

## Journal of Miles McDonell 1817 – January to April

### LAC Selkirk Papers, C-16, Vol.64

#### [Fort Daer<sup>1</sup> – Pembina]

*Wednesday January 1st 1817* – The Canadians saluted us at the dawn with a discharge of small arms to usher in the New Year. Gave the Soldiers the last day of their allowance, a dram to the Canadians & freemen finished our stock of liquor. Procured 3 horses from the freemen & intend going off in the morning, the horses here are poor wretched animals, the horses we brought with us are far superior, after making the journey. Wrote to Lt. Pambran [Pambrun]<sup>2</sup> to come to us with the Red Lake & Blackmans band [Le Homme Noir]<sup>3</sup> of Indians. Bruce<sup>4</sup> is to go to Pambran to Red Cedar Lake with the Express. Sent him to the plain to procure a guide, the Canadians ate the whole of the Cow given them yesterday & came for more Meat. The Soldiers altho' they had abundance of provisions stole some tongues. Weather cold. a serious quarrel took place at Breakfast between Lt. McDonald<sup>5</sup> and Capt. D'Or:<sup>6</sup> –

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<sup>1</sup> Fort Daer/Dair was established by Miles Macdonell, the agent for Lord Selkirk, in 1812. It was named after the eldest son of Lord Selkirk who held the title of Lord Daer. It was located on the south side of the Pembina River near its junction with the Red River and near to where the town of Pembina now sits. After the union of the HBC and NWC, and the determination that the fort was in U.S. territory, the fort was abandoned in 1822.

<sup>2</sup> Pierre-Chrysologue Pambrun (1792-1841) was born in Lower Canada and fought in the War of 1812. He joined the HBC in 1815 and left for the northwest with Colin Robertson. In 1816, he was captured by Cuthbert Grant and the NWC and was forced to accompany the Metis from Fort Qu'Appelle to Fort Douglas, and is one of the few HBC men to survive the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816. Consequently, he gave testimony for the HBC at the trials in Montreal and London. He returned to HBC service in 1819, serving as Clerk at Cumberland and York Factory. In 1822-23, he served as a Clerk in the Bow River Expedition. He continued to serve at Lesser Slave Lake, Athabasca, New Caledonia and the Columbia District until 1841. He became a Chief Trader in 1840 but died the following year in 1841, in Walla Walla, after falling off a Horse. Ted Binnema and Gerhard J. Ens (eds.), *Edmonton House Journals, Reports from the Saskatchewan District Including the Bow River Expedition, 1821-1836* (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 2016), 374.

<sup>3</sup> Black Man, or L'Homme Noir, was a Saulteaux chief who resided higher up the Red River towards Red Lake. He was an elderly man of a gentle and open disposition and friendly to whites. He would be one of the signatories of the Selkirk Treaty of 1817.

<sup>4</sup> Charles G. Bruce left Montreal to go to Red River with Miles McDonell in 1816, to serve as interpreter for the "Sautoux" (Ojibwa) language. Deposition of C.G. Bruce sworn at Fort William 23 August 1816. *Statement Respecting the Earl of Selkirk's Settlement upon the Red River* (London: John Murray, 1817), xlvii-xlix.

<sup>5</sup> Archibald McDonald (1790-1853), a former Lieutenant of the Glengarry Fencibles, was employed by Lord Selkirk to recruit colonists in Scotland in 1812. He arrived in the RRS in 1813. He was appointed to the Council of Assiniboia to aid the colony's governor, Miles Macdonell, and during the winter of 1814-15 he served as one of Macdonell's principal lieutenants. When the colonists were forced out of the settlement in June of 1815, McDonald proceeded with them to Jack River House. While the settlers would return to the settlement in the fall of 1815, McDonald returned to England via York Factory and prepared a written account of the events that led to the abandonment of the RRS. This account was published in London in 1816. Later that year he joined Selkirk in Montreal, and led a group of disbanded De Meuron soldiers who aided in the capture Fort William. McDonald then returned to Montreal and sailed for England in the fall. In 1818 he returned to the Red River settlement to assist in the administration of the colony. In 1820 he joined the Hudson's Bay Company as a clerk and was posted to Ile a la Crosse. In 1821 he was transferred to the

*Thursday Jan<sup>y</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup>* – Got but 2 horses from the freemen. The Indians leave their families to be fed here till they return. Loaded our 2 horses & the Canadians with Meat. Left the Bulls sled, he is quite tired, left 7 Fentes of Folavoine<sup>7</sup> for a future purpose. Sent off all our people in the forenoon. Lt. McDonald & I remained after the party had gone. Meantime Bruce arrived with old Adam to pilot him, had to procure dogs & leather for shoes for them, some other freemen arrived. recommended to them all to make as much provisions as possible for us, & left some tobacco, a fathom each for those I did not see. Came off, passed some our Canadians on the road, [p. 17,178] found the road heavy, notwithstanding the favorable report made to us of it by the freemen. It came on to snow blowing hard from N.E. & cold. Passed a baggage train & artillery train on the way the horses had given out. Reached the riviere aux Marais where Capt. D’Orson<sup>es</sup> & our people a head had put up. Mr. Nolain [Nolin]<sup>8</sup> & our Indian guide Taylor had gone a point farther on. Lt. McDonald & I had our faces frozen repeatedly which was the case with almost all our men. We felt otherwise warm. Seven of our Canadians are not come up, for whose safety I am concerned. The bedding of the Soldiers is left with the trains behind as are all our mess furniture. –

*Friday January 3<sup>rd</sup>* – It ceased snowing – wind blowing hard from N.E. – very cold & continued drift. We cannot stir from our Encampment. In afternoon it moderated when I sent in quest of our absent men – but cannot get any intelligence of them, nor can we get any of the articles left behind. Passed the day in our Encampment. Weather cold. –

*Saturday January 4<sup>th</sup>* – The weather is such that we sent horses back for our things tho’ yet very cold. Resolve to leave one of our guns, ammunition & some

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Columbia Department where he spent the rest of his career. He retired to Quebec in 1848 and died in 1853. Jean Murray Cole, “McDonald, Archibald,” *DCB Online*.

<sup>6</sup> Proteus D’Orsonnens (1781-1834), was born in Fribourg, joined the Regiment de Meuron in 1801, advancing to lieutenant in 1803 and to captain in 1814. He was hired by Selkirk to accompany him on his journey to Red River in 1816-17, and to retake Fort Douglas.

<sup>7</sup> Wild Rice

<sup>8</sup> This is Louis Nolin, the son of the French fur trader Jean-Baptiste Nolin (1742-1826) who operated in the Sault Ste. Marie region. In 1815, Louis was a clerk in Colin Robertson’s expedition to Athabasca, and he was with Robertson when he re-established the Selkirk Colony in 1815-16. He acted as an interpreter there for Robert Semple and the Colony, and he was at the Colony when the Battle of Seven Oaks occurred in 1816. He made a disposition about those events to Lord Selkirk at Fort William in August of 1816. As noted here he accompanied the invasion party of Miles McDonell to Fort Douglas in the winter of 1816-17. In 1817, he went to Montreal and in 1818 he was tried and acquitted with Colin Robertson for their capture of Fort Gibraltar. He returned to the Red River Settlement and he and his brother (Augustin Nolin) and Father would eventually settle there. E.E. Rich (ed.), *Colin Robertson’s Correspondence Book, September 1817 to September 1822* (London: The Hudson’s Bay Record Society, 1939), 237-238. Donald Chaput, “Nolin, Jean-Baptiste,” *DCB Online*.

articles of goods here to lighten the transport till they can afterwards be sent for. Our Indians returned to Fort Daer, except our guide John Taylor, their services can at present be dispensed with, gave them ammunition, tobacco &c, & directions to make provisions [p. 17,179] for us. Our 7 absent Canadians arrived safe, they made for the grand Isle & weather out the storm there. There are 8 Meurons beds yet behind. Lt. McD. remains to secure all the articles left. Made a start with the people to Nolain's camp about 6 inches of snow had fallen & was drifted in heaps. Much discontent among the Soldiers from the want of their bedding. – Weather extremely cold. –

*Sunday Jan<sup>y</sup> 5<sup>th</sup>* – Sent Nolain with his dogs back for the guns & ammunition left – the Carriage & train are to be abandoned. Sent 2 men to remain with Lt. McD. to secure the things left by bringing them to Ft. Daer, but they came on after secreting the things. Some more of the Meurons luggage was hid here to lighten us, & one soldier remained against Capt. D'Or. orders. Two Bulls were killed on the route by the people which gave them some encouragement. Crossed Riv<sup>re</sup> aux Prunes<sup>9</sup> & put up in sight of the Gratién.<sup>10</sup> 3 of our horses have given out. One gun is drawn by a Cow, burnt a us[e]less carriage for the iron. Weather Clear & cold all day

*Monday Jan<sup>y</sup> 6<sup>th</sup>* – Crossed the River Gratién. saw different bands of Cattle. the party killed 2 bulls. – An Indian came to our Encampment. Informed of some Brulés having come from La Sourie<sup>11</sup> to Ft. Douglas<sup>12</sup> & that more were expected there, that Peguis<sup>13</sup> is at the Riv<sup>re</sup> Salle<sup>14</sup> with about 30 Indians, that the Indians are all inimical to the N.W.C<sup>o</sup> & the Brulés. This Indian

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<sup>9</sup> La rivière aux Prunes (Plum River) is a small stream flowing into the Red River just north of present-day St. Jean Baptiste. It enters the Red River from the west. It was named for the plums growing along the stream.

<sup>10</sup> This is the rivière aux Gratis or Scratching River. It is now called the Morris River.

<sup>11</sup> Souris or Mouse River

<sup>12</sup> Fort Douglas was the fort built by Colin Robertson after he re-established the Red River Settlement in fall of 1815. It was built on the west bank of the Red River a few miles below the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

<sup>13</sup> Chief Peguis (c.a. 1774-1864) was a Saulteaux Chief born around 1774 near the Sault Ste Marie area. His name is also spelled here as Pigwis and is sometimes referred to as the Cut Nose Bungee Chief, as his nose had been bitten off in 1812. He was the son of an Anishinaabe woman and a French fur trader and as a young man led a group of Saulteaux westward to the Red River, where they established themselves at Netley Creek. He was a friend the Europeans in the area as evidence here, and in 1816 warned Governor Semple of the plans of the NWC to destroy the Red River Settlement. He was one of the five chiefs to sign the 1817 Selkirk Treaty with the Cree and Saulteaux of the Red River Region. In 1832, he was persuaded by the missionary William Cockran to settle in a community just north St. Andrew's, which by 1836 was known as St. Peter's. He was baptized into the Anglican Church in 1840, and took the name William King, and his children used the last name Prince. He died in 1864.

<sup>14</sup> La rivière Sale or Salle has its source near Portage La Prairie and flows into the Red River near Saint Norbert. It was also known as Stinking River.

volunteered to accompany us, resolve to send him on in the morning along with [p. 17,180] our vanguard to acquaint Peguis with our approach that he & his people may be in readiness to join us. Weather clear & fine all day –

*Tuesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>* – After traversing a bay reached a point from where we took a long traverse to upper part of the riv<sup>r</sup> Salle where Peguis & his Indians are hunting. Reached the river Salle at dusk & got to some Indian Lodges they furnished us with provisions, our stock being out. Peguis is farther up the river. These Indians are to accompany us tomorrow. Saw many Cattle to-day – Our Cow dragging the gun broke her trace to join 2 bulls that crossed the road near to us. –

Weather clear & fine all day – made 7 Leagues. –

*Wednesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>* – Capt. D’Or. & I suffer from sleeping from sleeping [sic] only on Oil Cloths too near the frozen ground, having parted with our Matress [sic] to give the blankets to the Soldiers to equip them for the voyage. Sent Indians a head to acquaint Peguis with orders for him to join us at the Passage – summer road. There is a Meat Stage the N.W. have on our way where Demarais,<sup>15</sup> Cadotte<sup>16</sup> &c. are, but on our reaching the place – found no person there, nor any provisions on the Stage. a fresh track of a horse sled had passed here from the direction of Ft. Douglas, a little before we came, & had gone up the river. We followed it for some distance but afterwards returned to the Stage sending Mr. Nolain & a party on the track. Encamped at the Stage to wait the return of our party. We had nothing to eat. Nolain returned in the evening with 7 Indians, the Duck & 6 others. We had to send back to the Indian Lodges [p. 17,181] for Meat, having nothing for supper. they returned late, bringing all they could get, some fired Meat. Peguis is a considerable distance up the river – our first party of this morning is gone to him, but it is thought that he is too far away to join us unless we wait for a day for him, which is not thought prudent to do. fear the enemy may learn our approach & be on their guard. Wea<sup>r</sup> fine & clear all day. dist. Advanced 5 m.

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<sup>15</sup> This was probably Jean Baptiste Desmarais who was employed by the NWC as an Interpreter in the Red River district between 1814 and 1817, and participated in the Battle of Seven Oaks. See HBCA *BS*.

<sup>16</sup> This was probably Joseph Cadotte. He was an interpreter in the employ of the NWC in 1816, and was in the party that murdered Owen Keveny. He was at Fort Douglas in 1817 when it was captured by Selkirk’s forces, and helped lead the Metis against the Red River Settlement in 1817. He was eventually indicted for the murder of Keveny, but was never brought to trial. He would later work for the American Fur Company. Bruce M. White, “Cadotte, Joseph,” *DCB Online*.

*Friday [Thursday] January 9<sup>th</sup>* – Left our Encampment at sunrise. It came on to blow a storm from N.W. & cold. Snowdrift. Several of our men got frostbitten – it was with difficulty that we could make head way against the wind. Stopped to make fire to warm us at 4 miles from the passage. Reached the Passage at sunset. Peguis was here with 9 Indians waiting for us. They came out of a wood with a flag displayed to meet us. When they first appeared at a distance, they were taken for Brulés. Witschy<sup>17</sup> called a halt to form the line. Our men were so cold that they would have fought to great disadvantage. We entered the wood along with the Indians & made fires. Peguis made me a present of 10 Buffalo tongues which were very acceptable having nothing for ourselves or men to eat. We resolved to remain here till midnight & then to proceed to Fort Douglas, so as to attack it by Escalade before day; it is distant 4 leagues. With this intention it was deemed best not to lay down to sleep. Our Cattle & luggage is to be left here with some of the Canadians to follow in the course of next day. – Weather cold. – blowing a storm from N.W. all day. [p. 17,182]

*Friday Jan<sup>y</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>* – At midnight the men were prepared for the march the Indians were all the night on the alert & now pressed our departure. I gave the soldiers who suffered much from the cold & were all day on a light diet little brandy which I had kept in reserve which cheered them much. We set out in high spirits certain of success. Mr. Laidlaw<sup>18</sup> accompanied us he would not remain being with the Cattle & luggage. – The wind had fallen – the night was fine & clear & not so cold as the preceeding [sic] day. On reaching the freemen's houses at the Forks, parties were sent to make prisoners of all within & sentries placed on these to prevent their giving intelligence to the enemy. Four ladders were immediately prepared, & after the men had warmed themselves we proceeded to the Fort. No sooner were the ladders placed to the pickets than Nolain, John Taylor (guide) L'Ecureil, Witschy & others entered. The main gate was them thrown open when we all entered,

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<sup>17</sup> Jacob Witschy was a sergeant of the disbanded De Meuron regiment which Selkirk had hired to retake the Selkirk Colony from the NWC. He would stay in the Red River Settlement until the early 1820s.

<sup>18</sup> William Laidlaw, the son of a Scottish farmer, was born around 1798. He was recruited by Lord Selkirk in 1815 to manage the home farm at Red River and accompanied Selkirk to Fort William in 1816. He arrived in Red River in January of 1817, and searched for a location for the farm which he located on the east side of Red River, a few miles south of Fort Douglas. The farm, which Laidlaw called "Hayfield", however, failed to show a profit. As a result, Laidlaw abandoned it in the fall of 1821. He blamed grasshoppers, drought, the lack of tools, and poor manpower. He left for the United States where he joined the Columbia Fur Company, and later the American Fur Company, trading on the Upper Missouri. He retired to Liberty, Missouri with his Sioux wife and five daughters. He died there in 1852. J.M. Bumsted (ed.), *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 135. Kathy Alexander, "William Laidlaw – Most Able Trapper." <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/william-laidlaw/>

the houses were taken possession of & all within the Fort made prisoners & all put into one quarter except Mr. McLellan<sup>19</sup> who was put in a house apart from the others. The prisoners made were, Mr. Arch<sup>d</sup> McLellan, Seraphin Lamar,<sup>20</sup> Toussaints Voudrie,<sup>21</sup> F. Mainville,<sup>22</sup> & 12 others. all was finished & quiet before daylight, guards & sentries place. Gave some liquor to the Men. Took possession of all the Stores in the Fort. It was time we had arrived & made so easy a conquest: 17 of the Meurons<sup>23</sup> & 7 or 8 Canadians are frostbit – many of them walk with difficulty & pain & the whole were jaded & much fatigued. Had our Flag hoisted at sunrise. [p. 17,183]

In course of the morning three Canadians arrived with Sleds from Bas de la Riviere<sup>24</sup> loaded with Flour & fish. Indians & others were throng about us all day. We are much straitened for quarters in the Fort. the gentlemen are obliged to be crowded all together in a small apartment for the present. Found in the Fort 5 pieces Canon, with stock of Balls, Grapeshot &c 4 Wall pieces, Muskets, also about a fortnight's provisions. – In the afternoon our Cattle & luggage came., Gave Peguis His Lordship's present – & some liquor for the Indians which they took to the freemen's houses to drink, so as not to disturb us in the night, released some of the N.W. men from confinement.

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<sup>19</sup> Archibald MacLellan/McLellan (d. 1820) entered the NWC in 1792 and became a partner in the concern in 1805. In 1815 he was sent to Lake Athabasca, and took a prominent part in NWC attack on the Selkirk Colony. In 1818 he was tried in Quebec for the murder of Owen Keveny. He was acquitted and retired from the fur trade in 1819. He died in Upper Canada in 1820. W. Stewart Wallace (ed.), *Documents related to the North West Company* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), 479-80.

<sup>20</sup> This is Seraphin (Seraphim) LaMar (1765-1818). He was born in Canada in 1765, and entered the fur trade by 1791. He became a Clerk in the NWC, and served in the Lake Winnipeg and Red River Districts between 1808 and 1816. He was enlisted by the NWC, along with the Metis headed by Cuthbert Grant, to destroy the Selkirk Colony in 1815. He was also present during the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816. He was later sent to Canada to be tried for the murder of Robert Semple. He died in Montreal in 1818 before the trial. Harry W. Duckworth (ed.), *Friends, Foes, and Furs: George Nelson's Lake Winnipeg Journals, 1804–1822* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 409.

<sup>21</sup> Toussaint Voudrie/Vaudry was born about 1767, in Quebec, and was operating a post at Rivière aux Morts (Netley Creek) for the NWC in 1803. In 1812 he was at the NWC post at Turtle River. He was a witness for the NWC at the Semple Trials in York in 1818, and at the time he testified that he had been in the Red River district for over 30 years. Gail Morin, *Metis Families Vol. 11, Sutherland – Zace* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2016).

<sup>22</sup> Mainville, a Metis, was, along with Charles de Reinhard, a NWC employee, accused of killing Owen Keveny.

<sup>23</sup> De Meurons was the name applied to the members of one of two demobilized regiments of mercenaries which fought on the British side during the War of 1812. Some were hired by Lord Selkirk to serve in the Red River Settlement as a protective force for the colony and settlers. They were a medley of Germans, Swiss, Italian, and French and were quarrelsome and hard to control.

<sup>24</sup> Bas de la Rivière was the geographical area on both sides of the Winnipeg River where it empties into Lake Winnipeg. The NWC Fort here was known as Pointe au Foutre, the HBC post was called Fort Alexander.

*Saturday Jan<sup>y</sup> 11<sup>th</sup>* – Bruce arrived with a freeman from Pembina instead of proceeding on the Journey I ordered him, he sent my letter by old Adam, the man I had engaged to be his guide. On his way down with 3 freemen to join us, a boy overtook them to inform them that 7 men had arrived at Pembina from Fond du lac, who spread a report there of Mr. Pambrun being made a prisoner by order of the American Government, Lord Selkirk also taken at Fort W<sup>m</sup> & all the Bourgeois of the N.W.Co. being returned there. That 4 of these men had proceeded towards Riv<sup>re</sup> La Sourie & Qui Appelle, (having a large Packet of Papers & letters) & 3 of them returned in pursuit of Adam who had only one days start of them. In consequence of this report, 2 of the freemen returned from him for Pembina. – [p. 17,184]

Peguis & the Indians went off, others arrived shortly after expecting to have been in time to assist at the capture. Began to take Inventories of the Stores – Wrote in the evening to Mr. Stitt<sup>25</sup> at Deadman's River<sup>26</sup> enclosing a Search Warr<sup>t</sup> for the N.W. post at Bas de la Riviere, with order to keep possession of the Fort till my arrival. Bruce & 2 men are to go early in the morning to Mr. Stitt. –

*Sunday Jan<sup>y</sup> 12<sup>th</sup>* – Bruce & his men did not set out till 10 A.M. B. is always dilatory & careless, propose going myself to-morrow, took the Examination of Mainville, Seraphin Lamar, & 2 others. Mr. McLellan tho' a prisoner is troublesome, talking among the people. I was consequently obliged to confine him more strictly till there can be time for his Examination. Had scarcely time to quit my chair all day, continually pestered with one thing or another which has been the case since arriving here. –

*Monday Jan<sup>y</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>* – The gentlemen taking the Inventories got thro' them. Mr. Laidlaw & Cadotte. Lt. McDonald declined doing this thinking this a degrading duty. They are very imperfectly done & must of course be all copied. There is so

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<sup>25</sup>This is John Stitt. He came from Dumfriesshire, Scotland and worked for the XY Company in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. When the XYC merged with the NWC, he worked for the new concern. By 1809, however, he working as the post manager for HBC at Pembina. He would work as a trader at posts around the Forks (Pembina and Deadman's River/Netley Creek) for the rest of his career. In 1815-16, he was considered "A weak unactive character." He was present at Red River during the Fur Trade Wars and was trusted by Chief Peguis. He represented the HBC at the Selkirk Treaty negotiations at Red River in 1817. He retired to the Red River Settlement in June of 1819. HBCA B.239/d/175-204; B.160/1-3; B.63/f/1, fos. 4d-5.

<sup>26</sup> Deadmans River, or Riviere aux Morts, is today known as Netley Creek. It enters the Red River from the north side some 6 miles from Lake Winnipeg. According to John McDonnell of the North West Company, the river was named Riviere aux Morts because a camp of Assiniboines, Crees and Saulteaux were killed here by the Sioux. It was a favoured camping spot of the natives of the region. John McDonnell, "The Red River," in W. Raymond Wood and Thomas D. Thiessen (eds.), *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 79.

much business yet to do here that I cannot get away to Bas de la Riviere. Propose to send Mr. Laidlaw in my stead, for which purpose I furnished him with a Warrant for the arrest of Mr. Crebassa<sup>27</sup> & seizure of his papers – Mr. Laidlaw set out at 12 O’Clock with [p. 17,185] one man accompanied by the 3 men that came from there 10<sup>th</sup> Inst. whom I had kept here that no intelligence of us might reach there till we appear. They are to call at Mr. Stitts who I expect they will overtake at home & to proceed altogether to the place. – Sent off 4 dog Sleds to bring the articles left near Pembina: also 3 Sleds to Riv<sup>re</sup> Salle for Meat. In evening arrived old Cadotte & the 2 Damarais with Meat. –

*Tuesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 14<sup>th</sup>* – Sent 3 sleds for Meat. took Depositions of Augustin Cadotte<sup>28</sup> & Bellumeur<sup>29</sup> who had been forced to accompany the pillagers of Mr. Fidler. Took Deposition of Joseph Cadotte.<sup>30</sup> –

*Wednesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 15<sup>th</sup>* – Four sleds of Meat arrived before day this morning. Set Mr. Joseph Cadotte at liberty, took the examination of Mr. McLellan. Mr. Hugh McGillis’s<sup>31</sup> family left the Fort. We have yet too many women & children to feed but cannot turn them our to starve tho’ belonging to our enemies. Had his irons taken off Mainville, considering him in perfect security without them. Three Sleds of Meat came in the evening. We must strain every nerve to get a stock of provisions while the Cattle are near. The Chimney of the prison house took fire in the evening & burnt down. obliged therefore to shift Mr. McLellan to another quarter til it can be repaired. – Weather very cold, blowing a storm from the Northward. Made

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<sup>27</sup> Jean/John Crebassa/Cribassa was born about 1777, in Quebec, and joined the XY Company before 1801, when he shows at Red River with 2 Canoes and 10 men. He would oppose the NWC at Pembina from 1801-1804. After the two fur companies merged in 1804, Crebassa began to work for the NWC. In 1807 he was stationed at Lac du Bonnet as a Clerk. From 1808 to 1810 he was at Broken River, and in 1810-11 at Bas de la Rivière. He would continue to work as a Clerk for the NWC from 1812-1821, at Bas de la Rivière, Red River, and Lake Winnipeg. Harry W. Duckworth (ed.), *Friends, Foes, and Furs: George Nelson’s Lake Winnipeg Journals, 1804-1822* (Montreal & Kingston; McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019), 399-401.

<sup>28</sup> Augustin Cadotte was born about 1762 in Quebec and was a Clerk for the NWC in the Lower Red River District in 1803-04. When he testified at York in 1818 (Battle of Seven Oaks) he had been in the Red River District for 38 years.

<sup>29</sup> The name is Belhumeur (Bellehumeur). There were several Canadian Bellehumeurs in the region at this time: Joseph and Louis. The context here does not permit a solid identification.

<sup>30</sup> See previous citation.

<sup>31</sup> Hugh McGillis (1767-1848) was born in Scotland and emigrated to Upper Canada with his parents. He joined the NWC as a Clerk in 1790, becoming a partner in 1801. He was at Fort Dauphin in 1799, and assumed charge of the post in 1802. From 1806 to 1816 he served at Fond du Lac (1806-12) Fort William (1812-13), Michipicoten (1813-14), Lesser Slave Lake (1814-15), and in 1816 he was one of the NWC partners arrested by Lord Selkirk at Fort William. He was subsequently tried and acquitted at York. Thereafter he retired to Upper Canada. W. Stewart Wallace (ed.), *Documents Relative to the North West Company* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), 468-69.



John Taylor, our Indian guide a present, with which he is much pleased. – [p. 17,186]

*Thursday Jan<sup>y</sup> 16<sup>th</sup>* – Engaged Baptiste & Joseph Demarais & Maron Ducharme to hunt for us. Engaged also Augustin Cadotte to serve with us the remainder of his Engagement with the N.W.Co. – Ordered 2 Canadians to Pembina to work at making provisions with Beautenau<sup>32</sup> & Tranchemontagne<sup>33</sup> the[y] are to go tomorrow along with old Plante. – Engaged all the men the N.W.Co. had here to serve out their time with us, promising to guarantee their wages according to their engagements with the N.W.Co. they are 9 men & a boy. Wea<sup>r</sup> Stormy & cold.

*Friday Jan<sup>y</sup> 17.* – The weather is so excessively cold that our men cannot proceed to Pembina. Nor can we send men for Meat to the plains. we are also without wood for the fires, & the prison Room Chimney cannot be rebuilt til weather changes. –

*Saturday Jan<sup>y</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>* – Sent 6 sleds for Meat. Our 2 men only set out to day for Pembina along with old Plante. Took information of 2 Canadians respecting the pillage of Mr. Fidler. Had 3 guns fired to salute Her Majesty's birth which broke the glass in all the windows of the Fort, & knocked down some plastering – we are yet scarce of room for our people. Sent 2 Canadians & a woman to the house of Soucisse<sup>34</sup> to lodge. Engaged Minie<sup>35</sup> to cut firewood. Sent our horses & Cows to the plains to feed having no hay

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<sup>32</sup> This is, likely, Charles Joseph Bottineau. Bottineau came from France or Boston, and arrived in the northwest around 1787, as a voyageur for the North West Company. In the period 1803 to 1808 he acted as a voyageur and hunter for Alexander Henry around Pembina. He stayed in the Pembina area thereafter, probably working for the NWC, and as a freeman. From the evidence in the Selkirk Papers, he also acted as a hunter for the Selkirk settlers wintering at Pembina in 1815. In 1816, he refused to take part in the Battle of Seven Oaks. He died near Grand Forks, North Dakota in 1824. HBCA B5. Deposition of Charles Bottineau, July 17, 1817. LAC Selkirk Papers, C-15, Vol 60, pp. 15849-50.

<sup>33</sup> There are two Tranchemontagnes identified in the documents. Antoine Tranchemontagne was a Free Canadian listed by Peter Fidler as living in the Red River/Pembina region in the period 1814-19. Charles Tranchmontage gave a Deposition to W.B. Coltman in 1817 that he and Michel Dauphine, both Freeman, wanted to go see Peter Fider in 1816, at Lake Manitoba, to get some merchandise for service they had performed for the Colony. HBCA B.22/e/1, fo. 10. Deposition of Michel Dauphine and Charles Tranchmontagne on July 13, 1817 at Red River. LAC Selkirk Papers, C-15, Vol. 61, pp. 16111-16112.

<sup>34</sup> Pierre Soucisse was a free Canadian who had a house at the Forks of Red River, and who was, according to William Coltman, friendly with both the NWC and Hudson's Bay Company. It was at his house that Coltman stayed during his investigation of the violence of the fur trade wars. He also gave a deposition to Coltman (No. 219) regarding the events of June 1816. W.B. Coltman, "A General Statement and Report relative to the Disturbances in the Indian Territories of British North America, 1818." *In Papers Relating to The Red River Settlement; 1815-1819. British Parliamentary Papers, Colonies—Canada 5* (Shannon: Irish University Pres, 1971), 184.

<sup>35</sup> There was a Free Canadian named Minie, listed by Peter Fidler as living in the Red River/Pembina regions, in the period 1814-19. HBCA b.22/e/1, fo. 10.

made, except 2 lean horses kept for wood riding. Weather clear & cold all day. [p. 17,187]

*Sunday Jan<sup>y</sup> 19<sup>th</sup>* – Altho' it is Lord's day, we are obliged to have wood hauled home, & the prison Chimney repaired. Made a tour with Capt. D'Or: & Lt. McDonald among the freemen's houses, observed the best situation for a Block House. Weather overcast, snowing all the afternoon. –

*Monday Jan<sup>y</sup> 20<sup>th</sup>* – The Prison Chimney has been badly repaired & cannot be used. Ordered the Blacksmith to make a Sheet Iron Stove for it. – Lt. Pambrun attended by 2 men arrived from his post at Red Cedar Lake which he left on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Instant. He met my Express on 11<sup>th</sup> within a day's journey of Fort Daer, along with the 3 N.W. men that turned back, & got my letter. Pambrun brings intelligence that Mess<sup>rs</sup> Grant & Morrison ran away at St. Marys, they are both become citizens of the United States, & the latter is appointed a Justice of the Peace at Michilimackinac for the Indian Territories & was arrived at Fond du Lac. Grant had gone to Washington. That he had visited Mr. Michl McDon<sup>le</sup> at this post near Crow Isl<sup>d</sup> on \_\_\_ Ulto. & that Mr. Duncan Graham<sup>36</sup> has reached the Ottertail Lake<sup>37</sup> & has 3 or 400 Sioux under his influence. The arrival at Pembina of Lt. Pambrun has had a good effect on the freemen there to dispel the reports of the N.W. Couriers who had passed there from Fond du Lac. Wea<sup>r</sup> clear & cold all day. –

*Tuesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>* – Five sleds of Meat came. A Stove is put up in the Prison Room, & the windows barred with iron. The prisoners are ordered into the Prison room & given into the charge of Witschy. The 4 Sleds on the 13<sup>th</sup> Instant for the articles left [p. 17,188] behind arrived. One of the men is much frostbitten & cannot do any duty for some time. Mr. Nolain brought the N.W. people's dogs to give them to our men. Weather clear & cold all day. –

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<sup>36</sup> Duncan Graham (1772-1847) was born in the highlands of Scotland in 1772 and immigrated to North America in 1794. He worked as an independent fur trader on the St. Peters River and at Devils Lake. During the War of 1812, he fought on the side of the British and after the war he joined the HBC. In 1817-18, he was the Master of the HBC post at Pembina, and in the winter of 1818-19 he wintered at Lac Traverse, in Sioux Territory. In 1819-20 he again wintered in the Upper Red River district (south of the US border). He had been in the HBC service for four years. In 1820 he quit the HBC and joined the NWC. In 1834 he retired from the fur trade and moved to Wabasha, Minnesota. He died in 1847 at Mendota, Dakota. HBCAB.160/d/2; B.239/d/210. "Captain Duncan Graham, an Historical Profile," [https://fullereriksen.familygenes.ca/members\\_data/0016ab/histories//Graham,%20Duncan%20History130927.pdf](https://fullereriksen.familygenes.ca/members_data/0016ab/histories//Graham,%20Duncan%20History130927.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> Otter Tail Lake is a large Lake in the west-central part of the present state of Minnesota.

*Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>* – Sent 90 sleds for Meat, the prisoners are all now confined together, viz. Mr. Arch<sup>d</sup> McLellan, Seraphin Lamar, Mainville, & Toussaints Voudrie. Some Indians arrived from the Mountain (above Pembina) they have a good stock of provisions ready at their Lodges & wish us to send for them. – Weather clear & cold all day. –

*Thursday Jan<sup>y</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup>* – Sent 4 Sleds for Meat, 3 mens & one dog train. The Indians out there have dogs for sale which the men may purchase. – Weather overcast & cold, threatening snow. –

*Friday Jan<sup>y</sup> 24<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Joseph Cadotte & Versaille a half breed propose going to Qui Appelle on a visit, it is thought proper that they should be permitted to go, as it may lead to conciliate the Brulés there. Gave Mr. Cadotte a written permission at his own request. Wrote by him to Mr. Cuthbert Grant,<sup>38</sup> expecting it may pave the way to a negotiation & withdraw him & party from the N.W. Enclosed him the Governor in Chiefs Proclamation of July 16<sup>th</sup>. 9 Sleds brough good loads of Meat. Weather cloudy & cold, snowing a little.

*Saturday Jan<sup>y</sup> 25<sup>th</sup>* – Sent Mr. Nolain with 9 Sleds for Meat – pressed Belangers 2 Horses & sent them also: he chose to go along with them himself. [p. 17,189]

Mr. Stitt arrived from Bas de la Riviere, which he left in possession of our people, & in charge of Mr. Laidlaw. brought with him François Viger,<sup>39</sup> a Clerk, prisoner & 3 men. Mr. Crebassa the Clerk in charge of the post was too unwell to be brought: after setting out he had to return to the Fort escorted by Bruce. The people at Bas de la Riv<sup>re</sup> quietly submitted to the execution of the Search Warrant not expecting any farther steps were to be taken, but neither Artillery Muskets or Ammunition were found notwithstanding all that was brot there these two years back. Inventories of the Stores were brot me by Mr. Stitt, with all the papers found there.

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<sup>38</sup> This is Cuthbert Grant, a Metis clerk of the NWC. He was born at the NWC post Fort Treblant around 1794 to Cuthbert Grant Sr. and Margaret Utinawasis. He joined the NWC in 1810 and by 1812 was a clerk in the Upper Red River department. By 1814 he was enlisted by the NWC to gather a group of Metis in the northwest to destroy the Selkirk Colony. As “Captain General” of the Metis, he took a prominent role in the destruction of the colony, and was one of the “Chiefs” of the Metis who signed the decree dispersing the Selkirk Colony in June of 1815. In 1816, he led a group of about 60 Metis who killed a group of HBC men and colonists at Frog Plain, leading to the second dispersal of the colony. After the merger of the NWC and HBC in 1821, Cuthbert Grant was hired by the HBC as “warden of the plains”. He thereafter founded the settlement of White Horse Plain/St. François Xavier in the Red River Settlement. He died there in 1854.

<sup>39</sup> François Viger was a NWC clerk arrested by Miles Macdonell and held in Fort Douglas.

By Mr. Stitt, I learnt that Mr. Alex<sup>r</sup> McDonell<sup>40</sup> is with all the Settlers, passing the winter at Jack R. except Mrs. McLean,<sup>41</sup> Boyle,<sup>42</sup> McNulty,<sup>43</sup> Lamont<sup>44</sup> &c. who have gone home with H.B.C<sup>os</sup> Ships. –

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<sup>40</sup> Alexander Macdonell/McDonell was born around 1774 in Inverness, Scotland. In 1813, he volunteered his services to Lord Selkirk who engaged him in 1814 to recruit colonists for the Red River Settlement. In 1815, he accompanied them to Red River in the company of the new Governor Robert Semple. In September of 1815, Semple appointed him as second in command to Colin Robertson, who was then in charge of the Selkirk Colony. Semple sent him to Fort Daer in November with the colonists who were to winter there. There he was sworn in as a councillor and high sheriff of Assiniboia. Returning to the Forks in April of 1816, Macdonell was a witness to the factional strife in the colony and growing animosity between Semple and Robertson. As a result, Robertson left the colony in early June of 1816, and Macdonell was appointed as second in command to Robert Semple. When Semple was killed at Seven Oaks on June 19, 1816, Macdonell took charge of the colony which was dispersed. Alexander Macdonell re-established the colony in March of 1817 and guided it for the next few years. He temporarily left the colony in 1819 to see his family, but in 1820, Selkirk appointed him an agent for the Red River Settlement. Selkirk's death and the merger of the HBC and NWC greatly reduced his influence, and he alienated both settlers and the HBC. By 1824, George Simpson considered him "disaffected" and one of the most dangerous men in the colony. Given his ostracism from the HBC, he left the colony in 1828. His Journal, transcribed here, describes his activities between 8 May 1815 and 17 August 1817. See Edith Burley, "Macdonell, Alexander," *DCB Online*.

<sup>41</sup> This is the widow of Alexander McLean/MacLean (c.a. 1780-1816) killed at the Battle of Seven Oaks. Thereafter, she and her children travelled to York Factory in order to return to Scotland. Their ship, the *Prince of Wales*, however, got caught in the ice and they were forced to winter at Moose Factory. They returned to Scotland in 1817. Lucille H. Campey, *The Silver Chief: Lord Selkirk and the Scottish Pioneers of Belfast, Baldoon and Red River* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2003), 86; Library and Archives of Canada (LAC), Selkirk Papers, Miles McDonell Journal, C-16. Vol. 63, p. 17028; Alexander McDonell, *A Narrative of Transactions in the Red River Country; from the commencement of the Operations of the Earl of Selkirk Till the Summer of the Year 1816* (London: B. McMillan, 1819).

<sup>42</sup> This is Michael Boyle, from Enniskillin, who arrived aboard the *Robert Taylor* in 1812, from Sligo, Ireland. Boyle was a servant of the Selkirk Colony who remained loyal to the colony throughout the harassment of the NWC/Metis in 1815, retreating north to the Winipic Settlement on Lake Winnipeg in 1815. The colonists were led back to the Selkirk Colony that fall, but Michael stayed at the Winipic Settlement, with Donald Livingstone, to build a boat to convey new settlers that were coming later that fall. Boyle would marry Helen Kennedy, who had come out in 1813. After the settlers were once again forced to flee the Selkirk Colony, after the Battle of Seven Oaks, the Boyles decided to return to Britain. Their ship, the *Prince of Wales*, however, was unable to clear the Hudson Strait, and they spent the winter at Moose Factory. The next spring, they went to New Brunswick House and in 1818 they continued on to Sault Ste. Marie. There is no record that the couple ever went back to the Red River Settlement. <http://www.lordselkirk.ca/project/helen-ellen-kennedy-michael-boyle/>

<sup>43</sup> Patrick McNulty (McNaulty, McNolty, McNulty) and his wife, Winifred, came to Red River with settlers in 1812 aboard the *Robert Taylor* from Ireland. He was engaged to the HBC for one year to pay for his passage, and thereafter became a settler. After the events of 1815 depicted here, he, his wife and two children went to Jack River until resettled in Red River in fall of 1815. After the Battle of Seven Oaks, the family travelled north to the Winipic Settlement on Lake Winnipeg and then on to York Factory to return home. The ship (*Prince of Wales*), however, was late in arriving and never made it through the ice. The passengers were left at Moose Factory for the winter, and in spring of 1817, Pat McNulty and his wife and family went by boat further east to Canada on their way home. In the spring of 1818 they were in York, Upper Canada where Mrs Winnifred McNulty/McNolty testified in the Selkirk Trials. Lucille H. Campey, *The Silver Chief: Lord Selkirk and the Scottish Pioneers of Belfast, Baldoon and Red River* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2003), 96-99, 174; HBCA B.129/e/2, fo. 1; *Report of the Proceedings Connected with the Disputes between the Earl of Selkirk and the North-West Company at the Assizes Held at York in Upper Canada, October 1818*. (Montreal, 1819).

<sup>44</sup> Samuel Lamond/Lamont was a millwright from Bowmore, Islay. He arrived as a settler at Churchill Factory in 1813. After the Selkirk Colony was destroyed in 1815, he and the other remaining settlers retreated to Lake Winnipeg. He returned home in the fall of 1816. Chester Martin (ed.), *Red River Settlement: Papers in the Canadian Archives Relating to the Pioneers* (Archives Branch, 1910), 27. Petition of Settlers to Lord Selkirk, 20 June 1815, LAC Selkirk Papers, C-2, Vol. 5, pp. 1557-1560. Alexander Macdonell to Selkirk, 22 September 1816. LAC Selkirk Papers, C-3, Vol 8, pp. 2757.

*Sunday Jan<sup>y</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>* – Examined the papers &c. from Bas de la Riviere, some are important. Mr. Viger &c. and Two Indians & a woman came up from Deadmans R. they are starving in that quarter getting no fish. Sent 2 N.W. men that came with Mr. Stitt back to Winipic R. with orders to Mr. Laidlaw to send up all the families from there that can travel with the dogs to haul provisions to this place. –

*Monday Jan<sup>y</sup> 27<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Nolain Returned with 11 Sleds Meat, also Belangers Horses well loaded. I proposed to Mr. Stitt to remove up here – he would be extremely useful to us in many [p. 17,190] respects, but he declined urging trifling excuses. – I do not like to order him to come against his will. –

*Tuesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 28<sup>th</sup>* – Preparing to send an Express to Jack R. to bring up a few supplies for immediate use, with directions for our people below what to do in the spring. Mr. McDonell & a party to come &c. but I am very ill situated for writing, my room being as yet the only place the gentlemen can assemble & mess in, the receptacle of Indians & every person, & two or three beds made on the floor every night. It is impossible to write in the day time. I sat up all night writing to send off the Express along with Mr. Stitt who is anxious to be away to-morrow. From the present state of the Country I imagine it more secure to send the Packet for the Saskat<sup>n</sup> & the Northward by Jack R., the enemy having the command of the interior in that direction. Wrote to Mr. McDonell,<sup>45</sup> Kirkness,<sup>46</sup> Sinclair,<sup>47</sup> Ja<sup>s</sup> Swain,<sup>48</sup> Bird,<sup>49</sup> &c.

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<sup>45</sup> Alexander McDonell/MacDonell the leader of the colonists at Jack River. See previous citation.

<sup>46</sup> This is James Kirkness (*b.ca.* 1774-1843) from Harray, Orkney. He joined the HBC in 1797. He served most of his career inland from York Factory, and in 1815 he was a clerk/trader at Jack River. He retired to the Orkney Islands in 1822. HBCA *BS*.

<sup>47</sup> This is either William Sinclair Sr. (*b.ca.* 1766-1818) or William Sinclair Jr. (1794-1868)

<sup>48</sup> This is James Swain Sr. (1775-1829) from London and St. Andrews, and he entered the HBC service in 1791. By 1810 he had become a Master at Severn House, and in 1813 he became Inland Master at York. He remained a Master and Trader out of York Factory until he returned to England in 1819. HBCA *BS*.

<sup>49</sup> James Bird Sr. (*c.* 1773-1856) was born in Acton, Middlesex, England in 1773. He entered the service of the HBC in 1788 as a writer at York Factory. He continued in this role until 1792 when he was transferred Cumberland House, and in 1793 became a trader at the South Branch House. From that date until 1803, he was a trader in charge of the South Branch House, Carlton House, and Edmonton House. In 1803, he succeeded William Tomison as the Inland Chief of the HBC, stationed at Edmonton House (he had been acting chief since 1799). Thereafter, Bird spent most of his career as Inland Chief and Chief of the Saskatchewan District. With the killing of Robert Semple at Seven Oaks in 1816, Bird was named Acting Governor of Rupert's Land, a position he held until 1818. Thereafter he moved back to the Saskatchewan District and became a Chief Factor in 1820. After the union of the HBC and NWC in 1821 he was named the Chief Factor in charge of the Lower Red River district. After a furlough in 1822, he became the Chief Factor of the Upper Red River district. He retired in 1824, and settled in the Red River Settlement. Over his career, he established a few "country marriages" in his various postings. Of the wives we know about, one was a swampy Cree woman named Oo-menahhomish, referred to as Mary. When he moved to Edmonton House, he married a woman known as Elisabeth (probably Elizabeth Montour, 1789-1834), and in 1835 married Mary Kelly Lowman in the Red River Settlement. He died there in 1856. John E. Foster, "Bird, James (d. 1856)," *DCB Online*. Ted Binnema and Gerhard

*Wednesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 29<sup>th</sup>* – The weather is so boisterous that Mr. Stitt & the Express cannot set out. Wrote Mr. Laidlaw – Two Sleds of Meat were brought. – There is a vast plague in fitting out the Express men with dogs, gave them my own Two, one of which is here & the other at Bas de la Riviere. They are at last fitted out with 3 dogs each. –

*Thursday January 30<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Stitt with the Two Express men Dalcour<sup>50</sup> & Suprenant set out at 2 O’Clock this morning. Mr. Stitt was furnished out of our Store with a quantity of provisions for himself [p. 17,191] & men of his post. We could not however get any goods or liquor from him notwithstanding our pressing wants. –

Sent 6 dog Sleds for meat. Pembina, the best place for making provisions has been hitherto neglected by us, further than recommending to the free Canadians & Indians to make all they could, there are only 2 men yet belonging to us there, the enemy may with facility visit the place & take or destroy all, resolve to send Lt. McDonald with a party there to protect the place, arrest stragglers &c. which will have the effect of lessening the consumption here, relieve the quarters which are too straightened & provide a stock of meat for the spring. –

In the morning an Indian, son of Pansongas arrived with a letter from Mr. Duncan Graham dated Red River 27<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1816, stating that the Yangtons Sioux are desirous of being at peace with Sauteaux, that they have laid down the hatchet &c. – this letter was sent by a Sauteaux woman & 2 girls taken by the Yangtons in war the preceding winter & now liberated for this purpose. this woman came to Pembina & sent this young fellow forward with the letter. The Yangtons desire 3 Sauteaux Chiefs to be deputed on this peaceable Embassy accompanied by a white man that speaks the Santeaux language – the woman is to guide them to the place &c – The young bull brought from Lac la Pluie was found dead to day in the plain, owing as I suppose to neglect of the keeper in giving him water regularly. – [p. 17,192]

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J. Ens (eds.), *Edmonton House Journals, Correspondence & Reports 1806-1821* (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 2012), 13-80.

<sup>50</sup> There was a Joseph Dalcour from L’Assomption, Lower Canada, who was a voyageur/engage in the NWC in the Lake Winnipeg Department in 1804-05. There was also a Joseph Daclour among the Canadians hired by the HBC in 1818-19. He was posted to Lac la Pluie. Harry W. Duckworth (ed.), *Friends, Foes, and Furs: George Nelson’s Lake Winnipeg Journals, 1804–1822* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2019), 381-82. HBCA B.239/d/204, fo. 18d.

*Friday January 31<sup>st</sup>* – Sent Lt. McDonald with 10 Soldiers, 7 Canadians & 2 half breeds (the Demarais) to Pembina, to guard Ft. Daer, make provisions &c. – This matter had been talked off [sic] for some time previously. Capt. D’Or: opposed sending the Soldiers for fear of weakening us here: but it being pointed out to be of the utmost importance to guard that place & make provisions for the Spring &c. he came into our views. The Demarais have 2 dog Sleds & took the Soldiers luggage. Two more dog Sleds were also furnished to take Lt. McD. luggage & provisions for the party – The Soldiers set out about 10 A.M. their luggage at 12 & Lt. McD. with 2 sleds set out about 1 P.M.

Four young Indians arrived in the afternoon, one of them was brother to Peguis, & 2 were in a band in the interest of the N.W. In course of the Evening the Chiefs brother told Mr. Nolin privately that a party of Brulés were near. he saw about 12 of them at Lagimonieres<sup>51</sup> old house the main body were farther off, the whole amounting to between 40 & 50 men. He saw Cuthbert Grant, Bostonais,<sup>52</sup> Mr. Gillis [McGillis?], Bonhomme Montane,<sup>53</sup> J. Cadotte,<sup>54</sup> & a tall one he did not know, who we supposed to be Mr. Black. He likewise informed us that 3 of them had been the

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<sup>51</sup> This likely refers to Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière (Lagemonière) (c. 1777-1855). He was born in Quebec and joined the NWC in 1800, and served in the west until 1806, when he returned home to marry Marie-Anne Gaboury. They then moved to Pembina and later Cumberland House. He worked as a provisioner for Miles Macdonell and the Selkirk Settlers in 1812-13. In 1815-16 he journeyed from Red River to Montreal on snowshoes to inform Lord Selkirk of the attacks on the Red River Settlement by the NWC. For his efforts, Selkirk gave him a grant of land in Red River. On his return he was captured by the NWC but was released. He would thereafter serve the HBC as a voyageur and messenger, and he became a farmer in Red River. J.M. Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 135.

<sup>52</sup> This is Peter “Bostonais” Pangman (1791-1850). Peter or Pierre Pangman was born in 1791 in the Saskatchewan River valley and was the son of the NWC trader Peter Pangman Sr. and a native woman. As noted here, he was an employee of the NWC, but in 1812 had begun his fur trade career in the employ of the HBC under John McLeod. He soon left the HBC and by 1815 was in the employ of the NWC as an interpreter and took a leading role in the dispersal of the Selkirk Colony in 1815. He, along with other Metis “Chiefs” Cuthbert Grant, William Shaw and Bonhomme Montour, signed the document that banished the Selkirk settlers and HBC from the forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers. Bostonais was also prominent in the 1816 destruction of the Selkirk Colony and was later arrested in 1816, standing trial in Upper Canada. He was not convicted and was released. He died in 1850 at St. François Xavier in the Red River Settlement, the very settlement he tried to destroy.

<sup>53</sup> Macdonell probably means Bonhomme Montour. Robert “Bonhomme” Montour (1787-1857) was born in 1787 at Red River to the fur trader Nicholas Montour and an Indian woman. By 1808 he had entered the fur trade as an employee of the NWC at Pembina, and by this time was still in their employ. He along with other Metis employees of the NWC (Cuthbert Grant, Bostonais Pangman, and William Shaw) were instrumental in dispersing and destroying the Selkirk Colony in 1815 and 1816, and all four signed a decree in June of 1815 ordering the dispersal of all traces of colonization at Red River. In 1818 he married Josette Spence around 1818 and the family lived in the Red River Settlement and at Pembina. He died in Pembina in 1857.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph Cadotte. See previous citation.

preceding night at Belangers,<sup>55</sup> & took away from there a Cache they had made last fall of a Keg of Powder & 2 of Spirits. The Demarais lodged at Belangers, knew of the visit, but concealed the whole from us, & Bt<sup>e</sup> Demarais is supposed to have given a letter to Arch<sup>d</sup> McLellan to-day [p. 17,193] from this party, as he was allowed to go to settle his old account with him – Late at night wrote to Mr. Stitt & Laidlaw the intelligence we had received. We are apprehensive for the safety of Lt. McD & party. Preparations are made in the Fort for defence in case of attack guards & sentries encreased. [sic] Capt. D'Or: had the watch to night & as is usual with the Officer on duty, did not lay down all night, he was quite on the alert. at one time the motion of the wind in some willows near was taken for the Brulés approaching & the alarm given.

### *February 1817*

*Saturday February 1<sup>st</sup>* – Belanger was sent for, he confessed the Cache being taken away. – & that Demarais had conducted Bonhomme part of the way with it. Mr. Cadotte Bonhomme, & La Pointe were the men that came to his house. It is thought more prudent to let the Indian woman that brot Mr. Graham's letter to Pembina return immediately, for fear that the Brulés hearing the affair may detain her. Wrote Mr. Graham in reply to his letter, communicated a signal by which the Sauteaux Chiefs called for on the Mission of peace may be known &c. – In the evening 3 men arrived from Mr. Stitt sent for a supply of provisions. Two of these men carried Mr. Stitt's Express to Jack R., & had just returned & brought me Mr. Alex<sup>f</sup> McDonell & Kirkness's letters to Mr. Stitt dated 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> January. The Colonists were at Jack R. under the direction of Mr. McDon<sup>l</sup> to the number of 92 souls. The Company's post was [p. 17,194] removed to Norwegian Point<sup>56</sup> under Mr. Kirkness. Don<sup>d</sup> Livingston<sup>57</sup> with the necessary assistance

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<sup>55</sup> Basil Belanger was a free Canadian, and former voyageur of the NWC, living at the Red River Settlement. At the trial of Colin Robertson, John Bourke, Michael Heden, Louis Nolin, and Martin Jordan in 1818, he stated he had lived in the Red River area for 13 years, and had a house there in 1816. In 1817, he was arrested by Miles Macdonell for having concealed some goods belonging to Archibald McLellan and having in his possession articles formerly belonging to Selkirk Colonists. A. Amos, *Report of Trials in the Courts of Canada Relative to the Destruction of The Earl of Selkirk's Settlement on Red River* (London: John Murray, 1820), 8-9.

<sup>56</sup> Jack River House was built in 1801 on an island near the mouth of the Jack River (Gunisao R.) at the NE end of Lake Winnipeg (Playgreen Lake) and was in operation until 1817, when it was replaced by the nearby Norway House I. It operated as a trading post and Inland Depot.

<sup>57</sup> Donald Livingston[e] and family had come to the RRS with Owen Keveny in 1812. He was born at Morven in the County of Argyre in Scotland in 1791. He was recruited as a servant to the Colony as a boat builder. On arrival at York



is building a gun boat, 46 feet keel to protect us in Lake Winipic. – Mrs. McLean & family, M. Boyle, McNulty &c. went home also Mr. Colin Robertson<sup>58</sup> & the prisoner Duncan Cameron<sup>59</sup> but without living [leaving] evidence for the prosecution. Guards placed the same as last evening – all on the alert. Weather Stormy from N.W. had a conversation with Mr. McLellan. –

*Sunday February 2<sup>nd</sup>* – Our young Indians went away. – Wrote by one of them to Lt. McDonald & sent a message by another to Peguis to come in. Two Indians with their families arrived from Riv<sup>re</sup> au Mort. – Two of our men (outlayers) came from the plain with Meat, they inform us that 5 of our men & 4 dog Sleds are taken by the Brulé party, that they (themselves) escaped not happening to be with the others – they also inform that the Cache taken away was hid in Belanger's Potato Cellar. the Brulé party are said to be only 12 men; & supposed to be those who were expected from Qui Appelle to reinforce this place. Had Belanger taken up & confined. Lt. Pambrun has taken charge of the Canadians, (as we can scarcely get a turn done by them) & for the first time their work is laid out for the next day. – Weather fine. –

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Factory in 1812, he married another emigrant, Ann MacGilveray, who was on the same ship. Donald had been engaged as a boat builder and Keveny wanted to leave him at York in that capacity, but as a married man, he was sent to the settlement. He continued his trade at the colony. He remained loyal to Selkirk all through the problems with the NWC and for his troubles was appointed constable of the Colony when Selkirk arrived there in 1817. He moved from the Red River Settlement to Iowa in 1840 and died there in about 1876-78. Deposition of Donald Livingstone, 31 July 1817, Selkirk Papers, C-15, Vol. 60, p. 15,826. Lucille H. Campey, *The Silver Chief: Lord Selkirk and the Scottish Pioneers of Belfast, Baldoon and Red River* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2003), 96, 174. Ted Binnema and Gerhard Ens (eds.), *Edmonton House Journals, Correspondence & Reports 1806-1821* (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta 2012), 323-324. <http://www.lordselkirk.ca/project/neil-livingstone-5179/>

<sup>58</sup> Colin Robertson (1783-1840) was born in Perth, Scotland, and entered the service of the NWC in 1803. In 1809 he left their service and in 1814 entered the service of the HBC with the goal of expanding the HBC presence in the Athabasca. As he passed Jack River in 1815, however, he found the dispersed Selkirk Colonists there and agreed to escort them back and re-establish the Red River Settlement which he did in September of 1815. In March of 1816 he captured the NWC Fort Gibraltar at Red River and arrested Duncan Cameron. In June of 1816, prior to the Battle of Seven Oaks, he left the colony after a dispute with Governor Semple. Thereafter he travelled to York Factory to return to London, but the ship he was travelling on, the *Prince of Wales*, got caught in the ice and he was forced to winter at Moose Factory. In June of 1817, he left Moose Factory for Canada, where he would be tried and acquitted for his actions in 1816. He stayed in the HBC until 1840, when he died. See Ted Binnema and Gerhard J. Ens (eds.), *Edmonton House Journals, Correspondence & Reports, 1806-1821*, 480.

<sup>59</sup> Duncan Cameron (1764-1848) was at this time the proprietor of the NWC Fort Gibraltar at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine River and, as such, in the middle of the dispute between Lord Selkirk and the NWC described in this journal. He was born in Scotland and emigrated as a child to New York. He and his parents came to Canada during the American Revolution in 1784. Duncan joined the NWC in 1784 and was elected a partner in 1800. From 1807 to 1811 he was stationed at Lake Winnipeg, and from 1811 to 1814 at Rainy Lake. In 1814 he was put in charge of the Red River district and headquartered at Fort Gibraltar. He was in the forefront of destroying the Selkirk Colony in 1815. In 1816 he was taken prisoner by the HBC at Fort Gibraltar and sent to England for trial. He was never tried and was released. In 1820 he returned to Canada and settled at Williamstown, Glengarry. He died there in 1848. W. Stewart Wallace (ed.), *Documents Relating to the North West Company* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1934), 429-30.

*Monday February 3<sup>rd</sup>* – Had Belanger's Effects all brought into the Fort, a cellar dug under the gentlemen's Mess room for his potatoes, 23 Kegs, [p. 17,195] also Beautinas<sup>60</sup> which were stored with them 30 Kegs making together 53 Kegs of fine potatoes, his other moveables including his 2 horses & wife were brought, among which is a great many articles pillaged from the Colonial Stores. I find Mr. Pambrun very active & willing on all occasions. These matters took up the whole day. In the Evening Bruce & 3 men arrived from Bas de la Riviere with 4 dog sleds, they came light bringing only one Keg flour & 16 White fish, altho' there was abundance of wild rice & grain there of which we have great need. These men did not meet with my Express going to Jack R. but they saw their fire on the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Instant. The families I ordered from Bas de la Riviere declined coming, as Mr. Laidlaw reports in his letter they even refuse to give their dogs for hauling Meat, the Indians in that quarter are in a wretched state, in danger of starving for want of ammunition & cloathing. –

*Tuesday Feb<sup>y</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>* – I conceive Mr. Stitt not safe at Deadman's R. his goods, ammunition & liquor afford sufficient cause to tempt the Brulés to pay him a visit, & we have not the means to prevent it – there are no Indians there to remain for & the debts he has given, may as easily be collected here as there. On these considerations I ordered Mr. Stitt, by letter, to remove himself & people either to here or Bas de la Riviere, & should he make choice of this place for himself, to send a reinforcement of an Interpreter & 2 men to Mr. Laidlaw. Sent 8 dog Sleds including his own 3 to assist in the transport. Wrote Mr. Laidlaw. – [p. 17,196]

*Wednesday February 5<sup>th</sup>* – We think long the Chief Peguis does not arrive, it is necessary however to send a party for meat. Mr. Pambrun got the loan of all the freeman's dogs & had them brought to the Fort to set out early to-morrow. These with those in the Fort make 7 Sleds which we propose to send to the Meat Stage to bring a load to Lagimonieres house from whence to return for more, the Oxen & horses to bring it from there to the Fort. We expect the Indians in that quarter will protect our people from being taken by the enemy. Peguis arrived at night with 13 Indians well armed, 6 more of his men are coming behind with Sleds of Meat. –

Weather fine & clear all day – Had Belanger's luggage inspected in which we found sundry articles pillaged from the wreck of the Colony. –

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<sup>60</sup> This may be Charles Bottineau. See previous citation.

*Thursday Feb<sup>y</sup> 6<sup>th</sup>* – The 6 Indians arrived early with their loads of Meat. – Had Peguis dressed in his new suit & girt with a Sword, one of those taken at Bas de la Riviere, the Flag was also hoisted in honor of Peguis & his followers. Early in the afternoon arrived two of the Sleds sent to Mr. Stitts with the articles I requested, viz. a Keg of Powder, 1 Keg Spirits, Cloth & Blankets. Mr. Stitt has made [a] choice of coming up here himself, & has sent Jack R. [Ram] Kipling<sup>61</sup> & another man to remain at Bas de la Riviere. Bruce had gone in the morning (rather against his inclination) with 7 Sleds for Meat according to the arrangement made yesterday. – Charles Fidler<sup>62</sup> came up along with the men from Mr. Stitts: – he left his Father’s post at the Partridge Crop 16 days ago. Mr. Thomas is there along with him & 6 men. [p. 17,197] Mr. Fidler sent his son Thomas,<sup>63</sup> with Pisk Kipling<sup>64</sup> & 5 men about a month ago to trade at the White River, 2½ days journey from this. The Partridge Crop is 6 days journey from here. –

The Indians remained with us all day to regale themselves with smoaking & get the news, which I detailed fully to them by means of Mr. Nolain.

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<sup>61</sup> Jack Ram Kipling was the native-born son of John Kipling (b.c. 1743-1794). He was born about 1788, and by the 1800s was employed by the HBC as a labourer and steersman out of Albany. By 1806 he was at Brandon House where he was based until about 1811 when he was posted to Pembina Post. He married Margaret Okanens before 1810. He was a steersman at Pembina in 1814-15 and an interpreter at Turtle River in 1815-16. He was at the Forks of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers from 1817 to 1821. He left the employ of the HBC in 1821 and was killed in a fight in 1836 at Fort Union. HBCA BS; B.239/d/165-216a. “The Kiplings of Hudson’s Bay: the first three generations,” <https://kipling-one-name.net/The%20Kiplings%20of%20Hudson%20Bay-%20The%20first%20three%20Canadian%20generations.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> Charles Fidler (1798-1886) was the son of Peter and Mary Mackegonne (a Native). Charles entered the employ of the HBC in 1812 as a Labourer, working his whole career in the Winnipeg, Swan River and Red River Districts at Brandon House, Curling River, Fort Dauphin, and Swan River. He quickly became a Steersman and eventually took over from his father as the Trader in charge of Fort Dauphin when his father became ill in 1819. The following year (1820-21) he was posted in the Swan River District as an Assistant Trader. He retired in 1821 to the Red River with his wife, Anne Sanderson. He died in the RRS in 1886. HBCA BS. HBCA BS; B.239/d/210 & 216a.

<sup>63</sup> Thomas Fidler (1795-1875) was born to Peter and Mary Fidler in 1795 at York Factory, and joined the HBC in 1812. He served as a Clerk at Brandon House (1815-16), and an Interpreter and Clerk at Beaver Creek and Fort Dauphin (1816-21). In 1820-21, he was listed as an Interpreter at Fort Dauphin and Big Point. His superiors’ views of him ranged from being a useful servant in tripping to Indians (1816), to being handy but disobedient and addicted to rum. He retired from HBC service in 1822 and settled in the Red River Colony. He was buried in St. Clements, Red River Settlement, in 1875. HBCA BS; B.51/d/4; B.63/f/1; B.239/d/175-216a.

<sup>64</sup> Thomas Pisk/Peask Kipling was born around 1792, at Albany House, to John Kipling (b.c. 1743-1794). He worked inland from Albany House and was at Brandon House by 1808 where he worked until 1812. From 1813 to 1815, he was a Labourer at the HBC post at Portage La Prairie, and in 1815-16 was stationed in the Manitoba District where he stayed until 1817 as a Runner and Interpreter. In 1817-18, he was temporarily in charge of Brandon House. In 1818-19, he was and Interpreter at the Forks, and from 1819 to 1822 he was an Interpreter at Isle a la Crosse. In 1822-23, he was again in the Lower Red River District where he stayed as a Steersman until 1825. In 1825 he left the HBC to settle at Red River. He rejoined the HBC in 1828 and shows up in the Columbia Department where he worked for the HBC until 1860. He was appointed to oversee Cape Disappointment in the Oregon from 1852-55, and thereafter was paid as a Labourer. He lived with his family (he had married Marguerite Plouffe Villebrun) at Cape Disappointment and took a 640 acre claim adjoining Peter Skene Ogden in 1846. HBCA BS; B.22/d/1-5; B.63/f/1; B.239/d/165-216a; B.239/g/1-32. “The Kiplings of Hudson’s Bay: the first three generations,” <https://kipling-one-name.net/The%20Kiplings%20of%20Hudson%20Bay-%20The%20first%20three%20Canadian%20generations.pdf>

They are seemingly well pleased at the prospect of having a peace with the Yangton Sioux, & decided on giving us all their support against our enemies. Sat up late with the Chief. Weather cold & overcast, all day. – The Indians brot 12 Moose Skins, of which we had much need for our people.

*Friday Feby 7<sup>th</sup>* – Altho' we had sat up late the Chief was very early astir, he slept in the same apartment with me, & while I was yet abed gave me his hand to take leave, as he was going away, he had his fine suit packed up on his back rolled up in his flag, his hat garnished with feathers on his head & sword in hand. All the Indians went off along with him, they must hold a Council before the Ambassadors can be sent to the Sioux to arrange the articles of the Peace.

A Mutiny broke out to day among the Meurons – to extort liquor from us. The men of the guard have uniformly since the capture of the place had a glass of liquor given them daily. They refused to mount to-day unless they got a gill each, as they had seen a Keg brought yesterday to the Fort, the Sentry on the prisoners even left his post, & the whole refused to do any more duty unless their request was complied with, they even threatened to leave [p. 17, 198] the post, & join the party at Pembina. Capt. D'Or: seemed to advocate for them, alarmed at the consequences, should they carry their threat into execution. These men have not done a turn except mounting guard since their arrival here, they throw their dirty water & sweepings at their room door, & a part of them sleep on the floor rather than put up berths for themselves, Filth & dirt accumulate in the Fort, that it is to be feared may prove pestilential when warm weather comes. – It would not do to give way to a requisition made in such a manner, even were liquor more abundant with us. I detained Mr. Pambrun, who was going to the plains, to wait the result – Seeing there was nothing to be gained, they at last returned to their duty quietly. Mr. Pambrun set out to the Plains with 2 men & dog sleds, one of whom had just come from Mr. Stitts. Gave him a speech to deliver at the Indian Council with a present of 2 gallons Spirits for the Chief – some Tobacco, also 2 gallons more to trade Meat. Seeing this liquor put up to be sent away, had aided in part to excite the jealousy of the Meurons, notwithstanding the necessity of it, for procuring provisions. We did not find that Witschy even took much pains to calm them. – Two Sleds came in the afternoon from Mr. Stitts with family luggage, Headin's Indian Wife &c. – At night Joseph Demarais arrived from Pembina, sent by Lt McD. for axes, Gate Hinges, Nails &c. The party had got up the 3<sup>rd</sup> day

after their leaving this, provisions abound there. – Wea<sup>r</sup> fine – Three horse Sleds were sent in the morning for Meat pursuant to the plan of yesterday. – [p. 17,199]

*Saturday February 8<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Stitts children arrived with some Indians, he is himself detained by illness. Took the examination of Basil Belanger. – Sent off Jos: Demarais with the articles required by Lt. McDonald. – Sent McDonald 2 quarts Spirits – wrote him – In the evening our 3 horses returned with upwards of 1000<sup>wt</sup> of Meat. – Wea<sup>r</sup> cold. – Propose to send away Charles Roque by Manitaubo Lake.

*Sunday February 9<sup>th</sup>* – The Canadians from Bas de la Riv<sup>re</sup> are anxious to return. We are out of firewood which I want them to assist awhile to provide. They are loath to part with their dogs but we cannot dispense with them to haul Meat. One of them sold his two dogs to one of our men for 32 dollars, an exorbitant price – but our man thought proper to give it. Otherwise I should have kept them for 10 dollars each which is the common price this winter here –

Weather cold. Indians come in with some meat & skins. –

*Monday Feb<sup>y</sup> 10<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Nolain went off to the plains for Meat with 3 Horses & 3 dog Sleds to take Mr. Pambrun's place; wrote to him for Pambrun to come in. Mr. Pambrun came in with 9 dog sleds & Nolain & people returned with him, also Bruce & old Cadotte. 2384 lb of Meat was brought this trip & 1000 lb by the last making. 3384 lb bought by Mr. Pambrun since he went out, the greater part dried Meat. All the Indians are decided to take up arms for us. Peguis's band [p. 17,200] are to keep their present position to cover us, he will be in himself in 5 or 6 days. Mr. Stitt arrived with 2 men. A Courier arrived from Ft. Daer, sent by Lt. McDonald for some supplies, but he did not bring the Meurons baggage. The free Canadians at Pembina have promised us their Meat, they however launch out unfounded calumnies against the treatment they experience from the Colony in not being punctually paid for their labour. Bought J. Bt<sup>e</sup> Deroche's dogs from Bas de la Riviere for one of our men. Weather very stormy & cold. Engaged Soucisse & Belhumeur to cut firewood. –

*Tuesday Feb<sup>y</sup> 11<sup>th</sup>* – Nolain went with 4 dog sleds to Indians for Meat. brought with him 4 Galls. Spirits & a quantity of Tobacco. Some dogs are yet left in the Fort. Much irregularity takes place respecting the prisoners, they are visited all

hours by even our gentlemen. Capt. D'Or: spoke to Witschy & Nolain to check them for this practice at which they take great offence. It is necessary to draw up some written rules for the prison. Got my letters prepared to send by Roque, who goes by Manitaubo, & Swan R. to the Saskatchewan, the route by Qui Appelle being unsafe, on account of the enemy. – Wrote to Mess<sup>rs</sup> Fidler,<sup>65</sup> Whitford, Bird,<sup>66</sup> & to Thomas Fidler at White River, to remove here with all his people & goods to prevent his being plundered by the enemy. – Roque & Charles Fidler set out together at 1 P.M. Sent away the 2 N.W. men to their families at Bas de la Riviere after [p. 17,201] disposing of their dogs to our men, they promised to work there at any thing they might be ordered to do, – Wrote to Mr. Laidlaw. – Our Stock of Hay is  $\frac{2}{3}$  consumed by keeping the Cattle & horses in the Fort, got Mr. Pambrun to send men with them to the plains. Witschy & Nolain have neglected to arrange the provisions in the Store, it is in a most shocking disorder. Mr. Pambrun has undertaken to get it arranged. We are also crowded for quarters when the people arrive from the plains, but I could not get a lodge pitched till Mr. Pambrun undertook the matter. We are much in want of an active Officer like him & I shall consequently feel the loss of him when he returns to Fond du Lac. In the Evening 8 Indians arrived with Sleds well loaded with Meat. It is uncommon to see Sauteaux dragging Meat to a Fort, it is an indication of their good will towards us. they belong to Peguis's band & one of them married his daughter last spring & brought her along to see me. – Weather clear & cold all day. –

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<sup>65</sup> Peter Fidler (1769-1822) was born at Bolsover, England. He joined the HBC as a labourer in 1788 and eventually trained as a surveyor. He served at York Factory, Manchester House, Carlton House, Buckingham House, and Cumberland House before spearheading the HBC efforts in the Athabasca. He also travelled extensively with the Blackfoot in 1792-93. He was assigned to the Swan River District in 1807, before surveying the Assiniboine and Red Rivers up to Lakes Manitoba and Winnipeg. After a furlough in England, he returned with the first Red River colonists to Rupert's Land in 1812. Appointed postmaster of Brandon House, he was also put in the service of the infant colony. In 1813 he began surveying the lots of the colony. As noted here, Fidler was left in partial charge of the settlement in the summer of 1814 when Miles Macdonell travelled to York Factory to escort another group of settlers. He remained partially in control until Macdonell returned in 1815. When Miles Macdonell was arrested by the NWC in June of 1815, Fidler again assumed temporary command. As such, he signed the capitulation of 25 June 1815 ordering all settlers to abandon the colony. Fidler escorted the fleeing settlers to Jack River, where they were met by Colin Robertson who took the colonists back to Red River to re-establish the settlement. Fidler went on to York Factory to transport the newly arrived governor of the HBC territories, Robert Semple, as well as additional settlers, to Red River. He then returned to Brandon House but continued to aid the colony. After the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816, and after the colony was re-established a second time in 1817, Fidler resumed surveying the property lots. In September of 1817, Fidler left the colony and resumed his fur trade career at Brandon House. From 1819 to 1821 he was put in charge of the Manitoba District at Dauphin Lake. In poor health, he was pensioned in 1822 and died that same year. Robert S. Allen, "Fidler, Peter," *DCB Online*.

<sup>66</sup> James Bird Sr. See previous citation.

*Wednesday Feb<sup>y</sup> 12<sup>th</sup>* – We are getting the Meat Store arranged. Settled with the Indians for the Meat, they brought about 800 lb dried Meat & grease. Our house smoaks all day in consequence of an extraordinary high wind. I was obliged to have the fire extinguished in my room. Had a visit in the Evening from Mr. McLellan, he requested a perusal of Mr. Dan<sup>l</sup> McKenzie's<sup>67</sup> letter to his friends – which I let him have. – he wishes to have a copy of it which I also promised him & shewed him the contracts Mr. McKenzie [p. 17,202] entered into with is Lordship as also the submission. – Mr. Stitt sent of his two men early this morning to bring up a load of goods from the Dead R. –

Weather boisterous all day. Gave the Indians a present of liquor to carry to their Encampment with a quart rum for Peguis, to induce them to come again with Meat, also ammun: each.

*Thursday Feb<sup>y</sup> 13<sup>th</sup>* – Drew up regulations & orders for the security of the prisoners. – Our Indians had gone away at 3 A.M. after getting each a measure of powder & one of ball to encourage them to hunt & come again with Meat. – Mr. Nolain returned from the plains, his party is yet behind. – He only went to the Chiefs band & reports that Guill<sup>m</sup> Rocheleau & Ant<sup>e</sup> Plante (Athab) made free with liquor on the way out. – Spoke to Mr. Stitt to take charge of the Stores, which he readily agrees to do – irregularities must occur when different persons are thus employed, the one cannot be responsible for the other. – if we have only to look to one. – he will be accountable. – Weather fine & clear all day. –

*Friday February 14<sup>th</sup>* – We feel anxious for the return of our people in the plains & fear they may have been taken, the Indians report that they saw fresh tracks which increase our concern, they at last arrived safe. Four dog sleds brought 1240 lb & the horses 628 lb. total 1868 chiefly dried Meat & fat. Mr. Nolain with more liquor & also other articles did not trade so much as

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<sup>67</sup> Daniel McKenzie (1767-1832) entered the service of the NWC in about 1790 and in 1791 was at Fort Chipewyan in the Athabasca district. He became a partner of the NWC in 1796 and was at the Upper Fort des Prairies and Rocky Mountains in 1799. In 1806 he oversaw the Athabasca district, and in 1808-09, he was in the Lower Red River district. From 1809 to 1812 he was in the English River district, and from 1813-15 at Fond du Lac. In 1816, he was one of the NWC partners arrested by Lord Selkirk and Miles McDonell. While under arrest, McKenzie came to an arbitration agreement with Selkirk on indemnification of damages, and McKenzie sold the furs and property at Fort William to Selkirk for £3000. While these agreements were quickly disavowed by the NWC and legal authorities, they created chaos in the NWC. When McKenzie was released he returned to Montreal in 1817. While at Drummond Island, he signed a protest that he had been pressured to sign these agreements while a prisoner at Fort William, and that he was in a deranged state of mind while he did it. This protest was disseminated among NWC officers, and it is possible that this was what Miles Macdonell here considered McKenzie's letter to his friends. McKenzie retired after 1817, and died in Upper Canada in 1832. W. Stewart Wallace (ed.), *Documents Relative to the North West Company* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), 476. J.M. Bumsted, *Lord Selkirk: A Life* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008), 320-22.

Mr. Pambrun with a less quantity of liquor only. – Wrote to Mr. McDonald [p. 17,203] & sent off Landrille with the articles he requested. – Weather boisterous. –

*Saturday Feb<sup>y</sup> 15<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Stitt took formal possession of the Shop. 3 Dog Sleds went for Meat – the Indians went off early as well as Landrille for Fort Daer. Three of the N.W. Canadians are averse to work in consequence of which we have no wood hauled. Sent all the spare horses to feed in the plain. – Witschy does not seem to take much interest in putting things to rights. – Weather fine all day. –

*Sunday Feb<sup>y</sup> 16<sup>th</sup>* – The Meurons asked for a gill of rum each to keep the carnival, being the Sunday preceeding Ash Wednesday if they got that they said they would ask no more. I gave them all I had on this condition, the remains of a Keg, I brought here, which made out the quantity required, but they had no sooner drank it than they asked for more which Capt. D’Or: seemed to think it would be best to give them, & applied to Mr. Stitt which was accordingly given, but the soldiers wished afterwards for more, & were dissatisfied in being refused. Mr. Stitt has only part of a Keg left for the Indians. – the allowance to the guard must even be discontinued. Beautins arrived from Fort Daer. Two Sleds came from Bas de la Riviere sent by Mr. Laidlaw with flour, Rice, fish & 4 Moose Skins. – Weather mild, thawing all day. – Our 3 Sleds returned late at night with good loads of Meat. [p. 17,204]

*Monday Feb<sup>y</sup> 17<sup>th</sup>* – Mr. Pambrun arranged 6 Sleds of dogs & men to go to-morrow to the Robe Noires<sup>68</sup> band for Meat. Chartier refused to go or do any other work & was very impertinent to Mr. Pambrun, had him confined in a lodge by himself & to get only half rations – Bruce & Bellair go with the party – the first made objections – but he must go – Nolain is to go to hunt Cattle. – Gave the men from Bas de la Riviere their orders to return to-morrow – wrote Mr. Laidlaw. – Weather mild – thawing all day. –

*Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February* – Bautins went off early for Pembina, the 2 N.W. men for Bas de la Riviere along with Mr. Stitts 2 men to bring up loads from the Riv<sup>re</sup> aux Morts. Set 6 dog Sleds for Meat to the Robe Noir’s Camp with Bruce & Bellaire. Bruce went off very reluctantly.

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<sup>68</sup> Robe Noir (Black Cat), according to Peter Fidler, was a newly made Chief from near Portage de Prairie. He was one of the Saulteaux Chiefs who signed Selkirk’s Treaty of 1817. Peter Fidler, “General Report of the Red River District of 1819,” (HBCA B.22/e/1); and “Report on the Manitoba District 1820,” (HBCA B.51/e/1).



Mr. Nolain of his own accord took Cadotte with him to hunt Buffaloe. He told Mr. Pambrun that he felt displeas'd at the charge of the Store & Indian trade being taken from him & given to Mr. Stitt, that he knew to trade a great deal better & would not serve under Stitt, that it was true, there was a good stock of provisions now in Store, but it was all owing to him that he would keep hunting till spring so as to keep out of the way to avoid being under the command of any one, &c. –

Chartier the N.W. man that was confin'd in a lodge on half rations, for refusing to work, & impertinence to Mr. Pambrun demolish'd the [p. 17,205] lodge & consequently had to sleep in the open air, Gautier another N.W. servant declin'd working, & was discover'd to give intelligence by signs to McLellan of the number of sentries & strength of the guard. We discover'd some preparations to facilitate the escape of the prisoners, had these 2 men confin'd in one of the rooms, & orders to the Sentries to let out none of the prisoners during the night, the key being lodg'd with Witschy & a tub furnish'd for their occasions. – Weather overcast, thawing all day. –

*Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February* – The weather is so mild that I propose to build a Chimney in the Block house at the S.E. Angle of the Fort. Sent for Mini & Belhumeur for this purpose, we can only prepare for beginning it to-morrow. We are scarce of quarters for our people – besides the Colonists expected from Jack R. – the Soldiers clean'd out part of the Fort & we had a good deal of wood brought. Gautier & Chartier the 2 men in confinement petitioned to be permitted to work, which it is judg'd most advisab'l to agree to, being scarce of working hands. Weather fine & clear, thawing all day.

*Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February* – Two Indians brought Sleds of meat & a third came to ask men to go to their Camp for Meat, the Cattle are yet abundant about the River Salle. – Had the Chimney began in the S.E. bastion & about 4 feet of it carried up – also a quantity of wood brought to the Fort. – Towards sun set one Delage a N.W. [p. 17,206] Co<sup>s</sup> servant arriv'd from Riviere a la Sourie, brought a letter from Hunter to Witschy dat'd 17<sup>th</sup> Instant. Delage inform'd that 19 Bois brules were coming on a party to see us to make peace. – when they were met by Mr. Joseph Cadotte. 6 of them immediately return'd to Qui Appelle that Cadotte prevent'd Cuthbert Grant & the others from coming to see us & instigat'd them to take our men that were for provisions &c. Two freemen came from Pembina

(Laverdure & Amelle) to get ammunition, &c. Buffalo abound about Pembina. –

*Friday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>* – In his anxiety to secure the prisoners & prevent the possibility of escape Capt. D’Or: wishes not to let them out during the day for their occasions observing that they might all rush out at once when the door should be opened overpower the sentry & run out at the gate. I remarked that that would be easily prevented by an additional Sentry or an orderly man to attend to the prison door during the day, none being allowed to go out at night that I thought it an unnecessary hardship to keep them closed up all day with their own ordure. We had 18 soldiers who did nothing else than keep guard.

Mr. Stitts men came with a load of furs – took the Information of Amelle & La Verdure – Nolain returned from hunting – he has killed one bull of which Cadotte brought part home for the dogs. Nolain says that he has killed 2 Cows far off, but Cadotte did not see them. [p. 17,207] Cadotte’s services were much required here during his absence. –

Sent Mr. McDonald some nails & balls by La Verdure, & requested him to detain the departure of some Indians going from there to Lac la Pluie till I should send up people to accompany them. – Our Chimney advanced very little to-day. Weather turned cold spitting snow from the Northward. –

*Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February* – Indians came in with two well loaded Sleds of Meat, they seem determined not to let us want. Mr. Stitts 2 men went again for a Cargo to Dead R. I sent a horse to bring up Cassettes which cannot stow on the dog Sleds, but the driver was obliged to return with him not being able to proceed for some banks of drifted snow. – Deloge gave some further Information respecting the brulés, he goes off to-morrow, & promises to acquaint us, should they come to attack. –

Weather moderately cold & overcast. Mimi [Minie] did not come to work at the Chimney to-day.

*Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February* – Deloge went away as did the last Indians who brought us Meat. To whom I gave 2 blankets off my bed rather than they should not be paid. Capt. D’Or: & Witschy wrote each by Deloge to Hunter. In the Evening our 6 Sleds came with great loads of Meat & 5 Indian Sleds along with them, also with loads.

Weather overcast snowed a little in the Evening. – [17,208]

*Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>* – Five more Indian Sleds arrived this morning with Meat, & another in the Evening – It is quite unusual with the Sauteaux to bring provisions to a Fort. it shows their determination to support us, & good will towards us. The Assiniboines & Crees only are in the habit of doing this. the prisoner Voudrie being unwell I permitted Lagemoniere to take him out to take the air making him give security in 500£ for his return. Sent 5 Sleds for Meat left on a Stage. Weather fine & clear. –

*Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February* – The quarters preparing in the Block house advance very slowly from the people's laziness – & want of a person to overlook & set them to work. Since Mr. Pambrun has been unable to go out, when he was in a situation to act we had no trouble with the men – the work went on well – I can get no service out of the Interpreters about the Fort. Yesterday when there was all the Meat that came in that morning & the day before to weigh & the Indians to settle with Mr. Nolain tackled in his dogs & went off, under pretence of going to see Peguis, but returned in afternoon when all the business was over. – Mr. Stitts Men returned with loads in the forenoon. Mr. Laidlaw arrived with 2 men from Bas de la Riviere in afternoon he brot a good horse from there in good condition & 10 Bushels Wheat. Mr. Crebassa could not be brought on account of his health. Our 5 Sleds for Meat yesterday returned also with good loads. Bellaire<sup>69</sup> has had the direction of these two trips, – his activity & exertions has given great satisfaction. – Weather overcast – Mild. [p. 17,209]

*Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February* – Two Indians came; one of them brought good Sled of Meat, about 1 P.M. a Packet from Ft. W<sup>m</sup> was brought us by Laudrie sent by Lieut McDonald from Pembina the men who brought it from Lac La Pluie remained at Ft. Daer to rest themselves. By it we have Montreal dates to October Fort W<sup>m</sup> dates to 30<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> & lac La Pluie to 23<sup>rd</sup> February. – Lieut. Graffenreid<sup>70</sup> arrived at the latter place on 27<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup> with 17 Meuron Soldiers. Lord S. while an attack on Fort W<sup>m</sup> was expected, weakened himself to reinforce us! – It occupied the day to read our letters & digest

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<sup>69</sup> There is a Louis Belahemare among the list of Free Canadians at Pembina/Forks (1814-1819) noted by Peter Fidler. HBCA B.22/e/1, fo. 10.

<sup>70</sup> This is Lieutenant Frédéric de Graffenreid (1792-1871). Graffenreid was born in Berne in 1792. He entered the Regiment De Meuron in 1810, served in the Malta campaign, and was a lieutenant upon the regiment's disbanding in 1816. At that time, he was recruited by Lord Selkirk, and in 1817 travelled to the Red River Settlement in advance of Lord Selkirk. He was sent to Lac La Pluie with 22 De Meuron soldiers and a handful of Canadians to reinforce the post, before continuing to Red River. In 1818 he returned to Europe, and recruited Swiss settlers for Selkirk. He died in 1871.

the news. ordered Mr. Nolain to set out in the morning for Peguis's Camp to desire his coming in – Wea<sup>r</sup> fine & clear. –

*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February* – Mr. Nolain did not set out till after breakfast to bring the Chief. Two Indians came with Meat. Our Block house quarter gets on but slowly. – Weather overcast. –

*Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February* – Mr. McDonald sent 2 Indians from Ft. Daer; one of them the little Knife came from the neighbourhood of Crow Island & reports that the gens des Fenilus or Sussitans Sioux, killed a Court Oreille Indian lately on the Crow Island R. & took away his wife & children & a Canadian woman; this is said to have taken place near Mr. Mich<sup>l</sup> McDonnell's Fort.<sup>71</sup> It is apprehended that this affair may break off the peace between the Sioux and Sauteaux – but the Yanktons mentioned thro' Mr. Graham, that these people spoke last fall of going to war, & wished the Sauteaux to be on their guard. – Mr. Nolain returned, the [p. 17,210] Chief will come in a few days – is quite happy at the news – & desires that if a Packet is sent his Lordship before he comes – to assure his L<sup>d</sup> of his attachment, & good disposition of all the Indians, they keep a sentry daily on the road from Brandon &c to watch the Brulés, and are ready on the first alarm to take an active part. –

Mr. Pambrun's health cannot permit his return to Red Cedar Lake. he proposes to send Lagimoniere there to take charge, & to remove from there towards Red R. to the Volens. I wrote to Mr. Chauvin to this effect & enclosed him a Warrant for the arrest of Mr. Morrison. Wrote also to Mr. Mich<sup>l</sup> McDonnell to remove as soon as he can towards Red R. either by Red Lake or the Ottetail. Propose also to send Bruce to the Blackman<sup>72</sup> & Indians of Red Lake, & afterwards to join Mr. Graham. – Weather clear & fine. –

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<sup>71</sup> Michael McDonnell was recruited by Lord Selkirk in 1811 as a Clerk, and he came to Red River with the advance party of Settlers. In 1814, on the orders of Miles Macdonell, he captured provisions at Turtle River, for which he was later arrested by the NWC. He was sent to Montreal by canoe in 1815. In 1816, he was sent by the HBC to Fond du Lac, and from there to L'Aisle de Corbeau where he passed the winter. In the spring of 1817, he went to Lac la Pluie where he met Lord Selkirk, and he was put in charge of the post. That summer Angus Shaw and a group of NWC partners and clerks captured the HBC post and turned McDonnell out. Michael then returned to Lower Canada and England, giving evidence against the NWC. In 1818, he returned to the Hudson Bay as a servant in the Albany District, but unhappy with his position he returned to Canada without permission in 1819. LAC Selkirk Papers, C-8, Vol 28, p. 8395. C-15, Vol 60, pp. 15975-76, 16007-008. C-15, Vol 61, pp-. 16290-94.

<sup>72</sup> This is L'Homme Noir, was a Sauteaux chief who resided higher up the Red River towards Red Lake.

## *March 1817*

*Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March* – Gave Lagim<sup>e</sup> & Bruce their orders; they went off this morning, wrote by them to Lt. McD. Sent him Whip & x cut saws &c. to saw boards for batteaux. – It is necessary that Mr. Crebassa should be removed from Winipic R., we are much at a loss, who to send for him, when Mr. Laidlaw Volunteered the matter, & went off after breakfast with a party of 2 men. Mr. Stitts men came with the last part of the luggage at Dead R. Our Meat operations have ceased since the arrival of the last party. Not an article to give the Indians in payment for Meat – our men cannot therefore be sent out till the expected supplies come from Jack R. the Block [p. 17,211] house Chimney was obliged to be partly pulled down not being properly built. Last evening had Mess<sup>rs</sup> McLellan & Lamar to acquaint them with the news we had received concerning them – the general order of 17<sup>th</sup> August to cancel the Militia & provincial rank of certain officers appointed for the Indian Territories & conquered countries. – Weather Stormy & overcast. Wind blowing the roofs off the houses from the South<sup>d</sup>.

*Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March* – Capt. D’Ors: had Mr. McLellan in his room to communicate to him more fully the news. – In the Evening Soucisse brought a letter from Cuthbert Grant addressed to M. McDonell demanding the liberation of our prisoners – he is come with a parcel of Brulés to the neighbourhood, among whom are Jos: Cadotte & Heurter<sup>73</sup> – the former wrote to his brother & the latter to Witschy, Cuthbert Grant writes –

“Sir the result of my voyage here is merely to request & demand of you Mr. McLellan & others who are in your possession whom we understand are most treacherously ill treated especially Mr. McLellan whom I am positive is innocent of any crime. Such treatment Sir you cannot complain of when you were in our possession, you had your liberties & freely went out & in the Fort when you thought proper – neither was your prison a dark Dungeon. I feel very much for the poor innocent people. I have in company with me gentlemen from Montreal last summer [p. 17,212] who offer themselves to become bail for them & myself should I be acceptable. Should you not comply with this request the consequences that shall hereafter occur I shall not answer for. – I am Sir, your Humble Servant”

(Signed) Cuthbert Grant.

“Please to excuse this Ink & Scrawl.”

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<sup>73</sup> This is Frederick Damien Heurter from Switzerland and the De Meuron regiment that disbanded in Canada in 1816. In that year, he was recruited by the NWC and travelled west to the Red River Settlement. There he witnessed the results of the Battle of Seven Oaks which caused him to defect to the HBC in the spring of 1817. The narrative of his experiences was published as *Narratives of John Pritchard, Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun, and Frederick Damien Heurter, Respecting the Aggressions of the North-West Company, against the Earl of Selkirk’s Settlement upon Red River* (1819). J.M. Bumsted, *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 110.

To which I immediately returned the following answer.

Sir – I just now received your letter by Soucisse, stating the ill treatment of our prisoners & demanding their liberation – in reply to which I have to inform you the Mr. McLellan & other prisoners here are not ill treated: – they are in confinement, but we have no dungeon in the Fort. The crimes of which they are accused are of such magnitude that I cannot take upon myself to accept of bail. – With respect to what you say of my having been formerly a prisoner with the N.W. C°. – If you are ignorant of the laws of your Country give me leave to inform you that there is a wide difference in crimes – & that which the N.W.C° chose to accuse me was not of the same nature with the crimes against Mr. McLellan & the other prisoners in custody here. – As to the threat you make, I despise it. Let your people & yourself if you chuse [sic] come to put it in practice. Your people are assembled unlawfully. I order you in his Majesty's name to disperse them, & if after 8 O'Clock tomorrow morning you are found together in arms, I shall put the Riot Act in force & you must take the consequences. – Any of you [p. 17,213] that will come here shall be protected – if not guilty of heinous crimes – & as to yourself you have already a letter from me to that effect. – I enclose you a copy of a general order of 17<sup>th</sup> August lately received from Head Quarters.

I am, Sir, Your Humble Serv<sup>t</sup>. Miles Macdonell – Gov<sup>t</sup>  
To Mr. Cuthbert Grant, & the Brulés –

Soucisse brought back in a short time the following letter in reply written in pencil.

“Sir, Your threats you make use of we laugh at them & you may come with your forces at any time you please we shall be always ready to meet you with a good heart, you shall see me to-morrow morning still under arms, I dare you to come out with your forces. Since you will not come to any reasonable terms you may do your worst & you may perhaps have cause to regret your expression & fully. – As for your General order I shall believe it when I see the original, – I am Sir, Your Humble Servant.

(Signed) Cuthbert Grant” To Mile McDonell Esq. –

Grant & some others of these fellows were at Soucisses house, he supposes their numbers to be about 50. – their Camp is on the Assiniboine River they have taken Belanrui & Sec. & old Mimic [Mimie] prisoners & have also 2 of our Cows with them. – Wea<sup>r</sup> stormy. – thawing. –

*Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March* – Soucisse was here again [p. 17,214] in the morning. he offered to go to visit the Brulés Camp if we wished it & to bring us all the information he could procure. He went accordingly & returned in the afternoon, told us that the enemy were about 70 men, that they ate a cow & heifer of ours of which he partook, he came again in Evening with a note from young

Roderick McKenzie<sup>74</sup> to get the Clothes sent for him by his father, & a request from the Brulés to have Mainville delivered up to them – that they could prove his innocence & that if he was given up to them that they would all go away quietly without doing any act of violence that we might then send in safety to the Indians for provisions or any thing else – if this was refused them that they would invest the Fort & prevent any of us to go out even to get water from the river – Capt. D'O. thought that Mainville might be given up if it would obtain us a peace for 3 months until the arrival of reinforcements. I wrote young McKenzie that he might safely come for his Clothes – no other person could get them as I was enjoined by his father to deliver them to him only, & to give him advice for his government. I desired Soucisse to tell the Brulés that there was an accusation against the prisoner Mainville, which he must answer for to the laws of his Country, that it was out of my power to liberate him, but I was ready to hear any thing that could be offered in his favour, that as to threats they would get nothing in that way. – Soucisse afterwards came along with young McKenzie when his parcel was delivered to him. I gave him the letter written [p. 17,215] at the request of his father, to read, & he went away after promising to come again next day. There was not a turn of work done to-day – the Fort gates were kept shut against my wishes. About 11 at night sent 2 men express to Bas de la Riviere, with orders to the Colonists to remain there till further orders & also Dalcour & the goods he has for us, to prevent their falling into the Enemy's hands – Weather stormy blowing hard from the northward & cold. –

*Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March* – I ordered the main gate to be opened. We have no wood at the Fort. I desired Witschy to get a party of 4 or 5 Soldiers to go into the opposite wood to to [sic] cover & protect the wood hauling, but he told me afterwards that they were not very fond of going. After breakfast I took Mr. Pambrun & Bellaire with me to take an excursion thro' the wood – We found no tracks there of the Brulés, it is certain that a few men posted there might keep off a great number – the snow is deep the underwood very thick. The Ambassador Soucisse acquainted us that some of the enemy Grant, Bostonais, Young McKenzie & others slept last night at his house,

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<sup>74</sup> Roderick McKenzie was an Apprentice Clerk for the NWC, who had begun his service in 1815. He was the Metis son of Daniel McKenzie, the NWC partner who has induced to sell Fort William and its stock to Lord Selkirk in 1816. After the merger of the NWC and HBC in 1821 he was taken in by the new HBC. Harry W. Duckworth (ed.), *Friends, Foes, and Furs: George Nelson's Lake Winnipeg Journals, 1804–1822* (Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019), 416-17.

that they appeared to be getting more moderate. They however ate another of our Cows last night. Soucisse the honest ambassador who is a man of noted courage & delivers a message or gives his own opinion without fear to the Brulés, came again in the afternoon to see us. he had been at the Enemy's Camp & found it entirely [p. 17,216] deserted. they had gone off. An Indian came in the Evening from Peguis's Camp. he had seen their tracks past Lagemoniere's old house, & found an Indian drum & 4 arrows on the road, the arrows were stuck in the snow pointing to the Fort. We have now no doubt of being rid of them for a while – The motive of their sudden departure is uncertain. Perhaps that not being able to frighten us into a compliance with their demand for releasing their prisoners & having learnt of our have a good stock of provisions laid in they thought it useless to continue the siege with any prospect of success. – We got a little wood hauled home but no other work done – the people are all idle. – Weather fine – thawing – A man is to go in the morning to order Laidlaw & Mr. McDonell to advance.

*Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March* – One man went early for Bas de la Riviere wrote Mr. Laidlaw. – about 1 O'Clock Mr. McDonell arrived from Jack R. he met the man sent who after communicating the news to him went on. Mr. McDonell left Jack R. on the 20<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>, our Express only reached there the 17<sup>th</sup>, he has brought only 4 men with him – my old Colonists. Dalcour is yet behind. In the Evening Mr. Laidlaw arrived he left Mr. Crebassa behind on the way – brought back with him our last courier, but saw nothing of the first. – We got our Chimney in the Blockhouse finished to day – Weather stormy snowing from the northward. – [p. 17,217]

*Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March* – All day employed writing his Lordship in the Evening closed the Packet. Two men came, one from Bas de la Riviere, the other was with Dalcour who has turned back with Mr. Crebassa on being overtaken by Roquebrun who had gone to Bas de la Riv<sup>te</sup> & not finding Mr. Laidlaw there returned in pursuit of him. – Sent Bellaire after Dalcour &c with provisions to bring them all back. – Wrote to Mr. McPherson<sup>75</sup> at Lac la Pluie. – Wea<sup>f</sup> overcast. – mild –

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<sup>75</sup> Donald McPherson (d. 1819) was born in Scotland and entered the HBC service 1811 as a Writer/Clerk. He was posted first to Albany Factory and then its inland post, Henley House until 1814. Thereafter, he appears to have been posted to Lac La Pluie where he wrote the District Report for 1816-18. He was by this time categorised as a Master. He was captured and imprisoned by the NWC in 1816. On February 24, 1819 he drowned at Lac la Pluie. HBCA B5; B.3/d/133-139; B.105/e/1; B.239/d/204.



*Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March* – Sent Nolin with the Packet to Fort Daer to send Couriers off with it from there. Wrote Lt. McDonald. We have not been to look after our remaining Cattle since the departure of the Brulés. Mr. Laidlaw with 2 men went in search of them, but did not find them, – wea<sup>r</sup> mild. –

*Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March* – We are straitened for lodging for the gentlemen, two of them sleep always on the floor of my room – it is therefore determined on the have Belangers house taken down & put up in the Fort, no sooner said than done, the whole of it was brought down before Evening except two foundation Sills which are frozen to the ground. Our Cattle were found & brought to the point. In the Evening Dalcour arrived with the Stores from Jack R. also Mr. Crebassa, who has been on the way from Bas de la Riviere since 4<sup>th</sup> Instant. Mr. Laidlaw had left him [p. 17,218] after entering Red R. came on a head. Met the 2<sup>nd</sup> man that I sent to counteract the news of the first, & brought him back with him. In the meantime my first messenger passed Mr. Laidlaw's party on the way without seeing them reached Bas de la R. & finding them gone came on immediately in much hast overtook Mr. Crebassa, Dalcour &c. at the Island in Red R. & turned them all back not knowing any thing of the 2<sup>nd</sup> messenger. they went back till overtaken by Bellair. Beth: Bethune<sup>76</sup> one of the Colonists that came up with Dalcour parted with them at the Mouth of Red R. in pursuit of Mr. McDonell who he thought was behind & took my 1<sup>st</sup> letter from Roquebrun, it is supposed that he has gone to Jack R. & will create a great alarm there among our Colonists & will spread to every part of the Country & of course militate against our affairs. We mush send off immediately to Jack R. to contradict the news. Wea<sup>r</sup> clear. – thawing. –

*Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March* – Mr. Pambrun got all the men & dogs collected to make a trip. he mustered 11 Sleds of dogs & 10 men including those who arrived last evening, & sent them off under the direction of Bellair who brought 4 Gallons Spirits & 1 Fath: Tobacco to trade. – Three Kegs of Spirits were

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<sup>76</sup> Beth Bethune was born on the Isle of Lewis, Rosshire, ca 1793. In 1811, he signed a contract for three years with the Hudson's Bay Company and sailed for Rupert's Land as part of an advance work party to make preparations at Red River for the first group of settlers who were to arrive in 1812. He did not arrive until at the RRS until August 1812 and did not have time to make adequate preparations for the settlers who arrived in October. As a result, the party went to Pembina where they built Fort Daer and spent the winter there. When he fulfilled his three-year contract and returned to his home in Lewis in 1814. When in 1815, Alexander McDonell led another group of settlers to Red River, Beth Bethune signed on for one year as a labourer. He would arrive with the settlers at Red River in the fall of 1815. Bethune accompanied Governor Semple on the way to meet the Metis and NWC at Seven Oaks, but he escaped unharmed. Though Bethune's contract ended after one year, he remained in the RRS and married Janet Sutherland (the daughter of James "Parson" Sutherland) in 1816-17 and became a colonist. He drowned in the Red River in 1822, and was buried in the St. John's churchyard. <http://www.lordselkirk.ca/project/beth-bethune-18040/>

brought up from Jack R. Dalcour left one in Cache near the Fort – till it could be brought [p. 17,219] in privately, but the Soldiers got wind of the matter & 3 of them went in quest of the Keg & found & brought it in great triumph to the Fort but not before they had taken a good swig. It was taken into the Barrack room, & the Soldiers in general were determined to keep it for themselves. Some of them wished it to be put into the Store & to take only their daily allowance of it till it was out, but the determined drunkards carried their point, & the drinking commenced in style, all that could be obtained was to have a part laid aside for their comrades at Fort Daer. – We got 8 men ready to send off for Fort W<sup>m</sup>. 4 of them are N.W. men. Wrote Dr. Allan<sup>77</sup>, Mr. McPherson, & Lt. McDonald. it was 3 O’Clock P.M. before I could get them away, they got themselves intoxicated by the liberality of the soldiers. I ordered Lt. McDonald to have the huts opposite Fort Daer pulled down that they might not shelter the enemy. Received a letter from Nolin by three Indians, he has heard that the Brulés have gone to Pembina – a fire seen on the Mountain &c. he is alarmed – & did not set out from the River Salle till this morning & took an Indian with him. Propose sending to Jack R. to contradict the effect of the reports the man that went back will spread – All our Soldiers are drunk – & fighting each other. Wrote in Evening to Mr. Kirkness, for liquor & sent down an anvil – wrote also to Mr. St. Germain<sup>78</sup> to send up 18 Colonists – the most active – Weather fine & clear thawing. [p. 17,220]

*Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March* – Our 2 men for Jack River set out by day light. Our Soldiers are again drunk to-day & very troublesome. In the evening Peguis arrived with 12 Indians with Meat. Till Nolin went out they knew nothing of the last visit of the Brulés. They assembled to the number of 80 & were coming against the enemy when they met the blind Indian that left here this morning who told them the Brulés had all gone away upon this they turned

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<sup>77</sup> Dr. John Allan, a Royal Navy Surgeon, was Selkirk’s personal physician and travelled with him to Red River and back. He was much more than a doctor, however, and would serve as confidante and right-hand man to Selkirk. J.M. Bumsted, *Lord Selkirk: A Life* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008), 303.

<sup>78</sup> This is Pierre Lemaire St. Germain, who was hired as a clerk for the HBC in Montreal, Canada, in 1815. He came out to Jack River in July of 1815, and accompanied Colin Robertson and the Settlers to Red River. He was then posted to Turtle River/Thieving River for the winter of 1815-16, and returned to Selkirk Settlement in May of 1816. He was at Fort Douglas on 19 June 1816, when the Battle of Seven Oaks took place. He made a deposition to W.B. Coltman, reporting that Cuthbert Grant had said that he carried out this attack on the express directions of the NWC, and that he was told to be cruel. St. Germain also noted that after the battle, several Metis were seen wearing the clothes and carrying they weapons of the slain Governor and Mr. MacLean. He would be stationed at Red River in 1816-17. HBCA B.63/f/1, fo. 4d-5, Winnipeg Department List of Servants 1815-16. B.239/d/188. Deposition of Pierre Lemaire St. Germain to W.B. Coltman, 10 September 1817, Red River. LAC, Selkirk Papers, C-15, Vol. 61, pp. 16,419-16,427.

back, had they come forward & found the Brulés here – it is likely that there would have been an end to their depredations. – had to give the two Chiefs Peguis and his friend the Robe Noire who is come along with him, a little drink in my apartment where they slept – they wanted some for the other Indians but several of the Soldiers are yet intoxicated. We refused them till to-morrow.

Weather fine thawing. – Our hay is cut & the two wood horses are sent to the plain to subsist themselves. –

*Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March* – Peguis says that he is to remain with us till Nolin returns – as he has many important things to speak of, he asked for liquor for his young men & to be allowed to dance here for the day which they were indulged with. they danced in the hall all day – some of the Soldiers danced along with them which appeared to give great satisfaction, there were only one or two soldiers in liquor to-day but they were far more troublesome than the Indians. – Peguis told us that he had sent Tobacco among the Assiniboins & Cree Indians – & assured us the N.W. could [p. 17,221] get none of them to join them against the Colony: that we need be under no apprehension from them. This was very gratifying news to some of our gentlemen, who felt alarmed for these Indians from Brulés reports, & were also alarmed at the contents of Nolin’s letter. The Indians kept up their drum & dance till a late hour, when they ceased all at once & laid down. – W<sup>r</sup> mild – overcast.

*Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March* – Some of our Indians went off after being paid for their Meat. The Robe Noir wanted more drink to-day to go to a place by himself to lament his daughter lately deceased, but his demand was not complied with. Our people returned from the Indian Lodges with good loads of Meat. – 11 Sleds – Wea<sup>r</sup> clear & fine. –

*Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March* – We are clean out of Tobacco. there is some that was concealed near the Pigeon R. last fall by Tho<sup>s</sup> Fidler. Some of the Men at Norwegian Point know the place. Our last Express was sent away in such haste, that orders were omitted to be sent down respecting this necessary matter – We must now send again, but wait the arrival of Mr. Nolin to know the news from Fort Daer. The Meat brought last Evening by our Men weighed upwards of 2900 lbs. – they are ordered to hold themselves ready to be off again to-morrow. Some of our Indians went away leaving us the 2 Chiefs & 2 attendants. – [p. 17,222] Wea<sup>r</sup> boisterous from N<sup>d</sup> – Overcast. –

*Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March* – Our people went for Meat, 10 dog Sleds. – Mr. Nolin arrived from Fort Daer, he reached there on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> Instant – Lagimoniere & Bruce had only left there that morning. – The Demarais declined going to Fort W<sup>m</sup> with our Express, as also did the Tête pelé Ducharme by their persuasion. [sic] Bt<sup>e</sup> Canebaeof & Landrie set out with it on the 12<sup>th</sup> Inst. accompanied by Jourdin<sup>79</sup> & La Greu<sup>80</sup> for Lac La Pluie. Nolin left Fort Daer on the 12<sup>th</sup> & met our last party on the same day. they would have reached the Fort that night. – The L'Estomac Rouge, or Arrow Leg – the head Chief of Winipic R. arrived from the plains with a numerous band of Maskegois with their families. They saluted the Fort & we returned the compliment by hoisting our flag & firing off a 3 Pounder. It was the first visit of this Chief & none of our people had been at their lodges for Meat, it was therefore indispensably necessary to give them a treat of liquor. They encamped in the wood opposite the Fort. In the Evening the drinking commenced, & our two other Chiefs joined them, they have a good deal of Meat & it is expected that they will trade the greater part of it to get more liquor. Mr. Stitt & old Cadotte are to be in readiness during the night to receive & pay for the Meat as it is offered. – Wea<sup>r</sup> clear & fine all day. –

*Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March* – Our Express for Jack R. went off at day light wrote by him to Mr. Kirkness [p. 17,223] respecting the Gunboat to prepare it for a 3 pounder, also respecting Tobacco, to get 2 Rolls of those hid at the Poplar River. – Mr. Stitt was on foot all night trading Meat from the Indians – they are all drunk yet & very troublesome – we had to shut the gates against them. – took a walk with Mr. McDonell to keep out of the way of solicitation. – The Indians were troublesome all day. – The Chiefs Peguis & the Robe Noire were for going away home to their Camps they are yet entrain. I consequently requested them to remain till morning, to have a talk with them. –

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<sup>79</sup> Joseph Jourdain/Jourdin was born at Noré, Lower Canada, and was a guide for NWC at Rainy Lake in 1804. He later became an engage/voyageur for the NWC at Red River in 1815-16, and was at Pembina in 1816 when it was captured by the HBC. In 1816, he was engaged to hunt for the Selkirk Colony. He was a witness in the Semple Trial in Toronto in 1818. Elliott Coues (ed.), *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson*, Vol II (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1897), 965. Deposition of Joseph Jourdain, 14 September 1817. LAC Selkirk Papers, C-15, Vol 161, pp. 16327-163-32.

<sup>80</sup> This may be François La Grave, a former North West Company trader, who travelled to the Missouri with a NWC party in 1793, and who remained behind when the rest of the expedition returned to the Assiniboine River. He, along with another NWC man, deserted from the Company. La Grave maintained his connections with the Mandan for many years, and, as here noted, had a wife and children at the Mandan villages. In 1818, he attempted to guide Archibald's McDonald's party of Red River colonists to the Missouri. Later in this journal, Macdonell also identifies him as Joseph Saufaçon. W. Raymond Wood and Thomas D. Thiessen (eds.), *Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains: Canadian Traders Among the Mandan and Hidasta Indians, 1738-1818* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 50.

Weather cold blowing strong from the Eastward. –

*Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March* – The Chiefs were ready at day light to set out homewards. I got up & thro' Nolin, the Interpreter, spoke to them on affairs in general. 1<sup>st</sup> The news lately received from Fort W<sup>m</sup>. 2<sup>nd</sup> the peace between them & the Sioux. 3<sup>rd</sup> the troubles here with the N.W. & Half Breeds – they conclude on forming a Camp near us in a short time. Gave Peguis a little spirits to bring with him, to talk with the inferior chiefs & treat them. they both went away perfectly satisfied. – The Meat traded from the Maskegoi Indians was weighed & found to be 1840 lb dried & pounded Meat. Equal to a voyage of our dogs – & has not cost more liquor than is sent out to the plain for a trip. – Two men arrived from Fort Daer received by them a letter from Lt. McDonald. The Demarais & Tête Pele Ducharme went off along with our last party for Lac la Pluie on the 15<sup>th</sup> Instant. The Perepauche is engaged by McDonald to meet Lt. Graffenried [p. 17,224] & his party at Lac des Roseaux with provisions &c. – Wear clear & boisterous. –

*Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March* – Had a talk with Estomac Rouge & his Indians, gave them the last news from Fort William – the prospects of a peace with the Sioux – the ill conduct of the Brulés &c. they are all determined to take up arms against the Brulés – Some of them offer to remain in the Fort to defend it against them. They are chiefly going to encamp below the Frog plain for the purpose of hunting & to be near the Fort. – Walked with Mr. McDonell to the Riv<sup>re</sup> a la Seine, discovered one of our boats in the ice, found some ploughs on the Point. Our 10 Sleds returned with good loads of Meat. – Two Indians also arrived with Sleds of Meat. – Wea<sup>r</sup> clear Windy & cold. –

*Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March* – Lt. McDonald has sent us no Salt down altho' he has been desired to do so sometime back. I am therefore obliged to send up for some being almost out of that article for table use. A Sled of dogs was sent to bring Mr. Viger<sup>81</sup> to Fort Daer to be so far on his way to Lac la Pluie. We find him an incumbrance here forward & ignorant & is a great restraint on our conversation. Jordan<sup>82</sup> was sent in company with Lt. McDonald's men to

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<sup>81</sup> François Viger was a NWC clerk arrested by Miles Macdonell and held in Fort Douglas.

<sup>82</sup> Martin Jordan, from Killala, Ireland, sailed in 1811 with Miles Macdonell for the Selkirk Colony. He was sixteen years old. The spent the winter on the Hudson's Bay and arrived in the Red River Settlement in 1812 to prepare the way for incoming settlers. He spent the next two winters at Pembina, establishing Fort Daer and later marrying Mary MacLean who arrived in 1812. He would move temporarily to Jack River after the attack of 1815, and in 1816 helped Colin Robertson capture Fort Gibraltar. Thereafter, he left Red River with Colin Robertson, just before the Battle of Seven Oaks. He would travel north to Jack River and there he would find employment for one year with the HBC (1816-17). In 1818, he would be tried with Colin Robertson for the capture of Fort Gibraltar, but was acquitted. In that year he

deliver Viger there who went away with great reluctance. Wrote Lt. McDonald for the immediate demolition of the huts on the south side [of] the Pembina near the Fort. Cautioned him to be vigilant &c. – Sent him 4 Muskets to arm the Canadians for the defence of the Fort. – some iron work which he [p. 17,225] requested also a gallon spirits for the Meurons, 5 pairs trousers 2 dressed Skins & a fathom Cloth for the old Pere-pauche. – Had a conversation with Mr. Crebassa to impress him with the ill conduct of his employers which seems to make an impression on him. Gave him our Lawer [sic] opinion & the letter to Mr. Daniel McKenzie's friends to read. There is no doubt of there being different Concealments made at Bas de la Riviere of Arms, provisions &c. which cannot altogether be unknown to Mr. Crebassa & one Deroche is named as the person who was employed by the N.W.C<sup>o</sup>. in that way. –

Weather clear & cold with wind all day. –

*Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March* – Our people were to have gone to the plains for Meat, but cannot set out for the wind, blowing the dust about off the burnt plain. Two Indians arrived from the river aux Cyprés – above Brandon House. One of them a Cree, the other a Salteaux. They have been sent by the Cree Chief Opesh to learn the true state of matters as they cannot trust to the stories told them by the N.W.C<sup>o</sup> & the Brulés. – This Opesh is a chief deserving consideration. the N.W.C<sup>o</sup> at Qui Appell last year ordered our people to depart from there & desired the Indians to remove out of the way to avoid being hurt when our people should be fired upon, but instead of obeying the warning Opesh pitched his tent close to the pickets of our Fort there in charge of Mr. John R. McKay,<sup>83</sup> & informed the N.W. that he was determined to remain there & if they should be the cause of making

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returned to Red River and took his family away, and worked for a time with the North West Company. Little is known of Martin thereafter, but in 1831, Mary remarried in the Red River Settlement. Lucille H. Campey, *The Silver Chief: Lord Selkirk and the Scottish Pioneers of Belfast, Baldoon and Red River* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2003), 96-97, 171. HBCA B.239/d/188, fos 9d-10. <http://www.lordselkirk.ca/project/martin-jordan-15709/>

<sup>83</sup> John Richards McKay (1792-1877) was born at Albany Factory to John McKay Sr. and Mary Favel. He was educated in England and joined the HBC in 1808 as a writer at Albany Factory. In 1809 he joined his father at Brandon House and was then posted first to Pembina, and then to Riviere Qu'Appelle where he supervised its reconstruction in the fall of 1815. In 1816-17 he was a Trader at Fort Hibernia, from 1817-19 a Clerk at Beaver Creek, and from 1819-24 he was posted to the Upper Red River district as Trader and Clerk, primarily at Brandon House. McKay retired to the Red River Settlement in 1824, but rejoined the HBC in 1831. Thereafter, he served as a Clerk and Postmaster at Portage and Fort Ellice. He was dismissed in 1844, but rejoined the Company in 1846 and worked as Postmaster at Partridge Crop, Riviere Poule d'Eau, Shoal River, Touchwood Hills, and various Cree camps. He retired for the final time in 1859, and died in 1877 at Fairford Mission. He was buried at St. Clements in Red River. HBCA BS; B.239/d/165-216a; B.239/f/12. T.R. McCloy, "McKay, John Richards," *DCB Online*. R. Harvey Fleming (ed.), *Minutes of Council Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-31* (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1940), 446-47.

one of his little Children cry, not one of them should [p. 17,226] get alive out of the River. – Two or our men arrived from Bas de la Riviere with intelligence that 2 N.W. Canadians had arrived there from Lac Sal – Six days before they left it three days ago, they are supposed to have brought a Packet which they concealed & could not return or proceed to the Northward for want of provisions, they refused to come here (Ft. Douglas) that two also came there from Mr. Fidler in Manitaubo lake with letters which they concealed, in case the place had been in possession of the enemy, they having met at the Dog's Head the Colonist that returned from the mouth of Red R. & gave them the discouraging news of the Brulés being in the vicinity of Fort Douglas with many discouraging additions which his fears suggested. – It is necessary to have these N.W. men apprehended their papers secured & brought here. Mr. Pambrun tho' ill with his leg readily undertook this business & immediately set out with one man for the execution of it. –

Weather thawing – an extraordinary high wind from the S<sup>d</sup>.

*Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March* – Our men went again for meat with 8 dog sleds for the last trip under the charge as usual of Bellaire – The Indian families, women & children went all down the river to prepare for making Sugar, the men all remain here for the defence of the Fort. – & Peguis with his Indians have come to encamp at the Passage to be in the way of the Brulés. – The Cree & Sauteaux Indians are to be away to-morrow morning. Gave them all the news for the information [p.17,227] of their Chiefs Opeah & Stemma, with all the tobacco we could muster, a Fathom & a piece of Carrot. – Weat<sup>r</sup> thawing much all day. –

*Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March* – We are scarce of quarters for our gentlemen, began to put up Belanger's house to accommodate some of them. Mr. McDonell & Laidlaw have prepared temporary lodgings for themselves on the second floor of the large House. – All our Maskago Indians have gone away with their Chief Agusokawt for fear of the enemy – the Sauteaux had a War-dance in the Hall at which presided old Wazé – called by the English Blackey – & by the French Nez plat, these are determined to assist in the defence of the Fort. –

Weather fine – thawing moderately, --

*Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March* – Langée a freeman from Pembina came to have his effects lodged in the Fort for security. Two of the Meurons came from Fort Daer to inform, in the name of themselves & their comrades there that unless a share of the rum got from Jack R. is sent to them that they shall abandon the Fort & come down here. – they told Capt. D. that he might send a party to relieve them if he chose it, but they were decided on coming away. Lt. McDonald gave leave to these two men to come down to prevent the others leaving him all at once, & has stated the sentiments of the Soldiers in a letter. he states that the Indians at Fort Daer are decided on defending it. Our Indians here are persuaded by [p. 17,228] their medicine & confirmed by dreams of the Brulés being near – under this conviction 8 of them came to the Fort with their families to Mount guard to night. –

Weather Stormy – rain falling & freezing as it fell. –

*Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March* – Heurter, Serg<sup>t</sup> late Meurons arrived from Riv<sup>re</sup> la Sourie accompanied by Deloges to claim our protection having both deserted from the service of the N.W.C<sup>o</sup>. they mention the probability of some Brulés coming soon to surrender themselves & mention also a prospect of the Brulés bringing Alex<sup>r</sup> McDonell<sup>84</sup> & Cuthbert Grant to deliver them up to us. McDonell cannot escape by flight to the Missouri thro’ Assiniboin Indians who are jealous of his visits already there – they give several details of the hopeless state of the N.W. party & the very uncomfortable situation of Alex<sup>r</sup> McDonell. – Cadotte is at la Sourie & quite inimical to us. the late party in our vicinity consisted of only 33 persons instead of 70 – as we were informed. On their return from here Cadotte wanted them to go against Fort Daer & to give no quarter to our people there, if they should be overcome. –

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<sup>84</sup> This is Alexander (Greenfield) Macdonell (1782-1835). He was the second cousin of Miles Macdonell, and in the employ of the NWC. He was born in Greenfield, Scotland, and immigrated to Canada in 1792 with his family. He became a clerk in the NWC in 1803, and in 1809 he was posted to the Red River department. His initial relations with his cousin, Miles Macdonell, were cordial, but when he became a partner of the NWC in 1814, placed in charge of the Red River Department, these relations became bitter and violent. He played a prominent part in the fur trade wars there between 1814 and 1818, and he took the lead in organizing the Metis resistance to the Selkirk Colony in 1815, leading to the first dispersal of the colony. In 1816 he recruited a Metis force, led by Cuthbert Grant, to seize HBC forts at Qu’Appelle and Brandon, leading inexorably to the Battle of Seven Oaks. He was allowed to escape prosecution, and was never tried. When the NWC and HBC merged in 1821 he retired from the fur trade and moved to Upper Canada. Wallace (ed.) *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, 464-65. J.M. Bumsted, “Macdonell (Greenfield), Alexander,” *DCB Online*.



Our people returned from the plains with Meat – all green Meat, & but of indifferent quality, it is not worth while to send them any more. – Weather Stormy from W<sup>d</sup> & very cold.

*Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March* – Preparing to send [p. 17,229] a party to Bas de la Riviere for Seed Grain – it is so cold that our men cannot work at putting up Belangers house. Nor can the Meurons set out for Fort Daer. –

Weather wind from W<sup>d</sup> clear & cold. –

*Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March* – The two Meurons set out for Fort Daer sent by them some Cartridges Powder Ball & Shot. Capt. D. wrote to Lt. McDonald. Mr. Laidlaw set out for the Bas de la Riviere with 7 Sleds of dogs. – Mr. Pambrun returned from there, but before his arrival there the 2 N.W. men had gone away by Jack Rams<sup>85</sup> leave, who prevented the men from stopping them – they returned to Lac Sal the way they came – the two men from Swan River arrived with Mr. Pambrun & brot letters from Mr. Bird,<sup>86</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup> – Mr. Sutherland<sup>87</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> – Mr. Fidler<sup>88</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> March. – also Mr. Thomas<sup>89</sup> 26<sup>th</sup> Feb<sup>y</sup>. Marten Jordan returned from Fort Daer with some Salt & brought back Mr. Viger; Lt. McDonald did not think it prudend [sic] to have him in the Fort as he refused to assist in its defence in case it was attacked by the Brulés. – Several of our Indians went off to-day to hunt. – Weather clear & cold all day. –

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<sup>85</sup> Jack Ram Kipling. See previous citation.

<sup>86</sup> James Bird Sr. See previous citation.

<sup>87</sup> This is probably James Sutherland (1778-1844), He was born at Ronaldshay, Orkney Islands, and engaged with the HBC in 1797. He was stationed at Edmonton House as a writer (1798-1803), and then as a writer at Cumberland House and Green Lake. He became a Trader and Master at Cumberland House from 1808 to 1811, and then assigned to the Winnipeg District (1811 to 1813). He was put in charge of the Winnipeg and Western Winnipeg Districts (1814 to 1816). That is how he enters the story here. He was imprisoned by the NWC and Cuthbert Grant on 9 May 1816 while stationed in the Qu'Appelle. Thereafter he was put in charge of the Swan River District (1816-1818) and thereafter in charge of the Forks (1818-19) and Swan River (1819-21). After the merger of the HBC and NWC he was made Chief Factor of the Saskatchewan District (1821-22), and finished his career as Chief Factor at Severn (1823-25). Thereafter he was on medical leave and retired to the Red River Settlement in 1827. He married Jane Flett (1785-1835) with whom he had seven children. After Jane died, he married an "Indian woman." Ted Binnema and Gerhard J. Ens (eds.), *The Hudson's Bay Company: Edmonton House Journals, Correspondence & Reports 1806-1821* (Calgary: Historical Society of Edmonton), 482; HBCA BS.

<sup>88</sup> Peter Fidler. See previous citation.

<sup>89</sup> Thomas Thomas (c. 1766-1828) came from London, England, and contracted with the HBC in 1789 as a surgeon. He rose to become the superintendent of the southern department in 1810, then replaced William Auld as Governor of the Northern Department from 1814-15, when he was replaced by Robert Semple. He spent the year of 1815-16 at Jack River House and convinced Colin Robertson to lead those RRS colonists who had been banished by the NWC in 1815 back to the Red River in 1815. He spent 1818-19 at Cumberland House and retired to the Red River Settlement in 1819. HBCA *Biographical Sheets* (BS); Bruce Peel, "Thomas, Thomas," *DCB Online*.

*Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March* – Sent 4 men & 3 Sleds of dogs to the Grosse Pointe<sup>90</sup> Manitaubo Lake to get supplies & remove the post established there by Mr. Fidler. Wrote to Monkman<sup>91</sup> who has charge of the post. Young Fidler who was there in charge accompanied Roque to his Father's instead [p. 17,230] of paying attention to my request. Mrs. Lagimoniere is afraid of the Brulés & does not think herself in safety at Belhumeurs – had her & family removed to the Fort. Capt. D. left his room for her accommodation. – Wea<sup>r</sup> overcast freezing. –

*Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March* – Ossiniboine, Yupé & Amleut's son arrived from riviere a la Sourie to surrender themselves – Deroche & Potoin came from Bas de la Riviere – Ossiniboine & Yupé the divisions among the Brulés, the ignorance in which they are all kept of the real state of things, the false news continually circulated among them by Alex<sup>r</sup> McDonell & the other leaders to keep them in the interest of the N.W.C<sup>o</sup> & hostile to the Colony – that all communications from us are read in a quite different way to encrease [sic] their animosity to us &c. &c. – That the late expedition was undertaken on the pretence of coming to make peace, otherwise the Brulés would not have consented to come – as it was many were forced against their will by menaces, that Cuthbert Grant on receipt of the Proclamation of the Gov<sup>r</sup> in Chief which we enclosed to him, threw it into the fire – Cadotte was the principal cause of killing our Cattle – & set the example by killing the first two himself – He proposed to attack this Fort, Bas de la Riviere, & Fort Daer. – &c. &c. – They also state that all the free Canadians at la Sourie have come with their families down the River Champion, & if encouraged will all come here – that Cadotte is at la Sourie – It is thought most advisable to permit these men to return, they left their families at la Sourie. Ossiniboine is a leader [p. 17,231] among the Brulés & will be able to detach a number of them from the N.W. cause. He & Yupé undertake to

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<sup>90</sup> This post was usually referred to as Big Point House. Big Point House (also sometimes referred to as the Manitoba Lake House) was built as a trading outpost in the Manitoba District in 1815. It was located on the western shore of Lake Manitoba about 8 miles north of the entrance of the White Mud River. It was called "Big Point" because of the great quantity of timber growing on it. In February of 1819 it was moved south to the mouth of the White Mud River by William Brown. It is unsure how long the house lasted after 1820.

<sup>91</sup> James Monkman (1775-1865) came from Whitby, Yorkshire, England and entered the HBC service in 1793. He served mostly at Severn Factory and its outposts 1793 to 1815, the last few years as an Assistant Trader. In 1814-15 he was the Outpost Master at Gods Lake, and in 1815-16 the Assistant Trader at Island Lake. He retired to the Red River Settlement after 1816-17. Between 1818 and 1887, the Monkman family established saltworks in the Lake Winnipegosis region. In 1819-20, he briefly entered the service of the Red River Colony to serve as Master of Fort Dair, to make sleds at £40 until the first of May 1821. He was married to a Cree woman named Mary and had at least ten children. He died in 1865 and was buried at St. Peter's Church in the Red River Settlement. HBCA B5; B.239/d/165-188).

make a prisoner of Mr. Cadotte & deliver him here for which I promised them a reward of 20 plus each. Mr. Nolin promised them 50 plus himself for the arrest of his brother from a good motive as he says to prevent his getting deeper in guilt. Poitras the N.W. master at la Sourie is on the poise of what to do, the N.W. owe him 12,000 livres & upwards. –

Weather – extremely cold & boisterous. –

*Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March* – Ossiniboine & Yupé went off on their intended mission after breakfast armed with a Warr<sup>t</sup> for the arrest of Cadotte. Heurter wrote by them fully to Poitras, & Nolin to his brother. –

Examined the men from Bas de la Riviere, who confessed the Caches – 50 bags Pemican & 10 Kegs Grease in one, & 50 bags Pem: in another also some arms &c. – in a different place. Should these provisions be in a state of proper preservation – they will be of immense service to us. – Weather clear & cold. –

*Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March* – Ossiniboine before he went away, told us that a N.W. Express from Athabasca had reached Qui Appelle, which brought accounts of a rencounter [sic] between Mr. Clarke<sup>92</sup> & McLeod<sup>93</sup> that they fought with swords, that McLeod had both his ears cut off & was struck to the ground & Mr. Clarke had received a slight cut in the head. McLeod was so badly wounded that he was not out of danger – A Cow which we brought from Lac la Pluie was found calved this morning on the point, had her brought

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<sup>92</sup> This is John Clarke (1781-1852) who was born in Montreal. He entered the service of the NWC in 1804 and from then until 1810 was stationed in the Athabasca Department. He left the NWC at that point and joined the HBC in 1814 to spearhead the HBC efforts to gain a foothold in the Athabasca District. In 1815 he established Fort Wedderburn, immediately opposite Fort Chipewyan, but given the determined opposition of the NWC, the winter turned into a disaster. Sixteen of his men starved to death and the rest of his men were forced to sign an agreement not to compete with the NWC to save themselves from starvation. Clarke led a second expedition to the Athabasca in 1816, only to be arrested by Archibald Norman McLeod of the NWC in April of 1817. He was released later that year and served on the Peace River (1818-19) and at Ile-a-la-Crosse from 1819-21. By 1820, Lord Selkirk, James Bird, and Colin Robertson had decided that Clarke was too vain and extravagant to front the Athabasca efforts. Though Clarke became Chief Factor in the HBC after the merger of 1821, he was never trusted by George Simpson. He retired from the HBC in 1835. See Ted Binnema and Gerhard J. Ens (eds.) *Edmonton House Journals, Correspondence & Reports 1806-1821* (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 2012), 465-66. Jennifer S.H. Brown, “Clarke, John,” *DCB Online*.

<sup>93</sup> Archibald Norman McLeod (c.a. 1772-1837) was born in Scotland in 1772 and entered the NWC as a clerk around 1793. He was made partner in 1796. He spent his early career in the lower Fort des Prairies department. From 1802 to 1808 he worked in the Athabasca department and retired as a Wintering Partner in 1809. Thereafter he became a partner of McTavish, McGillivray & Co as an Agent of the NWC and in 1809 became a Justice of the Peace for the Western Territories and then for the Montreal District. As such, he played a primary role in the fur trade wars at Red River between 1815 and 1818, and was one of the instigators of the Battle of Seven Oaks. After the merger of the NWC and HBC in 1821 he retired from the fur trade and moved back to Scotland. He died around 1837. Wallace (ed.) *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, 480-81.

[p. 17,232] to the Fort. – a bull calf – very little work going on with our people. –

Weather overcast – threatening snow. –

*Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March* – Had Voudrie taken out of the Goal to lodge with Belanger – he makes some discoveries – McLellan has been urging Mainville to attempt making his escape. Weather overcast thawing.

*Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March* – For the greater security & convenience [sic] of the prisoners we project the construction of a Necessary<sup>94</sup> adjoining the prison to have access to it without opening the prison door, the work was begun this morning. –

Weather overcast thawing. –

### *April 1817*

*Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April* – Had Francis Mainville further examined – he informed that McLellan had given orders for the Murder of Mr. Keveny – that he urged him to make his escape &c. Our men from Bas de la Riviere arrived with good loads of grain, also some hay for the Cow that calved, the grain has got partly wet coming up the river, water being over the ice. – had it spread on Skins in the Store. – Weather overcast – cool –.

*Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April* – Some snow had fallen in the night. Sent off 5 Sleds for Bas de la Riviere, also the 2 men, informers, from there, & sent by them a horse for Spring work. Mr. McDonell was to have gone with this party to take charge at Winipic R., as Mr. Laidlaw must come here, [p. 17,233] but McD. wishes to wait here his letters from below, as we expect our Jack River people every day. Wrote to Mr. Laidlaw to get immediate possession of the contents of the Caches & to remain at his post till the arrival there of Mr. McDonell &c. – Wea<sup>r</sup> cloudy – thawing the greater part of the day.

*Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April* – Two dog Sleds & men set out early to bring a Cache of 7 Pieces which Mr. Stitt left last fall on the Big Island in lake Winipic, they are to be joined there by Jack Ram Kipling from Bas de la Riviere. A Goose was seen to-day flying to the Northward. Wea<sup>r</sup> It had froze in the night, clear & thawing all day –

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<sup>94</sup> A lavatory or toilet.

*Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April* – All the snow is off the plains & the ground in many places already thawed to 7 or 8 Inches. – Our party to Manitaubo must have great difficulty to return from the sudden thaw. – Indians brought us accounts of 2 men having arrived at an Indian Camp below Netly [sic] Creek half starved, & said that many more were coming after them & out of provisions. The Indians did not know whether they were belonging to us or the N.W.C<sup>o</sup> – I wanted Mr. Nolin to take a man with him & go along with the Indians, to know what these men were &c. but he declined observing that the Indians themselves would bring them here if we desired it. – The season is so forward that it is necessary Mr. Laidlaw were here [p. 17,234] to prepare for Spring work. I therefore desired Mr. McDonell to hold himself ready to be off in the morning to relieve him at Bas de la Riviere. We have only 4 effective men here to work & 2 of them must accompany Mr. McDonell.

Wea<sup>r</sup> – Clear – thawing all day. – [p. 17,235]