métis in the Lac la Pluie records are relatively infrequent, and include the following labels: “half-breed”, “native of the country”, and; “brûle”. Journal entries generally identify individuals by name or family connection, not by racial origin, and identification as métis is often implied. However, in several cases métis identity can be confirmed in annual district reports which list and evaluate each post servant or by anecdotal remarks entered in a journal or diary.

- A sedentary population of métis families appears to have developed around the Rainy Lake posts from at least the late 1700s. However, the data indicates that settlements associated with posts were first and foremost fur trade in character, and the fact that métis resided there was secondary. That is, these were fur trade communities, as opposed to métis communities, despite the fact the majority of the population may have been métis. No evidence has been found to indicate that these settlements were ever characterized as métis, or if they were, at what point this may have occurred.

  - Instances are found in the earliest HBC Lac la Pluie journals in which the trading post is referred to as a “settlement”.

  - The diary of Hugh Fairis (1804-1805) indicates that approximately thirty men regarded the NWC Lac la Pluie post as their residence. In addition, Aboriginal and métis partners and children of these men lived at the post. It may have been this relatively large and well established settlement that prompted the NWC to target Rainy Lake as a location for retired servants and their native-born families. This plan was never realized due to the amalgamation of the NWC with the HBC in 1821.

  - There is evidence of social interaction between individuals and families belonging to competing posts at Lac la Pluie. Customarily, Sundays and holidays such as All Saints’ Day, Christmas and New Year’s Day were celebrated with dinners and dances.

  - NWC and HBC records from the first half of the 19th century indicate that Aboriginal or métis wives of traders and post employees were considered members of the post settlement. Journals contain frequent references to these women collectively as “the women of the fort”. As a group, these women engaged in post provisioning activities such as maple sugar harvesting, gardening, fishing, and rabbit-snaring.

- Métis offspring of European-Aboriginal unions were more than simply a side-effect of fur trade relations. These “natives of the country” possessed cultural, social and language skills
that created an occupational niche for these individuals as active participants in the fur trade. At Lac la Pluie, métis were hired as interpreters, winterers, runners, canoe-builders, and country-food providers. However, these activities were not necessarily engaged in exclusively by métis who appear to have served as “jacks-of-all-trades” often alongside non-métis apprentices, post-masters and clerks.

Lac la Pluie Post journals and Rainy Lake District reports contain references to a group of individuals labelled as ‘winterers’ and to post activities related specifically to “wintering.” In many instances these individuals can be positively identified as métis. For example, the journal for HBC Outfit 1818-1819 provides a list of families wintering at Lake la Pluie and its dependencies. In addition to 35 single men, the list shows a total of seven families including fourteen children. Some of the winterers are positively identified as métis elsewhere in the post records. As well, at this point in the fur trade history, it is almost certain that all of the wives of these winterers were either Aboriginal or métis, and certainly the children were of mixed ancestry.

One of the first roles for which métis were recognized as particularly well-suited, was that of interpreter. Having learned English or French from their fathers, and the local Aboriginal language from their mothers, métis children acquired both the linguistic and social skills to communicate between the two groups. Of the eleven men identified as interpreters at Lac la Pluie, three are positively métis, and the journals suggest that most, if not all of the remainder were probably métis. Nicholas Chatelain and François Mainville were likely the two best-known and highly regarded of métis interpreters at Lac la Pluie.

Métis interpreters and other métis post employees engaged regularly in harvesting activities, including the operation of fish camps, as well as duck, geese and pheasant hunting. Métis men such as Auger and Jourdain were known as expert canoe builders.

The métis population living in what is today the Rainy River District as enumerated in the 1901 Census totalled approximately 300 individuals. Métis represented about 9.1% of the total population of locations in which métis were enumerated. The majority (70%) of métis families in the district resided in the Fort Frances area, either off-reserve at McIrvine or on the reserve at Rainy Lake in the Couchiching Agency. Some continuity in the métis population from the fur trade records is evident.

Seven métis family names (31 households) recorded in the 1901 Census for the Rainy Lake and Rainy River areas were also found in the fur trade records. Five of these households lived off the reserve; 24 households were enumerated on the reserve.

A total of fourteen families living in the Rainy River District show that all or some of their métis family members were born in Manitoba. Several cases show that one or both métis parents were born in Manitoba, while their children were born in Ontario.
This may indicate that métis families from Red River moved to Ontario in the wake of the Riel uprisings, and that métis in the District at that time were not necessarily connected with the Lac la Pluie fur trade.

6.3.2 Métis at Rat Portage / Kenora

- The scant amount of archival data available for the Kenora District during the fur trade does not allow for conclusive findings regarding the history of métis in that area. Although HBC posts were established at Rat Portage (Kenora), Keewatin, Eagle Lake (Dryden) and Dinorwic (Wabigoon), almost none of these post journals or other records have survived. Consequently, any analysis of the development of a historic métis population in the Kenora and Dryden area must be considered within the fur trade context of the Lac la Pluie district to which these posts belonged. Nevertheless, there is some positive evidence for a sustained métis presence in the area.

- The earliest fur trade records for the Kenora District are from the Dalles post journals beginning in 1832. The post manager in 1832-33 was a Mr. Taylor whose entries reveal that the post was a relatively small one, with a population of at least two families. While the racial identity of the two men is unknown, it can be assumed that the wives were Aboriginal or métis and that the children were of mixed descent.

- Throughout its existence beginning ca. 1836, the Rat Portage post was managed by a series of métis individuals, several of whose family names are identified as métis in the 1901 Census and resident in the Kenora / Dryden area. Some métis individuals resident in Kenora today trace their ancestry to métis George McPherson, post factor at Rat Portage from 1858-1871.

- From the 1890s, inspection reports for Rat Portage, White Dog, Hungry Hall and Dinorwic, as well as government correspondence contain references to métis names known from the fur trade in the Lake of the Woods and Lac la Pluie area. Members of the Kenora Métis Community Council referred to several of these names as recognizably métis.

- The métis population living in what is today the Kenora District as enumerated in the 1901 Census totalled approximately 200 individuals. Métis represented about 2.4% of the total population of the locations in which métis were enumerated. The majority (60%) of métis families in the district resided in the town of what was then known as Rat Portage (Kenora).

- A total of twenty métis families (eleven family names) recorded in the 1901 Census are also found in the fur trade records.

- A total of 30 families living in the Kenora area (the majority in the town of Kenora) in 1901 had at least one member of their household born in Manitoba. In many cases,
the parents of families were born in Manitoba, while some or all of their children were born in Ontario. An analysis of the dates of birth of the Ontario-born children indicates that most families moved into the Kenora area sometime in the 1880s - 1890s. This is consistent with oral accounts given by several members of the Kenora Métis Community Council who related that many of the métis families in the area today are descendants of Red River métis who moved east into Ontario as tensions in the west increased due to the Riel uprisings.

6.4 MÉTIS INVOLVEMENT IN TREATY NO.3 / 'HALF-BREED' ADHESION

- An Annuity List dated 1871 lists 9 métis families (49 individuals) identified as “Halfbreeds of Fort Frances” who received annuities in the first year the Dawson route was used. This indicates that in the nascent period of treaty discussions in the area, there existed a distinct and recognizable métis group at Fort Frances.

- Métis individuals from Red River, Rainy Lake and Kenora were involved in the negotiations of Treaty No. 3 as hired interpreters and facilitators. However the insistence by Chief Mawedopenais—the Ojibwa spokesman—and by Alexander Morris—the Treaty Commissioner—that the success of the negotiations in 1873 were owed “much to the Half-breeds” indicates that perhaps some influence was also wielded by the métis in attendance.

- A “Personnel File” of Nicholas Chatelaine—a prominent métis leader and government interpreter—consisting of correspondence dated 1889-1890 indicates that government officials considered him to be an important and influential force among the Indians during Treaty No.3 negotiations.

- There appears to be no record that métis spoke on their own behalf with regard to inclusion in the Treaty provisions. However, on the third and final day of negotiations, Chief Mawedopenais of the Fort Frances band proposed that “the Half-breeds that are actually living amongst us” be included in the Treaty. Both Mawedopenais and Morris imply that while this group of métis were acknowledged as an “other” in racial terms, they were nevertheless considered by Ojibwa at Fort Frances as members of their community in social terms.

- In response to the Ojibwa request in 1873 that ten or twenty métis families be included in the Treaty, and in light of the important role Morris believed métis had played in a difficult Treaty negotiation process now in its third attempt, he promised to recommend that these métis be given the option to treat. In 1875, the “Adhesion by Half-breeds of Rainy River and Lake” was signed by Nicholas Chatelaine who represented the group of métis to whom Mawedopenais referred in 1873. The significance of the Adhesion is its indication of an organized and self-identifying community of métis in the Rainy River District.
While there is no direct evidence available to indicate a link between the families referred to by Chief Mawedopenais and those named in the 1871 annuity list, the fact that the 1871 list is appended at the end of the “Indians of Rainy Lake” account suggests that they were part of the same Fort Frances métis group;

Certainly by 1875, there is documented evidence that Chatelaine was the so-titled “Chief” of a definite and distinct group of métis in the Fort Frances and Rainy River area. This group appears to have possessed both a political and cultural consciousness as métis. In the Adhesion, Chatelaine and his métis group insisted that their distinct status be legally reflected in treaty provisions which recognized distinct métis rights, benefits and relations with the government, and which granted them a territorial base or reserve.

Despite a series of petitions and correspondence with the Government, Chatelaine’s “Half-breeds of Fort Frances” did not receive their own reserve, and by 1892 were considered part of the Couchiching band. Correspondence from 1901 indicates that the métis group still maintained a separate residence pattern from the Aboriginal people on the reserve. A petition dated 1909 and Indian Affairs annual reports dating to 1912 indicate that the Couchiching métis maintained a distinct identity and that they were recognized by government as a group with distinctive characteristics.

6.5 MÉTIS POPULATION IN RAINY RIVER / KENORA DISTRICTS: 20TH CENTURY

The Kenora and Rainy River Districts share much of the same history of economic development and settlement in the 20th century. However, few local histories recognize the Aboriginal presence before European settlement or the development of a population of mixed ancestry as a result of the fur trade. This is consistent with the general lack of data on métis in Ontario in the 20th century. A serious gap of information exists about métis during the period of industrial development and relatively little is known about what happened to the métis fur-trade families associated with the HBC posts in the region.

Significant European settlement occurred in the region beginning in the 1880s when the Dawson route and Rainy River canals were completed, and particularly when the Canadian Pacific Railway reached Rat Portage. This had the effect of bringing immigrant settlers of a broad range of ethnic origins into the region.

Industrial development of the region and the growth of urban centres came as a result of commercial fishing, gold mining, forestry, and tourism. There is documented evidence of métis involved in mining, the lumber industry and commercial fishing in 1901. This is consistent with oral accounts which add that métis were (and continue to be) actively engaged in tourism-related occupations.
Métis groups in the region have been represented by various organizations since 1971 when the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association (OMAA) established its Zone 1 office – Wesakwete – in Wabigoon. Since 1994, three additional offices have been opened under the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO); the Kenora Métis Community Council (Kenora); Northwest Métis Nation of Ontario (Dryden), and; Sunset Country Métis (Fort Frances). Consultations with groups in Kenora, Dryden and Wabigoon resulted in the following general themes with regard to métis identity and presence in Ontario today:

- Métis representatives generally agreed that the fur trade was the historic root of métis cultural identity. However, events such as that at Red River and the Riel Resistance are also viewed as significant to the history of métis people who now live in northwestern Ontario. As well, the interaction between persons of European and Aboriginal descent after the fur trade – i.e., during the period of immigration and industrialization – is generally seen as an extension of the métis heritage.

- Organizations (MNO) in Kenora and Dryden require individuals to satisfy criteria of membership which include genealogical authentication of an aboriginal ancestor. Numerous individuals have completed or are currently working to complete their genealogical documentation which demonstrates their aboriginal ancestry, and in several cases, their fur-trade roots.

- All métis groups consulted agreed that self-identification is also an important criterion of métis identity. Considered of almost equal importance is the acceptance by the métis community of an individual as a member of that community.

- Métis groups claimed a sense of shared life-style among self-identifying métis. This was expressed in the significance of resource-harvesting – hunting, fishing, berry picking, guiding, etc. – which most individuals connected to their Aboriginal heritage. As well, they indicated that the high number of métis involved in resource-oriented occupations is also an expression of the métis lifestyle.

- Métis groups unanimously considered the concept of “common territory” as irrelevant and inappropriate when speaking about métis community. Métis representatives characterized themselves historically as a highly mobile people who moved wherever their occupations or subsistence livelihood led them. Hence, speaking of métis in terms of a “traditional territory” was considered antithetical to the métis way of life.
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(Kenora District:)

m¹ Dryden
w¹ Keewatin (Township).
b² Mikado Mine
l² Rat Portage
m¹ Rat Portage, Town-Ville (Kenora)
u² Sultana Mine
x² Wabigoon

(Rainy River District:)

g¹ Alberton
i¹ Aylesworth
j¹ Beaudro Fishery ("Hungary Hall")
q¹ Fort Frances
z¹ McIrvine
i² Fort Frances

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- **AO**: Archives of Ontario
- **HBCA**: Hudson’s Bay Company Archives
- **NAC**: National Archives of Canada
- **NLC**: National Library of Canada

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<td>Dawson Route (Fort Frances) - Paylist Re: &quot;Halfbreeds of Fort Frances&quot;</td>
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<td>Irving Papers Correspondence re: Indian Islands Memorandum of Agreement re: half-breed rights under NW Angle Treaty.</td>
<td>AO MS 2574, 30/36/03, pp. 1-3</td>
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<td>Couchiching Agency - Treaty payments to half-breeds and a reserve for their use. (Manitoba Superintendency)</td>
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<td>Incoming Correspondence; George McPherson</td>
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<td>Personnel File of Benjamin Spence and N. Chastelaine, Interpreters for the</td>
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<td>Frank Oliver, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs</td>
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