

THE INDIAN–METIS CONNECTION: JAMES McMILLAN AND HIS DESCENDANTS

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A very steady, plain blunt man, shrewd & sensible of correct conduct and good character, but who has gone through a vast deal of severe duty and is fit for any Service requiring physical strength firmness of mind and good management provided he has no occasion to meddle with Pen & Ink in the use of which he is deficient his Education having been neglected. An excellent Trader, speaks several Indian languages and is very regular and Economical in all his arrangements; a good practical Man, better adapted for the executive than the Legislative departments of the business. His plain blunt manner however cannot conceal a vast deal of little highland pride,

and his prejudices are exceedingly strong, but upon the whole he is among the most respectable of his class and a generally useful Man.¹

James McMillan was thus described by his old friend, Governor George Simpson. The year was 1832, and McMillan had spent about thirty years in the fur trade.

Who was this man, this plain, blunt man of great physical strength, who spoke several languages yet, according to Simpson, at least, was unskilled with pen and ink? This respectful man who was proud and prejudiced? Born in Scotland about 1783, James McMillan was nineteen when he emigrated to Glengarry, Upper Canada, in 1802. James' father, Allan McMillan of Glenpean, Loch Arkaig, Scotland, and Allan's cousin Archibald McMillan, had chartered three brigs, the *Friends*, the *Helen*, and the *Jane*, to carry relatives and members of forty-seven other families to Glengarry in 1802. On board was James. In Glengarry, he and fellow passengers joined relatives and friends who had moved from New York State to Glengarry after the American Revolution.²

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Soon James McMillan became a clerk with the North West Company, the commercial enterprise formed in Montreal in the 1770s with the amalgamation of several small companies operated by fur traders and merchants, mostly Scottish. For many Highland expatriates like James, participation in the fur trade provided an arduous but lucrative avenue for social and economic improvement. The opportunity to accumulate considerable wealth in a comparatively short time appealed to young Highlanders dispossessed by the Clearances and other economic changes in Scotland. Also the fur trade offered adventure and freedom from the strictures of settlement life. During the late 1700s and early 1800s, many men from Glengarry found employment as clerks and labourers in the North West Company.

Like many other fur traders, James contracted unions with native women *à la façon du pays* (according to the custom of the country) shortly after arriving in the interior. In addition to providing companionship to lonely traders, marriage to a native woman reinforced trading alliances with local native bands, thus ensuring a steady supply of furs and provisions. A novice trader learned aboriginal social etiquette from his kinsmen and wilderness skills from his native father-in-law.³ Aboriginal women's knowledge of local culture and languages enabled them to function as interpreters and brokers between Euro-Canadian traders and Indian groups. These women were also excellent guides, for they were familiar with watersheds and landscape. In addition, they gathered berries, edible root vegetables, wild rice, sap, and medicinal plants; they hunted small animals and birds; they caught fish, and prepared pemmican; and they manufactured canoes, processed hides, strung snowshoes, sewed moccasins and other clothing.⁴

During James McMillan's tenure in the fur trade, he contracted three successive 'country' marriages, first to Josette Beleisle, daughter of a Canadian *engagé* (contract labourer) and Josephthe, a native woman. At the time, McMillan was a clerk in the Fort des Prairies Department, his first posting (ca. 1804-1808). The

Department covered a wide area, roughly what is now central Alberta.⁵

In 1808, James McMillan was transferred to the North West Company's Columbia Department, a vast and disputed area of the Pacific Northwest including present-day southern British Columbia and the states of Oregon and Washington. In March of that year, McMillan made the first of many trips across the mountains from Fort Augustus (near today's Edmonton) to Kootenay House, located on the Columbia River on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains, returning to Fort Augustus with a load of furs. Later that year, he made a second trip to the mountains to deliver horses to David Thompson, a colleague in the Columbia Department. The two men met at Kootenay Plains, on the eastern slopes of the Rockies, near Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. There they wintered and traded with the Kootenay Indians. In the spring of 1809, McMillan was once again in the Saskatchewan region, returning to the Kootenay area later that year.⁶ This pattern of migration between the Columbia River region and posts of the eastern slopes of the Rockies and on the North Saskatchewan River continued in subsequent years. During this time, McMillan was also situated at Spokane House near the Lower Columbia River and at Saleesh House,⁷ at Clark's Forks in Montana.

Perhaps because he was more permanently situated in the Columbia region, James McMillan dissolved the union between himself and Josette Beleisle through a process known as 'turning off,'⁸ whereby a trader transferred responsibility for the welfare of his wife and children to another trader in exchange for some form of financial settlement, usually an annuity to provide financial support for the family left behind. This custom was practised when a trader left the interior to accept responsibilities elsewhere.⁹

Soon after his transfer in 1808, McMillan took a second country wife, Marie Letendre, daughter of Jean-Baptiste Letendre, a Canadian *engagé*, and an Indian woman.

By 1821 James McMillan's distinguished service in

the North West Company had earned him the rank of Chief Trader of the Columbia District in the restructured Hudson's Bay Company, formed by the amalgamation of the North West and Hudson's Bay companies in 1821. James was now in charge of the vast Columbia District. About the same time, McMillan 'turned off' his second wife. Perhaps new responsibilities required him to establish alliances with tribal groups in the Oregon region of the Pacific Northwest where American fur traders, under the command of John Jacob Astor, competed fiercely, often violently, with British-Canadian traders, especially after 1821. James McMillan contracted a third country union with Kilakotah (Marguerite), daughter of the Clatsop sub-chief Coboway of the Chinook tribe and a relative of Chief Concomly. Kilakotah had been married to a clerk in Astor's Pacific Fur Company.¹⁰

In 1822-23 McMillan was granted furlough to attend to family business in Glengarry.¹¹ Upon his return he accompanied George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, on a long journey from York Factory on Hudson Bay to Fort George on the Columbia. Later, McMillan led a party exploring the lower Fraser River area. After returning from that region with Simpson in 1825, he was given the responsibility for Fort Assiniboine, on the Athabaska River, about 160 kilometres north west of Fort Edmonton. That same autumn, he supervised a survey of the trail

from Jasper House in the Rockies to the head of the Fraser River west of Jasper. Highly impressed, the Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company informed Governor Simpson that 'such spirited conduct is entitled to our warmest commendations, and we trust that the example of Mr. McMillan will be followed by every Gentleman in the service.'¹² By 1827 McMillan had been appointed to the position of Chief Factor in the Columbia Department, and that same year he established Fort Langley on the Fraser River.

By 1828, however, years of privations, injuries and stress had taken their toll. On 21 January 1828, he wrote to his friend, John MacLeod, at Kamloops: 'I do not know when I will be allowed to quit this side of the mountains but to be plain with you my good sir I am tired of it. I would willingly be quit of it.'¹³ McMillan's exhaustion had already been noted by Governor Simpson, who decided to transfer him out of the Columbia Department in order that he might 'enjoy a little repose in some one or other of the peaceful retreats of Ruperts Land.'¹⁴ In the spring of 1829, McMillan left the Columbia Department. At Fort Garry, he was joined by Governor Simpson in his journey eastward to Upper Canada.¹⁵ Accompanied by Simpson, McMillan went on furlough to Scotland in 1829-30, returning with a Scottish bride, Eleanor McKinley, and an infant daughter. McKinley was the sister of newly-appointed Hudson's Bay Company clerk (later Chief Trader) Archibald McKinley.¹⁶ The couple settled in Red River, where McMillan managed the Experimental Station at Red River, not an entirely successful tenure. In 1834, he was transferred to the Lake of Two Mountains District in the Montreal Department. He was granted furlough once again in 1837, and lived with his brother John at Pointe Fortune on the Ottawa River.

James McMillan retired from service on 1 June 1839 and by 1841, he was living in Scotland with his Scottish wife and their large family. During the 1840s and 50s McMillan was proprietor of Alexandria House on the outskirts of Perth.¹⁷ He was mentioned frequently in the correspondence of other fur traders travelling



Kilakotah (Marguerite), a daughter of the Clatsop sub-chief Coboway of the Chinook tribe, and third country wife (ca. 1821-1829) of James McMillan. (Courtesy of Harriet Duncan Munnick, West Linn, Oregon)

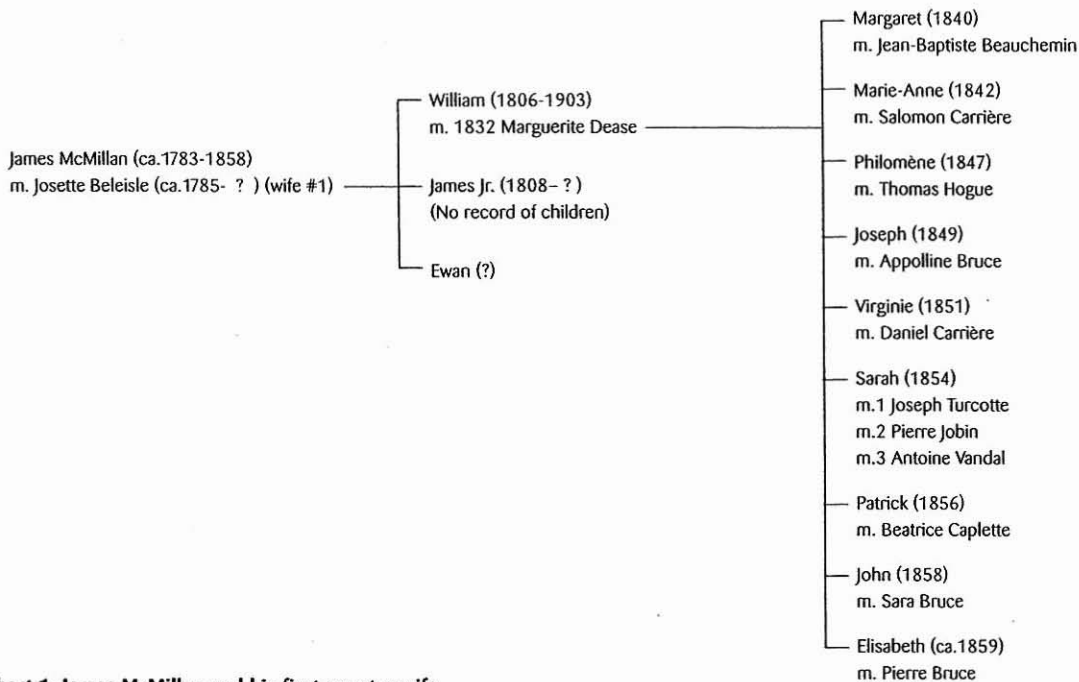


Chart 1: James McMillan and his first country wife

through, or resident in, Scotland. In 1847 Robert Cowie paid the McMillan family a visit, noting that ‘the house is very good with 17 acres cost[ing] £1800 for which he has been offered £2300.’ Cowie was less impressed by the McMillans’ eight ‘rather rough’ children.¹⁸

James McMillan’s Scottish business ventures were largely unsuccessful, and his final years were plagued by poverty and ill health. The considerable correspondence (ca. 1841-1869) between James McMillan, his family and the officers of the Hudson’s Bay Company in London after the move to Scotland paints a poignant picture of increasingly desperate financial circumstances. James McMillan died at 15 Abbotsford Place, Glasgow, on 26 January 1858, at 75 years of age. In August of 1869, when Eleanor McMillan died, her daughters wrote to the Hudson’s Bay Company one last time, requesting further financial assistance in order to bury their mother beside James in the Western Section of the Southern Necropolis cemetery, Glasgow.¹⁹

What became of James McMillan’s three country

wives and their numerous children? Fortunately for the historian, their biographies are closely intertwined with the prominent people and events of nineteenth-century Red River.

James McMillan’s first country wife was Josette Beleisle (see genealogical chart #1). There were three children, William, born ca. 1806²⁰; James Jr., born ca. 1808²¹; and Ewan, born shortly thereafter. Raised by his mother and her kin in the vicinity of Fort des Prairies (near today’s Edmonton), he became an accomplished hunter like many of his Métis brethren. In 1825, Governor Simpson noted that William, at age eighteen was ‘the boy of Mr. James MacMillan Chief Trader and [was] under no agreement with the company but never the less [would] ... do anything the company require[d] of him,’ and that ‘he was born and brought up at the N.W. Co Fort.’²² By 1826 William McMillan had become a contract employee of the Hudson’s Bay Company, as a middleman on the York boats. He retired as a bowsman in 1835.²³

William McMillan married Marguerite Dease²⁴ at



William McMillan (1806-1903), Métis son of James McMillan, with wife Margaret Dease (1813-1905). (Hugh P. MacMillan Collection, Guelph, Ontario)

St. Boniface in 1832, and settled in the parish of St. Charles. A prosperous farmer and storekeeper,²⁵ he imported fast horses from Kentucky for buffalo hunting.²⁶ The couple's nine children²⁷ were Margaret (born 12 January 1840²⁸), Marie-Anne (18 January 1842²⁹), Philomène (ca. 1847³⁰), Joseph (4 December 1849³¹), Virginie (ca. 1851³²), Sarah (5 March 1854³³), Patrick 'Patrice' (18 May 1856³⁴), John (ca. 1858³⁵), and Elizabeth (ca. 1859³⁶).

James McMillan and his second country wife, Marie Letendre, had four children (see genealogical chart #2). Eldest was Hélène (ca. 1811-ca. 1876).^{37,2}

She and husband Baptiste Boyer³⁸ had seven children: Emilie (ca. 1836)³⁹; William (ca. 1840)⁴⁰; Baptiste⁴¹; Clémence⁴²; Félicité⁴³; Hélène⁴⁴; and Marguerite.⁴⁵

The middle two children of James McMillan and Marie Letendre were Margaret (ca. 1813)⁴⁶; and Angélique 'Nellie' (ca. 1815), who with husband John Warren Dease, Jr.,⁴⁷ produced two children: Ellen (ca. 1841)⁴⁸ and Michael (ca. 1848).⁴⁹ The fourth child of James McMillan and Marie Letendre was Allan, born

ca. 1816,⁵⁰ and there may have been a fifth child, Suzanne.⁵¹

Allan followed his father into the fur trade, entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1836 as an apprentice clerk. Soon he was assigned as an agent instructed to thwart the ambitions of 'General' James Dickson, allegedly a wealthy Englishman who had spent time travelling with a caravan of traders from New Orleans to Texas in 1834-35. The expedition was attacked by Mexican bandits and several members of the party were killed or wounded. Dickson managed to escape. Back in New Orleans, he vowed revenge. He secured funds in England, and by 1836 had arrived in Montreal intent upon raising an army of Indians and Métis to take California from the Mexicans by force. In Montreal he recruited several Métis sons of former Nor'Westers, including John George McKenzie, Charles McBean (McKenzie's stepbrother), John McLoughlin, Jr. and Alexander Roderick McLeod, Jr.⁵²

Governor Simpson, however, feared that the volatile Dickson would stir up the Métis population and interfere with trade. Simpson set about to break up the expedition by writing letters to young McLoughlin and McLeod in September of 1836, offering



Métis group at Batoche, North West Territories, ca. 1878. Standing at left is Baptiste Boyer, son of Hélène (McMillan) Boyer, daughter of James, son of Allan McMillan. (Courtesy of Environment Canada, Parks Service, Batoche, Saskatchewan)

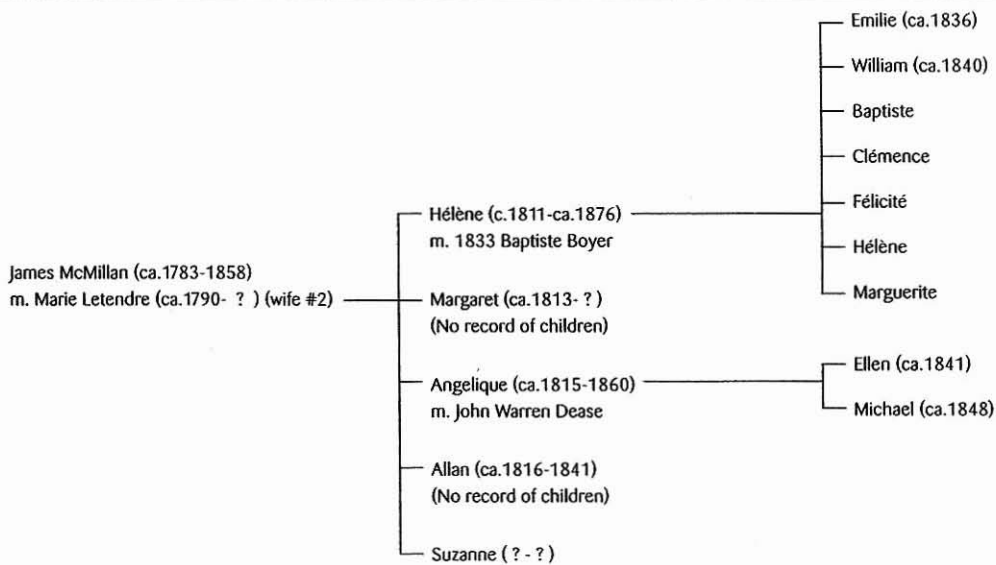


Chart 2: James McMillan and his second country wife

them employment in the Company's service if they would break their ties with Dickson.⁵³ Shortly thereafter, the Governor wrote to Chief Factor Alexander Christie, Governor of Assiniboia, informing him of his intention to employ young mixed-blood employees in the Company's service to dissuade their kinfolk from following Dickson. One of these young men was Allan McMillan, who was, thought Simpson, 'a fine, spirited, powerful, active young man and being related to the Batosh⁵⁴ family he will have a good deal of influence among the Saskatchewan Half Breeds who are the most troublesome people in the Settlet.'⁵⁵ Allan McMillan was given the responsibility of travelling westward from Lachine, Simpson's headquarters, to Red River with dispatches designed to guide senior officials in their dealings with Dickson. When McMillan reached Lake Superior in the late fall of 1836, the waterways were closed to navigation and he was forced to travel from there to Red River on snowshoes.⁵⁶

By the spring of 1837 Dickson had abandoned his endeavours and left Red River, never to be seen again. Sickness and desertion had decimated his troop of

Métis followers, and the purported refusal of the Hudson's Bay Company to sell him supplies and provisions effectively prevented any long-distance campaigns.

Perhaps as a reward for his efforts, Allan McMillan was promoted from shopman to clerk at the Forks in the Red River Settlement, and by 1838 he had assumed the clerk's responsibilities at Fort Garry where he remained until 1841, when he was reported to have left the Company's service and retired to Upper Canada.⁵⁷

By his third country wife, Kilakotah, James McMillan had one daughter, Victoire, born ca. 1821⁵⁸ (see genealogical chart # 3). She married three times, first to Joseph McLoughlin (ca. 1810-1848), son of Hudson's Bay Company Chief Factor John McLoughlin and Marguerite Wadin.⁵⁹ There were no children from this marriage. In 1850, Victoire married a second time, to Pierre LaCourse Jr. (1828-1861), son of Pierre LaCourse Sr., an *engagé* with the Pacific Fur Company at Astoria⁶⁰, and a Cree woman. Victoire and Pierre had six children: William (born ca. 1851, died without issue); Louis (born ca. 1852, died with-

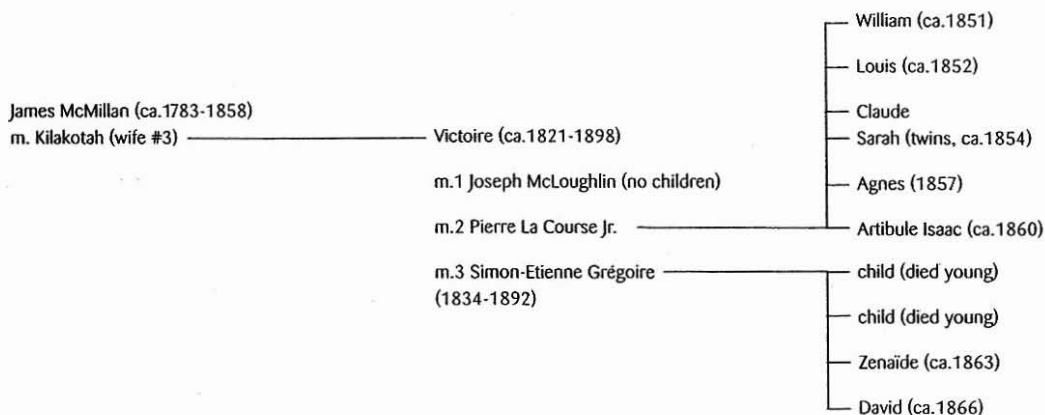


Chart 3: James McMillan and his third country wife

out issue); twins Sarah (born ca 1854, died without issue) and Claude, who married Malvina Bellique; Agnes (1857-1860); and Artibule Isaac (born ca. 1860, died without issue). In 1863 Victoire married a third time, to Simon-Etienne Grégoire (1834-1892), son of Etienne Grégoire, Jr. and a Saulteaux woman. The couple resided near St. Louis and had four children, two of whom died in infancy. The surviving children were Zenaïde (ca. 1863) who married a man by the surname of DuRette; and David (ca. 1866) who married Josephine Labonté⁶¹.

Many of James McMillan's Métis descendants experienced prosperity and assumed influential roles in nineteenth-century Red River. William, eldest son of James, enjoyed a relatively affluent life as a merchant and farmer in Red River even though after 1821 he spent his Hudson's Bay Company career as a boatman. His lack of education impeded promotion.

Despite his minor status in the company, William McMillan and his family were prominent in Red River society. They enjoyed close kinship ties with other members of the ruling class whose status was determined in part by membership in the Council of

Assiniboia,⁶² the governing body in Red River from 1835 until 1870, when jurisdiction over Rupert's Land passed from the Hudson's Bay Company to the government of Canada. The Métis, who constituted the majority of Red River's people, demanded that the Hudson's Bay Company appoint members of their community to this governing body. These councillors, representing a diverse population of farmers, hunters, and small businessmen, dealt with a variety of issues from road maintenance and business licensing to negotiations concerning Assiniboia's entry into Canadian Confederation in 1870. The fortunes of the McMillans, the Deases, the Brelands, and other McMillan relatives are associated closely with the Council of Assiniboia.

It is thus not surprising, therefore, to find several of James McMillan's descendants inextricably tied to participants in the Red River resistance of 1869-70, and in the North-West rebellion of 1885. The Métis settlements at Red River and in the Saskatchewan River region were small communities, and most of the Métis farmers and businessmen were linked by marriage or friendship. Riel himself came from an af-



Joseph McMillan (1848-1922) and wife Polly Bruce (1853-1922). Métis great-grandson of Allan 'Glenpean' McMillan, and son of William McMillan, Joseph spent most of his life in Winnipeg. (Courtesy of Orval McMillan, Toronto, Ontario)

fluent Red River family, prominent in the social and political history of the community.

Today James McMillan's descendants live in communities throughout Western Canada, particularly in the Winnipeg area. Other McMillan kin related to the Red River branches of the family can be found in North Dakota and Ontario.

Not all James McMillan's Métis descendants identified with the social and political life of Red River, especially those who lived elsewhere. For instance, Victoire, McMillan's daughter by Kilakotah, was born and grew up in the Pacific Northwest. Separated from her siblings at Red River, she could not have developed a distinctive ethnic affiliation as a Métisse. Like

many mixed-race people resident in regions now part of the United States, Kilakotah's descendants did not have the opportunity to assume an aboriginal identity unless they became part of a reservation community. Their only viable option was assimilation.

This portrait of James McMillan, his achievements, his family, and his legacy elicits more questions than answers. How could a man leave behind so many children and begin a new life in Scotland? Today the values of a fur-trade society that promoted liaisons with native women, then encouraged and condoned the custom of abandoning country wives, seem alien. James McMillan, however, was responding to the rigorous demands of his profession. Furthermore, by marrying his country wives and daughters to responsible partners and by ensuring that his sons were offered opportunities in the fur trade, McMillan obeyed the customs of the country. He was indeed, as his friend James Hargrave contended, 'an honest, kind hearted, manly fellow, a character not often found among the every day walks of life, and still more rarely sown in this land.'⁶⁵

NOTES

1. 'The Character Book of George Simpson, 1832,' in Glyndwr Williams, ed., *Hudson's Bay Miscellany 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Record Society 1975), 183-4. For an analysis of James McMillan's personality, see Private Archives of Hugh P. MacMillan (PAHPM), Guelph, Ontario, James McMillan File, 'Assessment of James McMillan's Handwriting' by Mrs. Hannah M. Smith, Graphologist, Vancouver, British Columbia.

2. The earliest settlers of Glengarry were the refugee tenants and militia soldiers of Sir John Johnson, the son and heir of Sir William Johnson, the former Northern Superintendent of the Indian Department in the colony of New York. Many of these individuals were Scottish Highlanders who had emigrated to North America as soldiers in the service of the British crown during the Seven Years' War. When this conflict ended, several chose to settle in the Mohawk Valley as tenants of Sir William Johnson, in the hopes that they, too, would eventually become proprietors of large tracts of land. While resident in the Mohawk



Six McMillans in the 1990s: Left to Right: William, son of John Sr.; John Sr.; Anne, wife of John Sr.; John Jr., son of John Sr., Grenada descendants of Alexander McMillan who went to the Caribbean; Penny McMillan and her husband Orval McMillan, Toronto descendant of Alexander's brother, James McMillan and his country wife, Josette Beleisle. Photograph taken in living room of Hugh and Muriel MacMillan, Guelph, Ontario, 1992. (Hugh P. MacMillan Collection, Guelph, Ontario)

Valley, some of these individuals worked for Johnson as employees in the Indian Department, or participated in the colonial fur trade of the Great Lakes region. Additional Scottish settlers from Lochaber migrated to the Johnson estates in 1773. After Johnson's death and the onset of the American Revolution shortly thereafter, the bulk of these tenants chose to migrate to British North America where they settled in Glengarry and adjacent counties. Sir William Johnson's former employees in the Indian Department, and the Scottish merchants participating in the Great Lakes fur trade, also migrated northward, to resume trading. For a summary of Sir William Johnson's patronage of the Lochaber Scots in New York State see Heather Devine, 'Roots in the Mohawk Valley: Sir William Johnson's Legacy in the North West Company,' in Jennifer S.H. Brown, William J. Eccles and Donald P. Heldman, eds.,

The Fur Trade Revisited: Selected Papers of the Sixth North American Fur Trade Conference (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press 1994), 215-40.)

3. See Duncan Cameron, 'A Sketch of the Customs, Manners, Way of Living of the Natives in the Barren Country About Nipigon,' in L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest* (New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd. 1960), 251-2.

4. For a discussion of the economic and social contribution of native women to fur trade society, see Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing Ltd. 1983), 53-73.

5. In the early years of the trade the name Fort des Prairies was assigned to the most westerly fort in the trading area. When James McMillan began his career with the

North West Company (ca. 1804), the name Fort des Prairies referred to a series of forts along the North Saskatchewan River. Fort des Prairies later became Fort Augustus, then Edmonton House and finally, after 1821, Fort Edmonton, site of today's Edmonton.

6. See J.B. Tyrrell, ed., *David Thompson's Narrative. 1784-1812*. Publications of the Champlain Society, no. 40 (Toronto: Champlain Society 1962), 415-6.

7. Apparently McMillan accidentally discharged his gun while at Saleesh House, blowing off two fingers. See Elliott Coues, ed., *The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson 1799-1814*, Vol. II (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc. 1965), 674.

8. Josette Beleisle later entered into a union with Joseph Delorme. Their son Pierre became a Member of Parliament representing the constituency of Pointe Coupe-Ste. Adolphe, Manitoba. Apparently he was also a member of Louis Riel's Council. For a record of the union of Joseph Delorme and Josephite Bellisle ca. 1813, see 'Table I: Genealogies of Red River Households, 1818-1870,' in D.N. Sprague and R.P. Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications 1983).

9. It is possible that 'turning off' enabled women to remain in their local region with their kinsmen, and was perceived as a kinder, gentler form of abandonment. Later, however, it was used by senior officers of the Hudson's Bay Company as a mechanism to rid themselves of unwanted native wives who could then be replaced by white women. See Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 50; see also Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1980), 134-5.

10. Likely William or W. Matthews/Mathews, of New York, a clerk with the Pacific Fur Company, later engaged with the North West Company in January 1814. See Coues, ed., *The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson 1799-1814*, Vol. II, 788. Ellen, daughter of Matthews and Kilakotah, became the country wife of George Barnston, Chief Trader of the Hudson's Bay Company. See Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 136.

11. Apparently James MacMillan's father and uncle had died about this time. In addition to attending to matters concerning the estate, James took his daughter Margaret and his son Allan back to Glengarry in 1823 to be baptized at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, where their

birthdates in the Northwest were recorded. See St. Andrews Church, Williamstown, Glengarry County, Ontario, 'Church Records Collection,' Vol. II, 279.

12. E.E. Rich, ed., *Simpson's 1828 Journey to the Columbia*, Vol. X (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society 1947), Appendix A, 137, Letter from Committee to Simpson, 23 February 1826.

13. James McMillan, *Miscellaneous Papers* (folio M 424), Letter from James McMillan to John Macleod, 21 January 1828.

14. Rich, ed., *Simpson's 1828 Journey to the Columbia*, Vol. X, 44.

15. PAHPM, 'Harriet Munnick Correspondence,' Letter from Munnick (West Linn, Oregon) to Hugh MacMillan, 10 February 1970. Before going on furlough, McMillan dissolved his union with Kilakotah, who married Louis Labonté Sr., with whom she had a daughter, Julienne (born ca. 1838), who married Narcisse Vivet and had several children.

16. Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 210; Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 132; and PAHPM, 'Willard Ireland Correspondence,' letter from Ireland (Provincial Librarian and Archivist, PABC) to Hugh MacMillan, 5 January 1965. In June of 1840 Archibald McKinley married Sarah Julie Ogden, daughter of his *bourgeois*, Peter Skene Ogden. Apparently the couple had several children and lived out the remainder of their lives with their daughter, Sarah, at Savona, near Kamloops, B.C.

17. PAHPM, 'Connelly-McLaughlin Correspondence,' letter from Stephen Connelly (Archivist, District Libraries, Rose Terrace, Perthshire, Scotland) to Mrs. Morag MacLachlan, 20 August 1982.

18. PAHPM, 'Angus and Aenaes Cameron Papers,' letter from R. Cowie to Angus Cameron, 25 November 1847. Copy courtesy of Mrs. Elaine Mitchell.

19. 'Correspondence Concerning James McMillan, His Wife, and Family,' in *Clan Magazine*, 1967, 16-9, letter from Miss E.C. McMillan, Glasgow, to William G. Smith, Hudson's Bay Company, London, 19 August 1869.

20. There is some discrepancy over William McMillan's actual age. He is listed in the Red River Census of 1870 as age 62, which would place his date of birth ca. 1806. Also, Governor Simpson's journal entry of Wednesday, 21 September 1825, makes reference to William McMillan being 'a man going on 19 years' which would place his birthdate

1806-1807. See Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), B.60 a/23. However, his descendants' mass cards on the occasion of his 1903 funeral listed his age at death as being 103 years.

21. Glenbow Archives (GA), Calgary, Charles D. Denney Papers, James McMillan file (#491.000A), for the record of James McMillan Jr., born 1808. There is some confusion over details regarding the life of James McMillan Jr. In the 'McMillan Family File' at the St. Boniface Historical Society, a James McMillan Jr. is listed as having been born in 1813. According to data compiled from the Red River Census of Manitoba, James McMillan Jr. was buried on 13 May 1843 aged 30, at the Red River Settlement (burial recorded in the Burial Register of St. John's Anglican Church, Red River). For further information on the siblings of William McMillan, see also PAHPM, 'James McMillan File,' letter from Albert E. Dease (Walhalla, North Dakota) to Hugh MacMillan, 21 May 1966; and PAHPM, Ruth Swan, Research Report on William McMillan (Winnipeg: Ruth Swan Heritage Consulting 1992).

22. HBCA, B.60 a/23.

23. PAHPM, Ruth Swan, 'Research Report on William McMillan.'

24. Marguerite (born Rainy Lake, 26 May 1818) was daughter of John Warren Dease and Genevieve 'Jenny' Beignet. A member of a distinguished Irish-American fur trade family, Dease was son of Dr. John Dease and Anne Johnson, sister of Sir William Johnson, Northern Superintendent of the British Colonial Indian Department and one of the most influential men in colonial New York State. Dr. Dease had migrated from Ireland in 1771 to serve as personal physician to his uncle William. He later became an officer in the Indian Department. After the American Revolution he became part of the Indian Department in Canada. Many of his sons entered the fur trade and had distinguished careers. His son John Warren Dease, Marguerite's father, joined the North West Company ca. 1801, and was the *bourgeois* or chief trader at the fort at Rainy Lake from 1814-1821. After the coalition of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies (1821), John Warren Dease became a Chief Trader with the new Hudson's Bay Company, responsible for Fort Alexander on Lake Winnipeg and later took charge of three forts on the Columbia River. He died in the Columbia region in 1829.

One of his sons, William Dease, became an important member of the Council of Assiniboia, which governed Red River from the 1830s to 1870. William Dease was married to the sister of another councillor, Maximilien Genthon. See Lionel Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadian Councillors of Assiniboia. Part III,' in *The Beaver*, Winter 1974, 56-8. There exists an extensive bibliography on the Johnsons and the Deases, but the sources used for the purposes of this paper have been extracted from the personal research records of R. Robert Mutrie of Ridgeway, Ontario, a historian, genealogist, and recognized authority on the Dease families of Ireland and America. Copies on file in PAHPM.

25. Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM), 'Red River Census, 1834,' where William McMillan is recorded as married and owning four horses and five mares. See also 'Red River Census of 1859,' where William McMillan is listed as owning two houses, two stables, one barn, seven horses, seven oxen, one bull, four cows, one calf, five pigs, one plough, one harrow, seven carts, one canoe, ten acres of cultivated land and a store full of merchandise.

26. Like his father, William had bad luck with firearms. Apparently while on a buffalo hunt, he surprised an Indian trying to steal one of his horses. The Indian attempted to shoot McMillan, who grabbed the barrel of the gun in his hand. The gun went off, burning the flesh off his hand and leaving it permanently withered. See PAHPM, 'James McMillan File,' Peter McMillan (Ashern, Manitoba), interview with Hugh MacMillan, 16 November 1968, re. his grandfather William McMillan and his great-grandfather James McMillan.

27. GA, Denney Papers, 'William McMillan File (#491.001); see also St. Boniface Historical Society, Winnipeg, 'James McMillan File.'

28. Margaret married Jean-Baptiste Beauchemin, son of Benjamin Beauchemin and Marie Parenteau. Jean-Baptiste was a prominent Métis of Red River who represented St. Charles in the Red River Convention of 1870, and served in the second Provisional Government of 1869-70. See George F.G. Stanley, Thomas Flanagan, and Claude Rocan, eds., *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, Vol. V (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1985), 219.

29. Marie-Anne married Salomon Carrière, son of Alexis Carrière and Suzanne Ducharme. Salomon's aunt, Angélique Carrière, was the wife of Louis Riel's uncle,

Benjamin Lagimodière. Salomon's cousin, Damase (born ca. 1851) was a member of Louis Riel's provisional Government of 1885. During the Northwest Rebellion, Damase was allegedly killed on the last day of fighting at Batoche when he was captured by Canadian soldiers and dragged behind a horse. See notes on the Carrière family in Stanley, et al., eds. *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, Vol. V, 232-3. For additional information on the Carrière families, see also 'Table I: Genealogies of Red River Households, 1818-1870' and 'Table 4: Geographical Location and Children of Manitoba Families, 1870,' in Sprague and Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*.

30. Philomène married Thomas Hogue, son of Amable Hogue and Marguerite Taylor, former country wife of Sir George Simpson, who 'turned off' Marguerite when he brought his new English wife, Frances, back to Red River after his 1830 furlough. Marguerite is reported to have lived out the rest of her life in increasing poverty after her marriage to Amable Hogue, a Company servant. See Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 184-8 and 281, fn. 25; see also Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 125-6.

31. Joseph married Appolline 'Pauline' Bruce, daughter of Baptiste Bruce and Catherine Perrault. John Bruce, the brother of Baptiste Bruce (and Appolline's uncle) was a carpenter and avocational legal expert in St. Boniface. He was president of the Métis National Committee until replaced by Louis Riel, and subsequently served as Commissioner of Public Works in the Provisional Government of 1869-70. See Stanley, et al., eds. *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, Vol. V, 229; see also Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadian Councillors of Assiniboia. Part III,' in *The Beaver*, Winter, 58; and George F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 69-71 and 86.

32. Virginie married Daniel Carrière, son of André Carrière and Marie-Anne Rivard. Daniel was Salomon Carrière's cousin (see note 29).

33. Sarah was thrice married, first to Joseph Turcotte, son of Vital Turcotte and Madeleine Caplette. Joseph's brother Norbert was a follower of Louis Riel. Norbert was connected by marriage to the Lépine family, ardent supporters of Riel in 1869-70 and 1885. Norbert Turcotte was married to Josephite Lépine, daughter of Maxime Lépine, who was a member of Riel's Provisional Government of 1885 and a leader of the Northwest Rebellion the same year. He was tried for treason and sentenced to seven years. His

brother Ambroise was Riel's military commander in 1869-70. Sarah's second husband was Pierre Jobin, son of Ambroise Jobin and Marguerite Mandeville. Pierre's brothers, Ambroise and Joseph, were both active in the Northwest Rebellion of 1885 and Ambroise was a member of Louis Riel's Provisional Government in 1885. He died from wounds sustained at the battle of Batoche. Sarah's third husband was Antoine Vandal, son of Antoine Vandal and Marguerite Berthelet. At least two members of the Vandal family (possibly cousins or nephews of Antoine) were tried for treason after the Northwest Rebellion. See Stanley, et al., eds., *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, Vol. V, 275-6 and 353-4.

34. Patrick married Beatrice Caplette, possibly the daughter of Denis Caplette and Elizabeth Bremner, also residents of St. Charles parish.

35. John married Sara (Virginie) Bruce, daughter of Baptiste Bruce and Catherine Perrault. Although the William McMillan file (#491.001) in the Denny Papers (GA) do not explicitly identify the parents of Sara and Pierre Bruce, their parents can be determined by examining 'Table 4: Geographical Location and Children of Manitoba Families, 1870,' in Sprague and Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation* where the Bruce family resident at Lot 97 in St. Boniface have two children still living at home, Pierre aged 15 and Virginie aged 9. The head of this family, identified as #555, is Baptiste Bruce, married to Catherine Perrault.

36. Elizabeth married Pierre Bruce, brother of Sara, who was wife of Elizabeth's brother, John (see fn. 35).

37. Hélène died at St. Francis-Xavier, Red River.

38. Baptiste Boyer was son of Pierre Boyer and Josephite Leduc from Vaudreuil, Lower Canada (Quebec). The couple was married at St. Francis-Xavier, Red River. See PAHPM, letter from Diane P. Payment (Historian, Canadian Parks Service, Winnipeg) to Hugh MacMillan, 20 December 1989. Some of the genealogical notes on the Boyer descendants has been extracted from biographical information compiled by Ms. Payment for the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. XIII.

39. Emilie married George Fisher, son of George Fisher and Genevieve Courville (or Guatville) of Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. The Fishers were an important trading family in the early west. George was a nephew of Hudson's Bay Company Chief Trader Henry Fisher; George was

thus a cousin to Betsy Fisher, wife of Louis Bousquet. See Art Fisher Private Archives, Regina, Saskatchewan, Fisher Family File, 'Pedigree Chart for George Fisher line.'

40. William married Julienne Bousquet daughter of Louis Bousquet and Betsy Fisher. Louis Bousquet was a protégé of Bishop Provencher from the age of four years old, when he was placed under his guardianship. He became a member of the St. Boniface Cathedral Choir, and taught at Provencher's school as a teacher before the Grey Nuns administration. He later became a petty magistrate, appointed by the Council of Assiniboia. Betsy Fisher was the daughter of Henry Fisher, Chief Trader of the Hudson's Bay Company and later a member of the Council of Assiniboia. See also Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia' Part I, *The Beaver*, (Summer 1974), 18; and Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia' Part II in *The Beaver*, (Autumn 1974), 39-45. William moved to Batoche in 1881, where he became a merchant. He did not support the Rebellion, and was arrested with Charles Nolin, who had successively married female relatives of both Louis Riel and Maxime Lépine, and who opposed Riel in 1869-70 and in 1885. See Stanley, et al., eds., *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, Vol. V, 227-8 and 315-6.

41. Baptiste married Elizabeth Bousquet, daughter of Louis Bousquet and Betsy Fisher, and was therefore sister of Julienne Bousquet (see fn. 40).

42. Clémence married Baptiste Gervais at St.-Laurent, in what is now north-central Saskatchewan. 'Table I: Genealogies of Red River Households, 1818 - 1870,' in Sprague and Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation* indicates a marriage between Baptiste Gervais and Clemence Bouer [sic]. For additional information on the Boyer family see group chart prepared by Diane Payment for *DCB*, Vol. XIII (see note 38), which makes reference to Clémence's marriage to a Gervais at St-Laurent.

43. Félicité married Gilbert Breland, son of Alexander Breland and Emilie Wells. It is probable that Alexander is the brother of Pascal Breland, well-known Red River trader and member of the Council of Assiniboia.

44. Hélène married Charles Racette III, son of Charles Racette Jr. and an Indian woman. The patriarch of the Racette family was Charles Racette (born ca. 1766), an old trader who had been in the interior for over thirty years in 1817. In 1818, old Racette and his family were camped at

the Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan River when the witnessed the beating and abduction of Benjamin Frobisher, North West Company partner, by servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. Frobisher died while trying to escape. Racette was called back to Lower Canada to testify in the court case that followed. See Samuel H. Wilcocke, 'Narrative of Circumstances Attending the Death of the Late Benjamin Frobisher, Esq.,' in L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, Vol. II (New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd. 1960), 177-226.

45. Marguerite married Alexander Goulet, son of Jacques Goulet and Louise Versailles. Alexander was the cousin of Roger and Elzéar Goulet of St. Boniface. Roger was a surveyor, magistrate, and member of the Council of Assiniboia from 1866-69. After 1870 he worked for the Department of the Interior, and then served on the Half-Breed Scrip Commission of 1885. Elzéar was a mail carrier from Pembina to Fort Garry, and member of the court martial that sentenced Thomas Scott to death. Elzéar drowned in the Red River when fleeing from Canadian militia men. See Stanley, et al., eds., *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, vol. V, 263-4; see also Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia. Part III,' in *Beaver*, Winter 1974, 56-8; see also information of the Goulet family from 'Table I: Genealogies of Red River Households, 1818 - 1870' and 'Table 4: Geographical Location and Children of Manitoba Families, 1870,' in Sprague and Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*.

46. No record of issue. It is possible that Margaret McMillan and Angélique 'Nellie' McMillan are, in fact, the same person. It seems odd that Angélique would not have been baptised at Glengarry at the same time as her brother Allan and her sister Margaret, as they are so close in age. Therefore it is possible that Margaret is actually Angélique, given that no further records appear for this person. This individual should not be mistaken for Margaret McMillan, daughter of James McMillan and Eleanor McKinley, baptised 14 February 1833 at Red River.

47. John Warren Dease Jr. was the brother of Margaret Dease, the wife of Nellie McMillan's half-brother, William McMillan. See 'Dease Family Pedigree Charts' researched by Robert Mutrie; see also PAHPM, 'Albert E. Dease Correspondence,' letter from Dease (Walhalla, North Dakota) to Hugh McMillan, 28 October 1966 re. siblings of William McMillan. Angélique died in 1860 at Red River.

48. Ellen married Patrice Breland, son of Pascal Breland and Marie Grant. Patrice Breland was a successful farmer and trader. He was a road superintendent for the White Horse Plains District, St. Francis-Xavier Parish, Red River, and in 1851, he served as magistrate for the same district. He provided conditional support to Louis Riel in the troubles of 1869-70, was a member of the Council of Assiniboia, and also a member of the North-West Territories Council, 1878-79. He served one term as MLA for St. Francis-Xavier in the Manitoba legislature in 1879. Pascal's wife, Marie Grant, was the daughter of Cuthbert Grant, the Métis leader involved in the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816, the founder of the settlement of Grantown, and Warden of the Plains 1828-49. He was later a member of the Council of Assiniboia, 1839-54. See Stanley, et al., eds., *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, vol. V, 227-8 and 265; see also Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia. Parts I-III,' in *The Beaver*, Summer 1974, 13-5; Autumn 1974, 40-5; and Winter 1974, 53 and 58.

49. Ellen married Lucie Gladu, daughter of Charles Gladu and Madeleine Poitras. The Gladu family had close ties to both the Riel and Dease families. Pierre Gladu, son of Francois Gladu and husband of Nancy Dease, established a mill in partnership with Louis Riel's father. Pierre Gladu's son William married Louis Riel's sister Eulalie in 1879. See Stanley, et al., eds., *The Collected Diaries of Louis Riel*, Vol. V, 262-3.

50. GA, Denney Papers, 'James McMillan File' (#491.000B). Allan was reported to have died in 1841 at St. Paul, Minnesota with no record of issue. See note 57.

51. There is record of a Suzanne McMullan (born ca. 1821) married to Pierre Sutherland, son of Pierre Sutherland and Angelique, an Assiniboine Indian. For a record of the union of Suzanne McMullan and Pierre Sutherland, see 'Table I: Genealogies of Red River Households, 1818-1870,' in Sprague and Frye, eds., *The Genealogy of the First Metis Nation*.

52. Peter C. Newman, *Caesars of the Wilderness* (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books Canada Limited, 1987), 332; see also Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 190-2.

53. HBCA, Winnipeg, 'General Dickson File.'

54. 'Batosh' (more commonly spelled 'Batoche') is another surname used to refer to the Letendre family, William McMillan's maternal kin.

55. HBCA, D.4/22, folio 80-80d, 'George Simpson Personal Correspondence,' Simpson to Chief Factor Alexander Christie, Lachine, 18 September 1836.

56. PAHPM, Conolly Manuscript, ca. 1917-1923, 55-7.

57. HBCA, Allan McMillan File. There is, however, an alternative account concerning the fate of Allan McMillan: 'McMillan did his work well, and got very little thanks for that. He was taken into the Company's service, but was looked down upon by some of the pale-faced fools in the service, so he left and went to St. Paul. He was killed by some curs. Poor Allan, he was a very good fellow.' PAHPM, Conolly Manuscript, 56-7.

58. PAHPM, 'Harriet Munnick Correspondence,' letter from Munnick to Hugh McMillan, 10 February 1970.

59. Marguerite was the daughter of former Nor'Wester Jean-Etienne Wadin, and prior to her marriage with McLoughlin had been the country wife of North West Company partner Alexander McKay, who had left Indian country about 1808. See Van Kirk, 'Many Tender Ties' 121; see also Brown, *Strangers in Blood*, 142.

60. See Coues, ed., *The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson*, 968.

61. Josephine was born in 1870 and died in 1899. On May 21, 1873 old Marguerite 'Kilakotah' Labonté sold a 320 acre parcel of land to her daughter Victoire and husband Etienne Grégoire for \$200, on the understanding that 'the said grantees will support and maintain me, the said Margaret Labonté, during my natural life in the same manner in which they have here-to-fore recently supported, maintained, and cared for me.' The parcel was all that remained of the Labonté claim fronting the Yamhill river, a tributary of the Willamette River some forty miles south of Vancouver. It is assumed that Kilakotah spent the rest of her life with her daughter in St. Louis. See PAHPM, 'Harriet D. Munnick Correspondence,' 'The Plum Thicket,' an account of the life of Kilakotah and her descendants, by Harriet D. Munnick, ca. 1969, 4.

62. See Dorge, 'The Metis and Canadien Councillors of Assiniboia,' in *The Beaver*, Summer, Fall, and Winter 1974.

63 64. National Archives of Canada, Hargrave Papers, MG 19 A21, Vol. XXI, as quoted in 'The Character Book of George Simpson, 1832,' in Glyndwr Williams, ed., *Hudson's Bay Miscellany 1670-1870*, 184, fn. 1.