

**THE JOURNAL FOR HAY RIVER ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE NORTH WEST COMPANY, 1807,
EDWARD SMITH**

The Journal for Hay River Establishment of the North West Company is located in the Selkirk Papers in the National Archives of Canada in MG 19E1 (Vol. 31; Reel C-9) pp. 9340-9350, also numbered 292-302. The fragments of the journal written by Edward Smith are most likely copies of portions of the original journal that were part of a collection of documents, the Selkirk Papers, obtained by Thomas Douglas, the fifth earl of Selkirk when he captured the North West Company Fort William in 1816 and confiscated papers at Lac La Pluie.

A typed transcribed copy of the journal is found in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, in MS Collection 77, Northwest Company Papers 1800-1818, Journal for Hay River Establishment, pp. 68-76, and formerly in the possession of Harold A. Innis.

The journal refers to portions of the first two years of the existence of the fur trading post, on the Hay River in northwest Alberta in the years 1806-1807 and 1807-1808, covering the two periods, 14 April 1807- 18 June 1807 and 11 October 1807 – 22 October 1807.

The authorship of the journal is indicated in the side note on page 9230 as “E[dward] Smith”.

The intent to establish the post is recorded in the journal of Alexander Mckenzie, nephew of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 8 August 1806, on his return from Great Bear Lake to Fort Chipewyan.

Embarked at 5 OClock and Encamped at Hay River at 6OClock in the Evening. I understand there is an Establishment making up this River one Clerk 3 Men and an Enterprater for the Chepewayans which ought to have been made at last Fall its not being done was at least 30 packs lost to the N.W. Comp^y¹

This entry thus most likely refers to Edward Smith as he proceeded to establish the Hay River post for its first year 1806-1807 and to commence the activities that are outlined in this journal.

The Hay River post was constructed in the mid-section of the Hay River basin that is situated in the Interior Plains and Boreal Forest between the Canadian Shield to the north east and the western Cordillera. The catchment area of the Hay River covers a significant portion of northwest Alberta but the valley is restricted as the river flows north and drains into the western end of Great Slave Lake and on into the Mackenzie River (Map One). The mid-section of the river course at Meander River is only a relatively short distance from the Peace River which breaks up early in the spring and flows in a west north west direction to Lake Athabasca and the Slave River. This situation was important to the cycle of operation of the Hay River post and the supply of trade goods and supplies and shipment of furs.

¹ Lloyd Keith, *North of Athabasca : Slave Lake and Mackenzie River Documents of the North West Company 1800-1821*, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), p.249.

The name Hay River is first recorded in James Porter's Journal, Slave Fort, on 19 February 1800.² In the same year, John Thompson refers to the river as "River au Foin" on the 7 September.³ The name of the first nation reserve located on the east bank of the mouth of the Hay River in the Athabaskan South Slavey language is Kátł'odeche First Nation. The word Kátł'odeche is composed of tlo (grass) and deche (river) and is descriptive of the riverine grassy reed covered lowland at the mouth of the river and also of the Hay Lakes area.⁴ The name used by the first fur traders to identify the Hay Lakes area of the mid Hay River valley was "little Aurabascha"⁵ and it also describes the natural environment of the area. The name used is rooted in Woods Cree language and describe the grassy reed marsh landscape and compares it to that of the Lake Athabasca area.⁶

The significant potential of the Hay River area to the fur trade slowly expanded with the entry of fur traders into the Peace River and the commencement of the building of a post by Charles Boyer in the summer of 1786 to trade for furs and provisions.⁷ This post, named Boyer Fort, was situated on the west bank of the Peace River close to the confluence of the river now designated Boyer River. The Boyer River valley with mixed woodland and small meadows gave access to the Meander River, a small tributary of the Hay River and the upper Hay River now designated the Chinchaga River.

This potential is illustrated by the early maps of Peter Pond (1787)⁸ (Map Two) and Alexander Mackenzie (1789-1800)⁹ and is outlined in the journal of James Porter Slave Fort Journal

² Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 91.

³ Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 132.

⁴ *South Slavey Topical Dictionary Kátł'odeche Dialect*, (Fort Smith: South Slave Divisional Education Council, 2009).

⁵ Different spellings were used little Aurabascha see Public Record Office: CO 700 America North and South 49, Anon (Peter Pond), 1787, Copied from the original signed P. Pond Araubaska 6th December 1787 marginal notation [Copy of a map of western Canada and the North Pacific Ocean thought to have been prepared by Peter Pond for presentation by Alexander Mackenzie to Empress of Russia] in Derek Hayes, *The First Crossing: Alexander Mackenzie, His Expedition Across North America, and the Opening of the Continent*, (Vancouver/Toronto : Douglas & McIntyre, 2001), pp. 48, 49, 63; little Araubascha, see Glenbow Archives NA-789-53 and a similar copy in National Archives of Canada- NMC 11618, and in Henry R. Wagner, *Peter Pond, Fur Trader & Explorer*, (New Haven, Conn. : Yale University Library, 1955), Map Number Three; Little Athabascow, see in Notice regarding the map of Mackenzie's River by Mr. W.F. Wenzel of the North-west Company, *Wernerian Natural History Society, Memoirs*, 1821-22, volume 4, Edinburgh, 1822, pp. 562-63, folded map, see copy of this map in Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 75; for use of little Arabascha, see on Alexander Mackenzie's first map, Public Record Office, PRO:CO 700 America North and South 54, in Derek Hayes, 2001, pp. 130, 131.

⁶ Derek Hayes, 2001, pp. 49, 64, 131; Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.75; Beryl C. Gillespie, "Territorial Groups Before 1821: Athapaskans of the Shield and Mackenzie Drainage," *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 6, Subarctic, p.168. General editor William C. Sturtevant, Volume editor June Helm. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981). Athabasca (also Athabaska) is an anglicized version of the [Cree](#) name for Lake Athabasca, āthap-āsk-ā-w (pronounced [a:θapa:ska:w]), meaning "grass or reeds here and there" (Wikipedia).

⁷ Harry W. Duckworth, Editor, *The English River Book: A North West Company Journal and Account Book of 1786*, Edited with an Introduction by Harry W. Duckworth. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill- Queen's University Press, 1990), pp. xix, xxii-xxiii, 12-13, 139 and end papers.

⁸ Glenbow Archives NA-789-53 in Barry Gough, *The Elusive Mr. Pond: The Soldier, Fur Trader and Explorer who opened the Northwest*. (Madeira Park, BC : Douglas and McIntyre, 2014), p. xvii; Public Record Office: CO 700 America North and South 49, Anon (Peter Pond), 1787, Copied from the original signed P. Pond Araubaska 6th December 1787 marginal notation) [Copy of a map of western Canada and the North Pacific Ocean thought to have been prepared by Peter Pond for presentation by Alexander Mackenzie to Empress of Russia] in Derek Hayes, *The First Crossing*:

(1800).¹⁰ Information with respect to the environment surrounding Boyer Fort to assist in map making would have most likely been transmitted to both Pond and Mackenzie by Boyer during his occupation there between 1786 and 1789¹¹ and John Cornelius Vandriel, trader and surveyor

Alexander Mackenzie, His Expedition Across North America, and the Opening of the Continent. (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2001), pp. 48,49, 63.

⁹ "Chart called Mackenzie's Map, illustrative of his tract from Athabasca Lake down Mackenzie River to the North Sea" Anon. (Alexander Mackenzie) c1789, Public Record Office, London, PRO:CO 700 America North and South 54, in Derek Hayes, 2001, pp. 89, 130, 131, 159.

¹⁰ James Porter's Slave Lake Journal -Thursday 19 March 1800, "Grand Blanc's Description of the Beaver Country" in Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.91.

¹¹ In the spring of 1786, Charles Boyer and seven employees were contracted by the North West Company to establish trade on the Peace River and Alexis Derry and Cuthbert Grant were also contracted with others to establish a trading post at the mouth of the Slave River on Great Slave Lake. From these two locations more, information about the surrounding areas would have been gathered including that of the Hay River area and it is was from this information that travels of trader/explorers could be guided and maps showing these explorations could be elaborated (Duckworth, 1990, p. xxxvii.).

In 1786, Charles Boyer established a trading post on the north bank of the Peace River upstream from Vermilion Falls close to the mouth of a river that now bears his name. The headwaters of this river impinge on the headwaters of streams and rivers that form part of the Hay River drainage system that flows northwards into Great Slave Lake.

Ferguson (1990, 1993) and Angel (1990) examined the early documents of the fur trade and the establishment of activities on the Peace River and particularly of Boyer Fort and Fort Vermilion area and their work indicates that there was most likely considerable knowledge of the geography of the area to the north of the Peace River towards Great Slave Lake that became available for the map making of not only to Peter Pond but Alexander Mackenzie. The archeological work of Pysczyk (1993) at the Boyer River Site, Fort Vermilion supports and extends these studies.

Ferguson, Theresa A., Working on Fort Vermilion Local History:1786-1826.*Proceedings of the Fort Chipewyan and Fort Vermilion Bicentennial Conference.* Patricia A. McCormack and R. Geoffrey Ironside Editors, Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, Occasional Publications # 28, (Edmonton: Boreal institute for Northern Studies, 1990) pp.58-64.

Ferguson, Theresa A., "Wood Bison and the Early Fur Trade," *The Uncovered Past: Roots of Northern Alberta Societies.* Patricia A. McCormack and R. Geoffrey Ironside Editors. Circumpolar Research Series, Number 3. (Edmonton: Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, 1993), pp.63-79.

Angel, Barbara. "Fur Trade Relations with Native People at Fort Vermilion: 1821-1846," *Proceedings of the Fort Chipewyan and Fort Vermilion Bicentennial Conference.* Patricia A. McCormack and R. Geoffrey Ironside Editors, Boreal Institute for Northern Studies Occasional Publications # 28, (Edmonton: Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, 1990), pp.86-93.

Pysczyk, Heinz W. A "Parchment Skin" is All: The Archaeology of the Boyer River Site, Fort Vermilion, Alberta," *The Uncovered Past: Roots of Northern Alberta Societies.* Patricia A. McCormack and R. Geoffrey Ironside Editors. Circumpolar Research Series, Number 3. (Edmonton: Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, 1993), pp.33-44. [although documents indicate that the Peace River area was used as a provisioning ground to support summer transport brigades and well as wintering parties, the archaeological evidence at this particular site showed a paucity of large animal bones but many small animal bones of beaver and hare. Possibly because of the size of both moose and buffalo only the flesh /green and dried or pounded meat was brought to the post. Bones may have been removed at site of kill and even broken and internal marrow consumed on site or transported.]

Boyer most likely traveled to Pond's House in the spring of 1787 carrying the winter furs traded with Beaver Indians and others possibly from the Hay River area directly at Boyer Fort or otherwise by indirect trade. Travel would have been as soon as possible in early May following the breakup of ice on the Peace River in the warm spring weather. Not only was the Peace River area to expand as a fur trading area but a source of food supplies to support not only the Athabasca Post but particularly the south bound canoe brigades carrying furs to Grand Portage.

Knowledge of the area around Boyer Fort gained by Boyer would have been passed on to Peter Pond who remained in the north and most likely travel to Great Slave Lake in the summer of 1787. Pond spent the winter of 1787 -88 with Alexander Mackenzie at Lake Athabasca but left the North West Country in the summer of 1788 never to return but with knowledge gleaned from his own travels and other traders such as Boyer and Cuthbert

who replaced Boyer in the summer of 1789 and remained at Boyer Fort (Old Establishment) until the summer of 1790 when he left the North West Company and the Athabasca.¹²

One of the copies of Pond's map of 1787 that depicts the area between the Peace River and Great Slave Lake and the River of the Mountains (Liard River) shows "a number of small lakes"

Grant and Laurent Leroux and from Indians from all surrounding locations. From these travels and this information and his knowledge of James Cook's travel on the Pacific Ocean along the northwest coast of North America, Peter Pond produced his maps of the North West Country.

In the fall of 1787, supplies from Grand Portage arrived late at Athabasca, preventing goods reaching Boyer Fort by canoe and only limited supplies reached Great Slave Lake. Men retreated south from Great Slave Lake because of lack of supplies for trade. Only a short journey by foot was made by Charles Boyer and Alexander McLeod in November of 1787 into the Peace River Country and some furs were brought back to Pond's House as well as being accompanied by some Beaver Indians. These furs amounted to three quarters of the total Athabasca trade for that winter. This indicates the importance of the Peace River and the Beaver Indians in the fur trade not only as a source of fur but as a provisioning ground for the spring brigades leaving for southern Canada.

Most likely Boyer returned to Boyer Fort on the Peace River in 1788 to rejoin any personnel that may have remained there since the spring of 1787. Reports indicate that a garden with vegetables was planted in 1788 and later trade records indicate that summer trade in furs was significant.

In the winter 1788-89, Boyer indicates his desire to leave the Peace River and to return to Grand Portage in the summer of 1789 to settle up personal financial matters and if satisfactory to return north. Once again, in early spring of 1789, Boyer most likely accompanied the furs traded in winter 1788-89 to the Athabasca Fort now relocated on the south shore of Lake Athabasca. Here, in the spring of 1789, before his departure on his northern voyage of exploration, Alexander Mackenzie met Charles Boyer and failed to persuade him to stay in or at least return to the Athabasca as he was the most competent person to aid in the trade. Boyer went south never to return to the Athabasca but presumably he had informed Mackenzie of any information that may have assisted Mackenzie in his proposed travels northward in the summer of 1789 with the prospect of reaching the Pacific Ocean at Cook's Inlet and also the extension of the fur trade in both the Peace River and more northerly areas. (W. Kaye Lamb, editor, *The Journals and letters of Sir Alexander Mackenzie*, (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1970), pp. 429,431,433, 436,438.)

¹² Various named Vandrieul, Vandreil, Vaudreuil, Vaudreil, Alexander Mackenzie refers to Mr. Vaudreil in his letter dated 15 February, (Lamb, 1970, p. 436.) gives the spelling as Vaudreuil, in later letters the name is spelled Vandreil (pp. 439-443.), in the journal of the second voyage, Mackenzie uses the spelling Vandrieul (Lamb, p. 239); Duckworth uses the spelling Vandriel found in the English River Account Book (Duckworth, 1990, p.65.) and in his biographies (p.171 lists a "Vandriel, J.", and gives a full name as John Cornelius Vandriel. Duckworth states that Alexander Mackenzie credits John Cornelius Vandriel with the first survey of Peace River. (p. xxxviii).

Alexander Mackenzie with knowledge of Boyer's pending journey to the south had called on the assistance of Mr. Vaudreil [Vandriel] from Isle a la Crosse to occupy Boyer Fort for the summer of 1789. Vandriel remained at Boyer Fort for the winter of 1789-1790. Vandriel had some training in surveying and completed a survey of the lower Peace River from Lake Athabasca to Boyer Fort and may be at other locations on his outward southern journey in 1790 at the request of Mackenzie. It is most likely that this survey of the lower Peace River was made in the summer of 1789 on Vandriel's journey upstream to Boyer Fort. The survey information could have then been forwarded by the winter express 1789-1790 to Fort Chipewyan and added to Alexander Mackenzie's mapping of his 1789 journey to the Arctic Ocean during the winter time of 1789-90. Mackenzie left for Grand Portage in the spring of 1790 before Vandriel made the same journey. Vandriel was requested by Mackenzie to make a survey of the route between Lake Athabasca and Isle a la Crosse and at points on Lake Winnipeg.

It is assumed that Vandriel as post master at Boyer Fort in the winter of 1789-90 and with his personal experience and interest in surveying and mapping gathered further information of the surroundings of Boyer Fort and probably the upper Hay River area. This information most likely was passed onto Mackenzie by Vandriel by correspondence during the winter of 1789-90 or on his arrival at Grand Portage in the summer of 1790 or at a later date by other means and Mackenzie incorporated this new information into his first map of his journey to the Arctic. This map shows more detail of the upper Hay River area than any of the later maps pertaining to the same area and marking the route ways of Alexander Mackenzie's two journeys to the Arctic Ocean in 1789 and to the Pacific in 1793. (Lamb 1970, pp. 239,436,438,439,442.)

north west of a tributary (Boyer River) and south of a north flowing river (possibly representing the Hay River). The lake area is named “little Araubascha” and the people occupying the area south of the lake cluster are named “Beaver Ind^{ns}”¹³ (Map Three). The Beaver are known to have made trading trips to Fort Churchill. This physical and toponymic information illustrate the potential usefulness of the Hay River area to the fur trade.

Alexander Mackenzie’s map of circa 1789 which was drawn to illustrate his journey from Fort Chipewyan to the Arctic Ocean in the summer of 1789 contains much detail of the area between Great Slave Lake and the Peace River despite the fact that his route through Great Slave Lake followed the north shore and had no contact with the south shore and rivers flowing northward into it (Map Four). It is most likely that the detail shown is from information gathered from Boyer Fort and journeys made north to the Hay River area to trade with Indians from that area over the period 1786 to 1789. On this map a fort is marked on the north side of the Peace River just upstream of the Boyer River and at the end of river details resulting from Vandriel’s survey of summer 1789. Little Arabasca is shown as one large lake with four streams draining into it and one river draining it and flowing north into Great Slave Lake by two large distributaries that indicate the deltaic mouth of the Hay River. Little Arabasca is flanked on the east by the “Carriboef Mountains” [Caribou Mountains] and on the south west by the cuesta shaped “Bald Mountain” [Watt Mountain] and further to the south by the Beaver Mountains. Once again, this map evidence indicates a more detailed understanding of the natural environment and fur and provision trade potential of the Hay River area and its situation with respect to water transportation routes.

Despite the more detail knowledge of the Hay River area all be it not accurately plotted at their correct co-ordinates, future maps representing and illustrating the journal accounts of Alexander Mackenzie’s two journeys to the Arctic Ocean and Pacific Ocean continue to show less detail. However, once journeys to the Mackenzie valley were made following the south shore of Great Slave Lake circa 1795, the location of the mouth of rivers flowing into Great Slave Lake were more accurately represented and potential access to the resources of the upper Hay River area are more clearly indicated¹⁴ (Map Five and Map Six).

¹³ This is seen on the copy in Glenbow Archives, NA-789-53 and a similar copy in National Archives of Canada-NMC 11618, and in Henry R. Wagner *Peter Pond, Fur Trader & Explorer* but the copy in the Public Record Office: CO 700 America North and South 49, Anon (Peter Pond), 1787, Copied from the original signed P. Pond Araubaska 6th December 1787 (marginal notation) [Copy of a map of western Canada and the North Pacific Ocean thought to have been prepared by Peter Pond for presentation by Alexander Mackenzie to Empress of Russia] and seen in Derek Hayes, *The First Crossing: Alexander Mackenzie, His Expedition Across North America, and the Opening of the Continent*. (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 2001), p. 48, 49, 63, uses the spelling “little Aurbascha” and substitutes “Pike Indians” for “Beaver Ind^{ns}”

¹⁴ Derek Hayes 2001, p. 135, also see CM/X12 B.C. Museum and Archives. The date engraved at the bottom of the world chart is “April 1st 1790”. This seems rather a very early date of publication due to the fact that Mackenzie did not return to Fort Chipewyan from the Arctic Ocean until late summer 1789 and did not travel south until spring 1790. The map with engraved date of publication of “April 1st” may have been edited perhaps by 1794 to incorporate this new information from the summer of 1789.

This world map although incorporating information with respect to Alexander Mackenzie’s journey to the Arctic Ocean in 1789 has selected and modified the detail on Mackenzie’s map of 1789. Although the positions of rivers and shorelines are located in more correct coordinates, significant features to the geography of the area that may be pertinent to fur trade have been left out. Names have been modified Bald Mountain to Bald M^{ts}, Beavers Mountains to Beaver M^{ts}, Carriboef Mountains to Cariboeuf Mount., Fort to Peace River F^t, and Little Arabasca to Little Arabasca L. Bald Mountain [Watt Mountain] would have been seen first when travelling up the Boyer River

The value of these resources in the Hay River area was understood by Chipewyan hunters who had begun to seasonally leave their traditional lands, the “Carribou Country” east and north east of Great Slave Lake to enter the “Beaver Lands” south and south west of Great Slave Lake and engage in trade with the fur traders who were now expanding throughout the vast Mackenzie River basin (Map Eight) .

One account of this contact and the nature of the resources of the Hay River area is found in the journal of James Porter, trader for the North West Company at Slave Fort by Ring Lake in the delta of the Slave River in 1800. On the 15 March, Grand Blanc, a Chipewyan trading chief and 40 followers arrived from the “Beaver Country” to trade before leaving on the 3 April to go to the “Carribou Country” and “all Promised to return in Canoes & to be here at our arrival in the Fall in order to return to the Beaver Country.”

“ THURSDAY 19th [MARCH 1800] ... - ”here follows the Grand Blanc’s Description of the Beaver Country he Says that above the Rapides of the Hay River the water is Very Still & flat swampy Lands in both Sid[e]s to the S. East in going up the river is the Carribou mountain & to the N. West is the Slave mountain & another that he Gives no name, between these mountains there is numbers of Small Rivers & little Lakes entirely Choaked up with Beaver Lodges – he says that he with a Good many of his relations Killed all the beaver that they brought from that Country in one of these Rivilets so of course they must be very numerous for he alone Brought 170 Pluis[castor seche] Exclusive of Robes [castor gras] Capots & for Himself & family & he adds that if there was a fort Established in that country that they would Double the Quantity of furs but the Distance is so Great from this Place that they are obliged to leave of the trench very Early”¹⁵ (Map Nine).

The area described by Grand Blanc matches that of the middle Hay River valley south of Alexandra Falls and north of Meander River but is far from the North West Company trading post of Slave Fort located between the Beaver Lands and the Carribou Country. A post within the Hay River valley would lead to greater productivity and if desired enable the Chipewyan hunters to occupy the area on a more permanent basis. A post could be established receiving supplies by canoe via Great Slave Lake and traded furs could be transported more quickly over the short distance land route to Fort Vermilion and thence by the early season canoe route on the Peace River.

valley before the distinct upland just south of Zama Lake and this is indicated on Mackenzie’s map of 1789. However, the line of upland marked on Arrowsmith’s map of 1790/94 that incorporates Bald M^{ts} and Beaver M^{ts}. would reasonably represent the north west to south west line of upland between Zama Lake and Naylor Hills. but fails to mark of the round cuesta of Watt Mountain. Derek Hayes 2002, p. 149 and 260, British Library: Maps 69917. (70). Philip Turnor’s summary map of 1794 based on surveys by himself and Peter Fidler in 1791-92, shows only their actual survey data, that of Alexander Mackenzie and most likely Vandriel. No south shore of Great Slave Lake is marked and no data with the exception again of the notation “Chepawyan Buffalo and Moose Plenty” is indicated between Great Slave and Peace River. Derek Hayes 2001, pp.250-51; Derek Hayes 2002, pp. 144-45, 260, “A map of America between Latitudes 40° & 70° North and Longitudes 40° & 180° West Exhibiting Mackenzie’s Track from Montreal to Fort Chipewyan & thence to the North Sea in 1789, & to the North Pacific Ocean in 1793, Anon. (Aaron Arrowsmith [?]/David Thompson/Alexander Mackenzie), c1800 PRO: CO 700 Canada 59A. This map to accompany Alexander Mackenzie’s Journal of his two voyages shows the location of the lower courses of the Kakisa River, Hay River and Buffaloe River in more correct location but there is no detail of the upper courses that were marked on the earlier maps.

¹⁵ Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 91.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the North West Company was facing increased competition. Rival trading companies had amalgamated to form the New North West Company (XY Company, Potties.) Competition was intense and as trade expanded throughout the Mackenzie River system, rival posts were essentially built in very close proximity to one another along the main river arteries as far as Great Bear Lake and Peace River. The Hudson's Bay Company entered this competition between 1802 and 1806 constructing Nottingham House near Fort Chipewyan, Mansfield House near former Boyer Fort, and Chiswick House at "little Lake" (Ring Lake) in the Slave Delta close by the North West Company and the XY Company posts (Map Seven and Map Eight).

Lloyd Keith suggests that the only response by the North West Company to the information and concern expressed by Grand Blanc may have been to establish Red Knife Fort at the western end of Great Slave Lake to the south of Big Island, just east of the Kakisa River and about 70 kms. west of the mouth of the Hay River.¹⁶ The post was built between May of 1801 and August 1802 and was still in operation in August 1806, the month in which Edward Smith was proceeding to establish the Hay River post. Some trade was made at Red Knife Fort with hunters coming from Hay River and by goods being taken up the river.¹⁷ The posts situation may have been an advantage to Redknife hunters coming from more traditional lands north of Great Slave Lake but in the opposite direction for Chipewyan hunters who desired to return to their lands in "Carribou Country" east and northeast of Great Slave Lake. The post was situated at the west end of the lake and it would seem to be situated at a strategic stopping location after crossing the open water of Great Slave Lake and at the entrance of the Mackenzie River. The western end of Great Slave Lake was a productive area for fish, fowl, caribou and bison and became an important area for fisheries that supplied not only local inhabitants but posts down the Mackenzie River.

With the amalgamation of the North West Company and the XY Company in November 1804 and the end of rivalry by the summer of 1805, it could be surmised that with surplus manpower and resources that there was now an opportunity to expand into the Hay River area as Grand Blanc had intimated. This view is supported by the statement and comment of Alexander Mckenzie who was in charge of the Mackenzie River District. He indicated the failure to establish Hay River post in the previous year had caused a loss of 30 packs to the North West Company.¹⁸ Although the Hay River post was established within the Mackenzie River district and would remain so, its operation and success are linked to its proximity to the Peace River and Fort Vermilion within the Peace River District with respect to shipping of furs and provisions.

The North West Company, Hay River post continued to operate until its closure in 1821. It survived the closure of the post of the Mackenzie River District in 1815. In the summer of 1818, a gunpowder explosion destroyed the post, François LaMissette [Piche], the summer post master,

¹⁶ Ibid, p.19.

¹⁷ Duckworth gives details of this post and the journal using the name Fort des Couteaux Jaunes or Yellow Knife Fort. *The Yellowknife Journal*. By Jean Steinbruck with An Introduction by Harry Duckworth translated by Marie – Therese Haughian and Karen Haughian, (Croydon, Winnipeg: Nuage Editions, 1999).

¹⁸ Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 249.

and two Chipewyan hunters were killed. This violent and sudden disruption in the pattern of trade, despite attempts to bring about order, along with much broader issues of conflict with the rival Hudson's Bay Company and the final union of the two companies in 1821 led to the closure of the distinct and independent Hay River post but trade with the various first nations hunters and trappers of the Hay River area would continue in a different form and in different locations.¹⁹

The content of the journal addresses the chief concerns of the establishment of a new trading post in a new location. New physical structures for trade, accommodation and security would be needed to be constructed as soon as possible. Competent post hunters needed to be engaged to provide provisions for daily survival. A cadre of hunters and trappers had to be developed who would be loyal to the new established Hay River post rather than the surrounding posts of Fort Vermilion, Fort Chipewyan, Slave Fort, Fort Liard and Fort of Forks. Harmonious relations between Beaver, Chipewyan, and Iroquois Indians had to be maintained so that trade would be successful. Communication patterns between neighbouring posts in winter and summer had to be organized.

The contents of the journal focus on the actions of the journalist Edward Smith, his summer post master and interpreter Piche, and Grand Blanc, the Chipewyan trading chief and La Bouche, the Beaver trading chief.

The actions of the trading chief Grand Blanc reflect the concerns for the benefits from the trade in the Beaver Land as opposed to the benefits and the customs of the traditional life in the Carribou Country. The action of La Bouche reflects the problems of rivalry between the Beaver and the incoming Chipewyan.

Both Edward Smith and Piche had experience of rivalry at the same location at Slave Fort in 1802, with both the Chipewyan and Red Knife and with the XY Company, Hudson's Bay Company and North West Company. Piche had extreme experience of rivalry from 1786 onwards with different trading companies. His fluency in the Chipewyan language and his personal relationship with the Chipewyan people enable him to be an articulate and skillful interpreter for Edward Smith.

Smith and Piche used both gifts of tobacco and alcohol, and ceremony and when needed intimidation, skillful harangues and threats to maintain order and continuity of trade. Likewise, the hunters and trappers use both cooperative, steady and productive trade and threats of abandonment and desertion to other posts in order to obtain better trading relationships with Smith.

¹⁹ See Chapter 3 – Aboriginal Settlement and the Establishment of Fur trading posts in the Hay River Area Prior to 1821 and Chapter 4 – The Relocation of the Fur Trading post to the mouth of the Hay River in David Alan Harrison *Hay River, NWT. 1800-1950: A Geographical Study of Site and Situation*. PH. D. Thesis, University of Alberta: Edmonton, 1984.

THE FOLLOWING IS A TRANSCRIPTION OF THE JOURNAL FROM THE SELKIRK PAPERS IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA.

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“Page 9240 (292)

“Fragments of Journal by E. Smith Hay River. see July 5-1807 Ft. Augustus²⁰. 1807 see Oct^r 16”²¹

²⁰ James Wyld's Map of North America dated 1828 locates a Fort Augustus at the confluence of a tributary of the Hay River but all other records searched indicate a Fort Augustus on the North Saskatchewan River near present day Edmonton. (*Atlas of Alberta*, (Edmonton: Government of Alberta and University of Alberta, 1969), p.49.). Murdoch McPherson's map of 1824, “A Chart of the Mackenzie's River Department” locates an abandoned post at the head of navigable water on the upper Hay River also at the confluence of a tributary flowing from a lake which may represent the Hay Lakes area. (Hudson's Bay Company Archives[HBCA], G1/52, in Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.45.).

²¹ The writer and the date of this side note written in smaller but similar script to that the fragments of the journal are not known. The fragments of the Journal by E. Smith Hay River are most likely copies of portions of the original journal that was part of a collection of documents, the Selkirk Papers, obtained by Thomas Douglas, the fifth earl of Selkirk when he captured the North West Company Fort William in 1816 and confiscated papers at Lac La Pluie.

The side notes were likely written to identify parts of the journal that may have been significant in any legal matters that Selkirk may have initiated against the North West Company. Similar side notes are found in other journals in the Selkirk Papers. (Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp. xvii, 263, 275.)

This side note to page 9240 (292) indicates that there were fragments of E. Smith's journal, that is several rather than the two fragments seen on pages 9240 (292) to 9350 (302) covering the two periods 14 April 1807- 18 June 1807 and 11 October 1807 – 22 October 1807. The side note first draws attention to July 5 1807 yet there is no text for that date in this portion of the Selkirk Papers associated with Hay River. It is not known if there is another fragment of E. Smith's Hay River Journal located in a different section of the Selkirk Papers.

Attention is drawn to “Ft Augustus. 1807 16 Oct” The text for that date in the Hay River Journal has content that may be used in questioning the actions of the North West Company but **the reference** to Ft. Augustus is not understood. The only record for Fort Augustus at this date relates to a North West Company post on the North Saskatchewan River near present day Edmonton see end note 2.

The name of E. Smith is added to indicate that he was the writer and author of the Journal for Hay River Establishment. Edward Smith is first associated as a clerk with the XY Company that established a post at “little Lake” now named Ring Lake in the Slave River Delta under the leadership of Alexander McKenzie, the nephew of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, in the fall of 1802. (Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.158.). In November 1804, the XY Company amalgamated with the North West Company. In his journal dated 8th August 1806, Alexander McKenzie wrote “Embarked at 5 O'clock and Encamped at Hay River at 6 O'clock in the Evening. I understand there is an Establishment making up this River one Clerk 3 Men and an Enterprater for the Chepewayans which ought to have been made at last Fall its not being done was at least 30 packs lost to the N.W. Comp^y” (Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.249) This entry thus most likely refers to Edward Smith as he proceeded to establish the Hay River post for its first year, 1806-1807 and its activities that are outlined in this journal. Smith remained a clerk in the North West Company until 1814 when he was made partner (Ibid p. 161) He became a chief factor in the newly organized Hudson's Bay Company in 1821, serving in Athabasca until 1823, Mackenzie River in 1823-32 and Mackenzie River & Athabasca in 1834-37. He retired 1 June 1839. (Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Biographies)

Journal for Hay River Establishment. –

Tuesday 14th April 1807– Still Cold Weather but The Men²² implored, having now settled the accounts²³ of the Post and only want the Clearing away of the Ice²⁴ to forward the express to Slave Lake²⁵. –

Wednesday 15th – The Weather still Cold – No news from any quarter –

Thursday 16th – The Men began to plant the Fort Pickets²⁶. – I hope it will be finished this Week.

²² The initial number of persons at Hay River was five (5), Smith, 3 men and an interpreter, according to Alexander McKenzie's journal of 6 August 1806. Smith sent three (3) named persons and then most likely two others to Fort Vermilion in early April. Smith followed with seven (7) men leaving behind two (2) persons to manage the post. This indicates a possible total of 14 persons under Smith's command. It is indicated that the first canoe journey of five persons to establish the Hay River Post was in early August and therefore the supplies carried may have been surplus resources from the previous year in Athabasca. A second canoe journey may have been made in the fall bringing not only new season supplies from the south but extra man power. There is no mention of the name of a leader of this possible second canoe trip. An alternative source of the extra man power to make up the number under Smith's command could have been from Fort Vermilion I. In the period 1823-1870 traders came from Fort Vermilion to Hay River to collect country provisions. It is very likely that routes from the Fort Vermilion area to the Hay River area were well known many years before the establishment of the Hay River Post and that Smith had a general if not specific idea as to where to locate and build the new post. In the season 1821-22, George Simpson wanted again to try to set up a rival post for the Hudson's Bay Company at Hay River. He considered "Thirty pieces of goods with two Officers, an Interpreter and Eight Men would be sufficient for this post" (E. E. Rich, *Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department by George Simpson, 1820 and 1821, and Report*, (London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, Volume I 1938), pp. 386,387.)

²³ By early April 1807, the initial first year of trading would have been completed, furs traded would be ready for shipment south, and the details of the trade, "the accounts", needed to be sent to headquarters by express in order to prepare for the necessary action for the upcoming year 1807-1808.

²⁴ The breakup of the ice on the Hay River at the Hay River Establishment which was most likely located close to the present-day Meander River would have been earlier than break up at the mouth of the east channel of the Hay River at Great Slave Lake. The break up at Hay River varied between 22 April and 21 May during the period 1894 and 1994 with greatest frequency of occurrence in the first two weeks of May. (Data collected by David Harrison from mission records, newspapers, and personal observation.)

²⁵ Refers the North West Company post most likely located on Moose Deer Island at the western edge of the Slave River Delta (see entry for 27 May 1807). The express would consist of essential letters, accounts and materials to be sent to neighboring posts and more distant southerly headquarters and be linked with similar items from the Mackenzie River posts. An express delivery by water from Hay River Establishment to Slave Lake post at this time would be delayed by the fact that on arrival at the mouth of the Hay River ice on Great Slave Lake would still prevent safe canoe travel until June or at times July and foot travel would have been hindered by water on top of the lake ice (Porter Journal 16 April 1800, Lloyd Keith, p.94). Expresses during the winter season along the Mackenzie River system operated by dog team from Fort of the Forks (Fort Simpson) in early December and early April at the latest. (see Porter's Slave Fort Journal of 1800-1801 for details of express activities on 7 and 8 April 1800, and 26th and 31st December 1801 in Lloyd Keith, p. 93, 122 and 123.)

Because of these varied ice conditions, the Hay River Establishment as part of the Great Slave Lake/Mackenzie River region of the Athabasca District was resupplied in the fall by canoe by way of Slave Lake post but its winter traded furs were transported south overland to Fort Vermilion post on the Peace River in the Peace River region of the Athabasca District. Open water on the Peace River in the early days of May allowed the transport of furs to southern Canada to begin approximately two months before shipment from the Mackenzie Region.

²⁶ By this date the frost would have started to leave the ground and the men would be able to build a protective fence of tree limbs around the fort.

Friday 17th – Saw two Swans²⁷, the Weather Milder than usual the Men still employed but they do not advance being too many. –

Saturday 18th – Nothing New. –

Sunday 19th – Leat last night Cree²⁸ and two others arrived paid some Skins²⁹ Credits³⁰ and Treaded Six, Never was such backward Weather known,³¹ Snow all day and very cold, so that the men did nothing.

Monday 20th – Snow, Raine &c. all day the Men doing Nothing. –

Tuesday 21st & Wednesday 22nd – The same. –

Thursday 23rd – Sent of three Men to Peace River³² to viz Guilbond³³, Gotiez³⁴ & Paquett³⁵, to make the Packs³⁶ of this Post, two more will follow soon. – the Weather finer than usual –

Friday 24th – The Hunter Killed two Swans at Night, on which we feasted being the first of the Season. –

Thursday 30th – As it is now too late to attempt sending off an express to Slave Lake³⁷, came to a determination of sending or going myself as far as Fort Vermilion³⁸ to see Mr. McLeod³⁹,

²⁷ The presence of swans implies there was some open water despite the unseasonable weather.

²⁸ The word Cree appears to indicate the name given to a single person arriving with two others. Porter's Slave Lake Journal on 19 April 1800 makes a reference to "The Crick arriving with the Tranquille, the Fleche & all their retinue". They are most likely Chipewyan trading chiefs along with Grand Blanc who arrived at Slave Fort at the end of the winter hunting season.

²⁹ Skin or plus or plue measure of value used by North West Company and is similar to Hudson's Bay Company "made beaver" see Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 455.

³⁰ It was the custom for trading Indians to be given goods on credit in the fall for which the trader expected payment in spring. In the journal a distinction is made between paying "credits" and "trading" furs or provisions. "Trading" occurred only if the fall debts had been paid and furs or provisions were left over. See Harry W. Duckworth, 1990, p. 186; and Lloyd Keith, 2001 p. 452.

³¹ Poor weather conditions were also noted for the first three weeks of April 1807 at Fort Bizkaia on the Liard River opposite the mouth of Muskeg River to the west of Hay River, and the first arrival of ducks. (George Keith Journal, 1807 April, in Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 282.)

³² The men were going to the North West Company post on the Peace River with Smith on the 30th April 1807 refers to Fort Vermilion.

³³ Guilbond is probably the same person as Francois Guilbord, Francois Guilboud or Gelbore and worked in the Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake area between 1801 and 1806 before coming to Hay River. (Biography in Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 399.) North West Company Servants Contracts 1801, HBCA F.5/1 fo.20

³⁴ Gotiez may be Louis Gautier, North West Company Servants Contracts, 1800, HBCA F.5/1/fo.46; Louis Gauthier along with Charles McLeod carried the winter express between Fort Chipewyan and Slave Fort and return in late December, 1800 (Lloyd Keith, pp. 122, 123.)

³⁵ Paquett may be Andre Paquet, North West Company Servants Contracts, 1804, HBCA H2-133-4-4, a "Pasquette" was employed by the North West Company at Fort Dunvegan between 18th April 1806 and 3rd October 1806, see David W. Leonard, Editor, *Dunvegan Post Journals for 1806 and 1808: being an Account of the Activities at the Post as recorded by Alexander Roderick McLeod*. (Edmonton: Peace Heritage Press, 2014), pp.22ff

³⁶ Furs collected during the winter would be compressed and wrapped for protection in "packs" each weighing approximately 90 lbs. for shipment by canoe.

³⁷ By this late date in April, the men carrying the express mail along the Mackenzie River- Slave River route would have passed by the mouth of the Hay River even if the Hay River was navigable at this date.

³⁸ Journal evidence and archeological evidence indicate that Fort Vermilion at this date was located on the west bank of the Peace River approximately 17 miles or 27 kms north of the confluence of the Keg River with the Peace

therefore left the property here in charge of Piche⁴⁰ and Gadoies⁴¹ and set out for Peace River in company with 7 Men, so that my Journall will bear a Blank till my return, the Weither very cloudy and great appearance of Raine but we began our Journey at 10 oc'lock. P. M.⁴² –

River. This Fort is identified as Fort Vermilion I and archeological site IaQf-1 by Pyszczyk and was operated firstly by the North West Company and after amalgamation by the Hudson's Bay Company between 1798 and 1830. For details of location of forts in the Fort Vermilion area see Henry W. Pyszczyk, *The Last Fort Standing Fort Vermilion and the Peace River Fur trade 1798-1830. Occasional Papers of the Archeological Society of Alberta* Number 14, April 2015.

³⁹ This is most likely North West Company Chief trader Archibald Norman McLeod who established Fort Dunvegan in 1805 and wintered there in 1806-1807 and would have passed through Fort Vermilion early May 1807 to accompany his packs of fur enroute to southern Canada. There was also Alexander Roderick McLeod and Roderic McLeod, the younger brother of Archibald Norman McLeod in the Peace River area at this time, see David W. Leonard, Editor, *Dunvegan Post Journals for 1806 and 1808: being an Account of the Activities at the Post as recorded by Alexander Roderick McLeod*, (Edmonton: Peace Heritage Press, 2014), pp.11ff.

⁴⁰ Piche is the François La Missette dit Piché named in the contract signed by his mark on 21st January 1799 with the North West Company (HBCA, F.5/1, fol.8, NWCo. Servants Contracts) He is named as François La Missette in the North West Company Ledger for 1811—21 in the years 1812 to 1819 (HBCA, F.4/32 fol. 493, 449 NWAc Bks). He was variously named Pickets, Piché, Pêché, Peshe, F. La Misitte, Francois La Mefsetti alias Pichez. Piche arrived in the Athabasca May 6th 1786 associated with the activities of Peter Pond. In the winter 1786-1787, Piche was implicated in the death of John Ross, a rival to Peter Pond. In fear of possible consequences Piche fled to the more distant Great Slave Lake, where he was involved with the construction of a trading post for the North West Company east of the Slave River Delta. Philip Turnor met him there in 1791. Piche became fluent in the Chipewyan language and thus able to act as an interpreter for the North West Company and earning eventually a wage of 1000 livre. James McKenzie uses the term “Montagne” for the Chipewyan language and indicates that Piche used the language to advantage when needed, (James McKenzie Journal, 20 July 1799, L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, (New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd., 1960), p.397). His relationship with and understanding of the first nations people of the Great Slave Lake area was strengthened by his marriage to a Yellowknife woman. In 1801, James Porter identifies a Slave Lake Trading Leader, Thionelzar, as Piche's brother-in-law (Lloyd Keith, pp. 123, 449.) Piche had extensive employment as interpreter, summer time post manager and general servant in the Mackenzie River area, Great Slave and Athabasca Lake areas. In the fall of 1802, Piche worked at the North West Company post at little Lake (Ring Lake) in the Slave River Delta and in opposition to Edward Smith, a young clerk and other engages of the New North West Company (XY Company or Potties) under the leadership of Alexander MacKenzie, the nephew of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. With the amalgamation of the Northwest Company and XY Company in November 1804, Piche and Edward Smith would combine their skills and experience to a common goal, the interests of the North West Company and its extension into the Hay River area. In the years 1806 – 1807 and 1807-1808, Piche's skills as an interpreter and relationship with the Chipewyan hunters enabled Edward Smith to establish a peaceful and productive trade at the newly established post on the Hay River that continued for over a decade. Most likely Piche acted as the summer post master. It is somewhat ironic that the actions of Piche that had helped establish a successful post at Hay River in 1806-1807 would be linked to its demise in 1818- 1821. In the summer of 1818, Piche was the summer post master at Hay River. While smoking his pipe he entered the store room to serve two Chipewyan hunters. Sparks from his pipe led to a gunpowder explosion that killed the two hunters, destroyed the storehouse and its contents and his own slow painful death. This violent and sudden disruption in the pattern of trade, despite attempts to bring about order, along with much broader issues of conflict with the rival Hudson's Bay Company and the final union of the two companies in 1821 led to the closure of the distinct and independent Hay River post but trade with the various first nations hunters and trappers of the Hay River area would continue in a different form (David Harrison, 1984.)

Bibliographic notes with respect to Piche are found in Lloyd Keith, 2001 p 415- 417 and Harry W. Duckworth, 1990, pp. 163-164; two recent biographies of Peter Pond by Barry Gough and David Chapin provide accounts of Piche's involvement with the death of John Ross and his flight to Great Slave Lake and further references, Barry Gough, *The Elusive Mr. Pond: The Soldier, Fur Trader and Explorer who opened the Northwest*. (Madeira Park, BC, Canada: Douglas and McIntyre, 2014); David Chapin, *Freshwater Passages: The Trade and Travels of Peter Pond*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2014). Both biographies contain early maps that depict the upper Hay River area where eventually the Hay River post was established. Personal correspondence was received

Wednesday 20th May 1807. – After a long a tedious Voyage⁴³ got this day safe back from Peace River in perfect health in my absence Piche and Gadoies sufered a good deal for want of

from Harry W. Duckworth and Anne Morton, Hudson's Bay Company archivist in 1990 with respect to sources relating to the name Piche in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

Accounts of the destruction of the Hay River Establishment in 1818

HBCA F.3/2, fo.164-165d Letter to "The Proprietors of the NWCo. En route from George Keith, Saml. Black, Ft. Chipewyan, 8th Sept 1818: - "... About the 26th following [July] accounts from Slave Lake reached us & Mr. Wickes writes from hence that a melancholy accident had happened about the 17th June at Hay River namely that F La Misitte in giving out Liquor to the Indians dropt his Pipe among some gunpowder (on the Floor of the Shop) which instantly communicating to a Keg an explosion took place & threw down the house, killed two Indians & tossed the unfortunate wretch himself beyond the Buildings – He lingered ten days after this dreadful catastrophe in great torment and expired – The 6th Ult. Nicholas Andries writes from that place stating his arrival from Slave Lake & that by Mr. Mackintosh's activity in sending a Man or two from Fort Vermilion the buildings are removed & things going on as usual. The establishment is also sufficiently provided with Ammunition etc. for the Summer & only seven of the Chipewyians had gone to Slave Trade". HBCA F.3/2, fo. 168-169d Letter to Angus Shaw Esq. NWCo. Fort des Prairies from his nephew Simon M^c Gillivray, Fort Chipⁿ 4th October 1818: - "... A serious accident happened to one of our Establishments (Hay River) – The well known, a Francois La Mefsetti alias Pichez was unfortunately blown up by Gunpowder Last Summer – this poor Old Man suffered 10 days in a most excruciating manner He has blown through the Roof of the House and was found in the woods the third day after the accident happened 2 Montagniers was killed on the spot

Accidents of this kind has grown pretty frequent here since last spring – Mr A R McLeod underwent a singing with a 2! Gunpowder, but this affair happened last spring"

HBCA F.3/2,fo. 176,177 Letter to General Proprietors and Agents and Angus Shaw from Joseph G. McTavish, 22rd December 1818: - "... One canoe which was bound for the purpose of conveying Mr. Jos. Mc Gillivray with a few pieces to Hay River having followed the opposition to Slave Lake last fall shared the fate of the Slave Lake Brigade (that is caught in the ice near Little Buffalo River , left Fort Chipewyan September 30th) Mr. Joseph however with 6 men on foot succeeding in reaching Hay River early in November when I am sorry to say he found that valuable fort in a compleat state of confusion mostly all the Chepewyans have abandoned it and but few of the Slaves have likely heard of this is owing to not having left a proper person in charge last spring, that poor old human Drunkard Picket was appointed Summer in master but whilst in the act of drawing Liquor for two Indians in the Shop with a lighted pipe in his mouth a piece of live tinder fell on the floor where it seems there must have been a few grains of Powder near an open Keg of the article the consequence of course was that the poor old wretch and the Indians were literally blown through the roof of the building and expired shortly afterward, this happened too at a time when the only Man he had was absent at Fort Vermillion , the charge then devolved upon a woman until the return of the Man and the arrival of Nicholas Andries who labored very well but the Indians had been promised that a gentleman should pass the Summer there and felt very sore at being disappointed & thus a Post which last year yielded 54 good packs in all probability cannot return out 20 next spring. Mr. Joseph came here (Fort Vermillion) – – – to settle the – forwarding his outfit and has returned again and I have every reliance in his using his utmost endeavours to retrieve the fate of affairs there"

⁴¹ Duckworth indicates that "Piché "was in charge of the main Mackenzie River post in the summer of 1806, along with one "Gadoies" and served as interpreter there the following winter (PAM, Selkirk Papers, vol. 31, 9340 -50)", in Harry W. Duckworth, p.164.) Most likely the main Mackenzie River post referred to was Fort of the Forks at the junction of the Liard and McKenzie River. The two men may have been there in the first part of open water season but Alexander McKenzie indicated that he understood that an interpreter accompanied a clerk and three men was making its way up the Hay River on the 6th August 1806 to establish a new post (Lloyd Keith, p.249). The Journal for Hay River Establishment makes reference to both Gadoids (Gadeiu) and Piché working together in charge of Hay River on 30th April and 20th May 1807 and therefore not at the Mackenzie River post in the season 1806-1807.

⁴² The fact that Smith travelled in the night time may indicate that he was familiar with the route to Fort Vermilion and had made previous journeys.

⁴³ The round-trip journey by foot to Fort Vermilion I [IaQf-I] took 20 days including presumably a stopover there of unknown length. His journey appears to have taken longer than the journey to Hay River proposed by George Simpson from Colville House and later traders from Fort Vermilion II. The precise location of Hay River from Fort Vermilion at this date is not known. Also, Smith indicated that he wished to see Mr. McLeod, the chief trader then stationed at Fort Dunvegan and his intended arrival at Fort Vermilion was not precisely known. 1807 is only the second time that McLeod had made this journey from Fort Dunvegan via Fort Vermilion to Fort William. McLeod's

departure from Fort Dunvegan would depend on the date of breakup of river and the arrival of canoes from the Rocky Mountain post for which he was responsible. The pattern of travel along this routeway is indicated by the events of the spring of 1806 recorded at Fort Dunvegan and Fort Vermilion as follows: - Fort Dunvegan 30 April 1806, "great deal of ice drifting in the river." 2 May 1806, "sent in a small canoe to the Forks." 10 May 1806, 9 canoes left for "Raminitiquia [Kaministiquia]...lac La Plui." "Mr. McLeod remains here, expecting the Rock Mount People." 12 May 1806, Mr. McLeod left Fort Dunvegan; Fort Vermilion Saturday 17th May, "yesterday about 12oclock Mef^s. McLeod and Clark sett off in two light Canoes, having left a canoe & 5 Men at this place to wait for the Rocky Mountain Canoes, and some Beaver Indians that has not arrived." Fort Dunvegan 22 May 1806, Five men, a large canoe and 28 pieces arrived from Rocky Mountain and left the same day for Fort Vermilion. (Journal of the daily Transactions at Dunvegan beginning the 18 April 1806, NAC Selkirk Papers, MG19, E 1, volume 24, pp. 8964(257), 8965(258), 8968(2061), 8971(264); Journal of all the transactions of Fort Vermil. During the Summer 1806, from the departure of A. Norman McLeod, NAC Selkirk Papers MG19, E1, volume 23, p. 9264(216)

George Simpson in 1821 indicated that Hay River was about "Six Days March across the Country to the North of Colville House" that was situated just above the Vermilion Falls on the Peace River and near the mouth of the Mikkwa River (circa 125 miles or 200 kms.). His information with respect to the location of Hay River would have come from local hunters and also John Clarke who had led the Hudson's Bay Company renewed expedition into the Peace River in 1815 and had formerly been employed by the North West Company on the Peace River in 1802 and the Mackenzie River(1806-1809) and stationed at Fort Vermilion in 1804-1806.(CLARKE, JOHN : Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online; Rich, 1938, pp. 386, 387, Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp. 365-367). Simpson also indicated that "it would be necessary that the supplies for this Post [Hay River] would be forwarded very early in the Season as the navigation is tedious around Gt. Slave Lake and up the current about 10 days March" (circa 140 miles or 225 kms. Ibid). Neither Smith's nor Simpson's data give the precise location of Hay River at the time of occupation by the North West Company between 1806 and 1821. But with the relocation of the Fort Vermilion post following its takeover by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821 to a new site circa 1830 [Fort Vermilion II] on the east bank of the Peace River just above the confluence of the Boyer River in the present town of Fort Vermilion, spring and fall round trips were made to the "Horse Tracks or Horse Track", later to be called Upper Hay River Post and currently named Meander River. The times taken for some of the seasonal round trips from Fort Vermilion II to Hay River are as follows. HBCA B.224e/1/fo.78, 1823, 11days [this may be from Vermilion I]; HBCA B.224a/4/fo. 8-9, 1834, 9days; HBCA B.224a/10/fo.13, 1846, 11days, dogs used; HBCA B.224a/12/fo.20, 1864, 9days, horses used. If the Hay River post was established at Meander River, the distance to any post built on the Peace River between Keg River and Boyer River would be roughly the same (circa 69-77miles or 111-124 kms.) because of the fact that the Peace River trends in a southwest -north east direction along this portion of its course. If the Hay River post was built further upstream towards the Chinchaga River or Hay Lake then there would be a significant difference to the distance to the various post sites (72-88 miles or 116-142 kms.) However, it would seem and be indicated that Meander River would be the head of navigation because further upstream the river is narrower and has numerous small tight meandering bends to frustrate upstream travel. It would seem that the posts built in the general vicinity of current town Fort Vermilion, that is Boyer Fort (1786)/ Old Establishment, Mansfield House(HBC, 1802-03), Fort Liard(1802), unnamed XY Fort(circa 1802) and Fort Vermilion II(HBC 1830) were better situated to use the Boyer River valley as an access route to Hay River than Aspin House/ Fort du Tremble/Finley House/New Establishment (1790/92)and Fort Vermilion I/ La Fleur House(1798) that were not built close by any marked natural routeway leading to Hay River(Map Seven). Map evidence of Pond (1787) and Mackenzie (1789) points towards Boyer Fort /Old Establishment being the place from which information and exploration of the Hay River began.

Hulbert Footner journeyed from Fort Vermilion II to Alexandra Falls in 1911 and describes the route way followed by Hudson's Bay Company employees and others on the way from Fort Vermilion II to "Horse tracks "(Upper Hay River Post and current Meander River) He describes some of the land over which Edward Smith may have traveled to Fort Vermilion II in the spring of 1807, a landscape with mixed forest and prairie with many small rivers and two lakes, a natural environment for diverse animals but of ease of access. He describes also the cuesta shaped Watt Mountain that appears on Alexander Mackenzie's first map outlining his journey to the Arctic Ocean in 1789, as Bald Mountain. (Hubert Footner. *New Rivers of the North*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1921), in John Warkentin, *The Western Interior of Canada: A Record of Geographical Discovery 1612-1917*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, nd.), pp.285,286.

provision, but at present we make out a lively hood. Game and Beaver flesh⁴⁴ have been refused from the Indians not thinking to Tread what we cannot eat and what is not proper to make dreyed provissions⁴⁵ –

Thursday 21st – To my outmost satisfaction⁴⁶ had a visit from the Grand Blanc⁴⁷ when he mead us Many declarations concerning his relations that many of them intended to leave the River and go to there Lands⁴⁸, 14 of those was present at the time what by threats and what by some little

⁴⁴ Large numbers of Beavers were killed in the summer season as well are during the prime fur winter season [Mansfield House Journal, Peace River 30th June 1803, "In the Evening 8 Mowhawk Indians arrived at the New Company's [XY Company] with about 700 Beaver", Thomas Swain, *Journal Mansfield House, Peace River, Nottingham House, Athabasca Lake, Chiswick House, Slave Lake, 1802-04*, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, MS Collection 26 Tyrrell (Joseph Burr), item 94, Thomas Swain's Journal.

⁴⁵ Freshly killed and butchered meat called "green meat" could be cut, sliced and dried by sun or fire to make dried meat. This in turn could be pounded into fine powder and mixed with animal fat or "grease" to make pemmican and finally stored in an animal skin bag or "taurreau". Pemmican formed the light weight nutritious literally "Take Out" food that fed the voyageurs en route to Fort William. [Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp .453, 454; Duckworth, 1990, p.186.]

⁴⁶ Edward Smith most likely came to know of Grand Blanc and perhaps had met him as early as the fall and winter of 1802 -1803 after he had arrived at the XY post at Ring Lake, in the Slave Delta and Grand Blanc was moving south from his lands to make war on distant nations (Lloyd Keith, p.174.).

⁴⁷ Grand Blanc also named Big White and Chienalizé arrived at Slave Fort to trade with James Porter 16th March 1800 with about 40 other hunters. He was "Cloathed" as a chief and in conversation with Porter informed him of the location and characteristics of the "Beaver Country" from which he had come, that is, the upper Hay River valley and brought a large quantity of fur. He also implied that it would be to their mutual benefit if a fort would be established there. Porter's journal for Thursday 19th March states "here follows the Grand Blanc's Description of the Beaver Country he Says that above the Rapides of the Hay River the water is Very Still & flat swampy Lands in both Sid[e]s to the S. East in going up the river is the Carribou mountain & to the N. West is the Slave mountain & another that he Gives no name, between these mountains there is numbers of Small Rivers & little Lakes entirely Choaked up with Beaver Lodges – he says that he with a Good many of his relations Killed all the beaver that they brought from that Country in one of these Rivilets so of course they must be very numerous for he alone Brought 170 Plus[castor seche] Exclusive of Robes [castor gras] Capots & for Himself & family & he adds that if there was a fort Established in that country that they would Double the Quantity of furs but the Distance is so Great from this Place that they are obliged to leave of the trench very Early" source Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 91.

Grand Blanc is reported by Wentzel in 1802 of having to have gone to war along with the aid of Cree against distant nations (perhaps the Beaver) [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.174] There was a similar rumor of the Chipewyans going to war against the Indians attached to Fort Liard in 1807 [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.286]. Grand Blanc was most likely in the Red Knife River area of the upper Mackenzie in February 1805 [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.202. All these accounts indicating the spread of the Chipewyan in a south westerly direction out of their traditional caribou lands and impinging on the traditional lands of the Beaver and Slave people.

Grand Blanc's name is recorded in the Fort Liard Journal of 1822-23 [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 433.] He and some of his relations are reported to have died of starvation in the mountains west of Fort Liard in the outfit year 1831-1832 [HBCA B.39/a/28, in Theresa A. Ferguson, *Chipewyan Hunting Groups on the Hay River, 1800-1845, Alberta History*, Winter 2016, p.6 and note 35.]

⁴⁸ Smith is wanting to persuade or pressure Grand Blanc and other Chipewyan and Redknife hunters and trappers to remain in the Beaver Lands throughout the whole year and thus strengthen the trade particularly for beaver at the newly established Hay River post. Grand Blanc and others had earlier established a seasonal migratory pattern of livelihood with the arrival of the traders into the Mackenzie River system to benefit from both the various trade items earned in the Beaver Lands and the traditional resources of their lands, the Caribou Country. Smith wished to break this pattern or at least to make sure that the hunters and trappers return to the Beaver Lands during the prime season for catching beaver, that is, from late December to March. This migratory pattern is illustrated in the diary accounts of James Porter, Slave Fort at the mouth of the Slave River in 1800-1801.

"Friday 13th [March 1800] - three Indians arrived Says the Grand Blanc will be here in 2 days with a Band of 40 odd Indians Gave them a dram & a bit Tob°."

“Sunday 15th [March 1800] The above Indians arrived ...Hoisted our flag & fired a few shots –Gave all a dram & a bit Tob^o.”

“Monday 16th [March 1800] – drew 1400 skins of Credits afternoon Tranquill arrived with a band of off[sic] his relations Gave them a Dram & a bit of Tob^o Cloathed Grand Blanc Gave a Capote of 4 Ells [ell = 45 inches, Lloyd, 2001, p.90, footnote 21] a pair of Leggings & a Clout to Tranquille and the same to the Reggire (the 3 Brothers them has Given for their Part at 7 Packs) – Gave them a keg of mixt Rum & 5 fam^s Tob^o which Kept them merry all night-“

“Thursday 19th [March 1800] ... here follows the Grand Blanc’s Description of the Beaver Country ...”

“Friday 3rd [April 1800]– The Greater Part of the Indians went away. Gave Grand Blanc 3 fathoms Tob^o 10 mea^s ammⁿ flints awls &c Value of 12 Skins the whole amounts to 37 Skins- the most goes to the Carribou Country but they have all Promised to return in Canoes & to be here at our arrival in the Fall in order to return to the Beaver Country & to in Courage them to Perform their Promise was Pretty liberal with trifling Presents to all who Paid their Credits & Gave them at their departure from a foot to 6 inches of Tob^o each man according to His capacity.

“Wednesday 22nd [April 1800] ... most of the Red Knives went away-Gave the Rat 4 mea^s ammⁿ 4 flints 2 awls Value of one Skin of Beach & 2 fathoms Tob^o. Gave about 50 Skins in tobacco & other trifles amongst all the others they had Given about 14 Packs”

“Sunday 5th [October 1800] ... Employed all day Giving Credits to the Indians – Note before they would take anything they asked if Goods were to be Sold here on the Same Conditions as at Fort Chipewean Saying that they were no more Slaves then the Indians of Athabasca & if the Prices of Goods were not to be the Same here as there that they would leave the Post told them they were to have them here at the Same Price they then Said we should reduce their Last Spring Credits in the Same manner but were told in the affirmative that they must Pay their old Debts the Same as they were Given to them, after a few Pretty long harangs they all Consented & were Seemingly Pleased”

“Sunday 12th [October 1800] –The Indians all went away & except a few young men who stays here to wait their relations from their lands) Gave to them that has from 60 to 100skins Credits from 2 to 4 mea^s of ammⁿ & from 2 to 4 feet of Tob^o with awls flints & & all the young men Pieces of Tob^o & other trifles Gratis they all intend to go to the Beaver Country three of the Men Goes to winter with them Gave each of them value of 12 Skins of ammunition &c and to[ld] them to have an Eye over these Indians during the winter & if they founde that they had any intention of Go to Athabasca or Grand Marais to endeavor to deswade them but if they Could not prevail to Go along with them & take Particulars that they did not hide none of their furs...”

“Wednesday 26th [November 1800] ... the other Stays here to wait his relations from the Carribou Country”

“Saturday 29th [November 1800] ... in the Evening 3 Red Knives arrived from their Lands with a traine... they left the Rat their Chef on the other side of the Lake with a band of about 20 of his relations they Slept 8 nights Since the[y] left their lodges– “

“Sunday 30th [November 1800] Traded 2 otters 1 wolverine 3 Skins Value of fresh meat 2 ditto Pounded & 2 in Small Cords & Sinows[sinews] Gave them Some Credits at night three Chipewears arrived Left Grand Blanc with a band of 70 odd men eight days ago they have not left the Carribou Lands which is a Bad omen for making Packs The Carriboux is so numbrous this year that it will no doubt induce a great many of them to Stay all winter.”

“Monday 1st Cut up amongst their relations telling them to make hast[e] to Go & trench in order to Make their Credits & all those who have not a Sufficiency of iron tools to Come as quick as possible to Get them & Go to work.” [trench refers to the process of catching beaver by breaking into their lodges through the winter ice. Iron tools were needed to make the process easier but were heavy items to carry and also not needed for major activities in the Carribou Country]

“Friday 12th [December 1800] – Toward the Evening the Grand Blanc & 28 Men arrived from their Lands they brought Some traines but it was too late to Know what they Contain Gave them all a dram & a bit Tob^o & a quart to the Chief...”

“Saturday 13th [December 1800] – Employed all day Trading & Giving Credits to the Indians ...”

“Sunday 14th [December 1800] Busey Giving credits to the Indians the greater Part of them went away gave the Grand Blanc 4 fathoms Tob^o 6 mea^s of ammⁿ a Knife 2 awls a Comb & a firesteel . Gave Six Fingers & Cadineyuse each 4 foot Tobo a firestart 2 flints 2awls 2 needles & a Gunworm Gave all the others from Six to 18 inches Tob^o with awls flints & with as many fair words as Possible in order to encourage them to work fitted out two men Ouallate & Lanche to Go to live with them Gave each of them 8 mea^s ammⁿ...”

“Tuesday 16th December 1800] – all the Indians went away Ouallate & Lanche went along with them”

presents we gained 11 and three embarked which we was but careless whether they went or remained, it seems by what the Grand Blanc says that the Beggare⁴⁹ & Tamb is amongst the number of those Rebels, be as it will Piche will go and find them in a few days. The men always Bissey . –

Friday 22nd – Nothing New- No News from any Quarter. – Piche preparing for his Voyage.-

Saturday 23rd.- At Night the Indians at the House Drank – The Three Thumbs⁵⁰ is Comander in Chief of this Band and his plans laid down to go to Church – hill Factory next Season with his

“Friday 9th [January 1801] ... There is now upwards of an hundred Indians Come from there lands & taken Credits here Since the end of November last besides an equal number (if not more) including old men & Boys in the Same Bands that has not Come to this House & all these People amongst them all has no Brought 2 Packs of furs & very little hopes of them doing much better for the remainder of the winter So that the Present appearances we will make but Verely Poor returns.” [the trade items received from Indians coming from their Lands, the Carribou Country were mainly items associated with the caribou hunt, that is, dressed caribou skins, caribou tongues, dried or pounded meat, grease, collets, babiche, sinew. Only a few furs such as, beaver, marten, otter and Wolverine were traded. Few furs were expected from that quarter but the expectation was that as a result of the credits given, iron work received, gifts and words of encouragement offered the Beaver Lands would be much more rewarding.]

Journal entries for Slave Fort, North West Company on 25th August 1802 and Chiswick House, Hudson's Bay Company on 11th 12th October 1803 both at Ring Lake in the Slave River Delta indicate Chipewyan and Red knife hunters were in the Hay River valley in both the summer as well as the winter season but many still journeyed to their lands, the Carribou Country in the fall to harvest caribou in its prime condition (Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.168 and Thomas Swain, Chiswick House Journal, MS Coll 26. Tyrell (Joseph Bur) Papers, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto)

Thomas Swain's entry for Sunday 11th December 1803 expresses the significance of journeying to the Carribou Country.”8 Chippewyans came to the old House [North West Company] last night that has been 10 nights coming, they have come from their lands & brought nothing with them, they never bring any furs from that Quarter, they go there in the summer and very seldom return before this month, they only go there to supply their wants in Clothing which they make of the Skins of the Rain Deer which they Clothe themselves from head to foot.” Thomas Swain was the first Hudson's Bay trader to reach Slave Lake following the early exploration of the area by Philip Turnor and Peter Fidler in 1791.

⁴⁹ Beggare, Beggure or Begguer may be the same person as Reggire as transcribed by Lloyd Keith for the word that appears to be written as Beggire in Porter's Journal 16th April 1800. Ferguson indicates that he was a brother of Grand Blanc and Tranquille. Theresa A. Ferguson, Chipewyan Hunting Groups on the Hay River, 1800-1845, *Alberta History*, Winter 2016, p. 2 and note 4.

⁵⁰ Three Thumbs variously named Trois Pouces and Trois Pousis was a Chipewyan or Montagner trading chief who traded at Fort Chipewyan, Lac Claire and Slave Fort in 1800-1802. (Lloyd Keith, p. 449). The traditional lands of the Chipewyan were the forest-tundra ecotone (variously referred to as “their lands”, “carribou country” and barren lands) to the east and north east of the Slave River and Great Slave Lake. Their early trading relations were with the Hudson's Bay Company at Churchill and York Factory by land or by more circuitous route along the English or Churchill river system. In 1717, Fort Churchill was constructed to support the trade with the Chipewyan. The Chipewyan in turn traded with the “Far Indians”, such as the Slavey, Dogrib, Beaver and Yellowknife [Redknife] bringing the Hay River area within the sphere of influence of the fur trade. A peace treaty between the Cree and the Athapaskan Indians (particularly the Beaver) in the mid 1760's allowed Beaver Indians of the Peace River area and possibly the upper Hay River valley make periodic and long trading trips to Churchill. (E.E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870*, Volume 2:1763-1820, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1960), pp.47,57; Beryl C. Gillespie, *Territorial Expansion of the Chipewyan in the 18th Century*, Proceedings : Northern Athapaskan Conference 1971, volume 2, National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper, Number 27, p. 368; J.C. Yerbury, Lake Athabaska Region Before 1765, *Alberta History*, volume 29, no. 1, Winter 1981, pp.33,34; J.G. MacGregor, *Peter Fidler, Canada's Forgotten Surveyor 1769-1822*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1966), p. 151; Thomas Swain, Mansfield House Journal 5th December 1802, “... This morning a old Beaver Indian (that had been at Churchill) man and his wife came to the French House[Fort Liard North West Co.] but brought nothing. I made

hunt this declaration he mead himself, after we had gained him to remaine and left 3 prs. Chizels ⁵¹and 2 Axs, in ower possession till fall saying that he now did not want them till the Ice was taken. –

Sunday 24th The men employed as usual from Morning till Night all the Indians left the House.

Monday 25th. – The Weither Very Warm. No News from any Quarter. –

Tuesday 26th. – May 1807.- No arrivals of course No News from any quarter. –

Wednesday 27th. – As there is no news from any of the Indians that went below⁵² for their Spring Hunt, I have this day sent of Piche to follow them and see what is become of them⁵³,

him a present of one fathom of Tobacco, 1 pint of powder and 40 Ball, also sent a fathom of Tobacco to a Chief that he left at his Tents.” [Thomas Swain, Journal Mansfield House, Peace River, Nottingham House, Athabasca Lake, Chiswick House, Slave Lake, 1802-04, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, MS Collection 26 Tyrrell (Joseph Burr), item 94, Thomas Swain ‘s Journal, p.6.]

The Chipewyan main trading items would be mainly products from the caribou herds and other furs traded from first nation hunters who occupied forested areas to the west and south. The main demand for the fur trading companies would be for beaver and meat products for sustenance especially for the summer brigades transporting fur products to southerly headquarters. It was to the advantage of the traders to encourage the Chipewyan to focus their activities within the Beaver Country rather than in their traditional lands in order to obtain the furs they wanted. The Chipewyan hunters became active in both the Beaver Country of the forest and the Caribou Country of the tundra-forest ecotone and used that skill to their benefit in negotiating their role in the fur trade. (James Porter, 3 April, 1800, 9 July 1800, W.F. Wentzel, 7 September 1802, Lloyd Keith, pp 93, 108, 17.) Lac Claire, Fort Chipewyan and Slave Fort were on that portion of the Mackenzie River system that essentially marked the boundary between the two regions whereas the Hay River Post was within the Beaver Lands.

⁵¹ The heavy iron chisels were used to “trench” or break into the snow and encased beaver lodges to catch the beaver and obtain the prime pelts in the winter months, December to March. These tools were heavy and of little use for Caribou Country activities and therefore left at the Hay River post till that time.

⁵² That is north from Meander towards Great Slave Lake to the numerous river valleys draining from the Caribou Mountains and the Cameron Hills mentioned by Grand Blanc to Porter in 1800.

⁵³ By this date, the Hay River would be open for canoe travel north and down to Great Slave Lake but the lake would still be ice covered with the possible exception of shore leads. Any furs caught could have been traded at Slave Fort now located on Moose Deer Island at the western edge of the Slave River Delta and the Chipewyan could have continued as normal to their lands, northeast of the East Arm of Great Slave Lake. Also, furs possibly may have been traded at Red Knife Fort at the west end of Great Slave Lake and south of Big Island which most likely had been constructed in 1801 and was still in operation in August 1806, and hunters, if Redknife, continued to their traditional lands north of Great Slave Lake. [*The Yellowknife Journal*. By Jean Steinbruck with An Introduction by Harry Duckworth translated by Marie –Therese Haughian and Karen Haughian. (Croydon, Winnipeg: Nuage Editions, 1999), isbn 0-921833-62-8; Lloyd Keith 2001, p.248., Alexander McKenzie, entry 7 August 1806 indicates the existence of the Red Knife or Yellowknife Fort but footnote 137 is a wrong interpretation of the location. The S[outh] Branch refers to the southern channel of the Mackenzie River which leads upstream from Little Lake [Mills Lake] and not the channel south of Big Island. The Yellowknife Journal 1802-1803 locates the fort west of Stoney Point and Pointe Desmarais. Maps by Wentzel dated 1821 and 1822 locate an old fort or Fort George opposite Big island on the south shore west of Stoney Point and the [Pointe Desmarais] Fishery. [Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp. 74,75.]

“Journal of Simon McGillivray, Jr. Trader, Hudson Bay Company, Fort Resolution Sept 4th 1829 – May 15th 1830
“found by Morley H. Lawrence in Desjarlais School, in March 1925 typed copy held by David A. Harrison makes reference of a Fort George and its location most likely towards the western end of Great Slave Lake.

“11th October 1829 ‘At dusk arrived La Ferté from Fort Simpson This is his 11th day; and four days ago-(8th of Oct.) – Mr. Smith was at Fort George.” [Edward Smith was journeying from Fort Chipewyan to Fort Simpson]

with orders to continue his route to Moose Deer Island by him sent Letters to him⁵⁴ that may comande at that Post with the Amounts of the debts due by the Indians that is gone that way⁵⁵. – Piche promised faithfully that he would do his best to bring the Indians back to Hay River, and in case of his failling to get the Indians to Come here he would advertise those at Moose Deer Island in time to take there measures to stope the Indians to go any farther⁵⁶ with there furs. –

Thursday 28th. – Raine and Cloudy Weither with Strong N. Wind all day. –

Friday 29th. – The mens finished reasing Barks⁵⁷ enough for the Buildings today and covered the Store so I may say it is finished.

Saturday 30th. – Arranged the Store and spread out the pounded Meat in the garret on leather Tents weighed the Fures, received since my departure in all 6 Packs. –

Sunday 31st. – Being holiday the Men did nothing. – No news from any Quarter. –

Monday June 1st. – Some Indians arrived. Treaded 10 Sks⁵⁸. Fresh Meat and Expended Goods in presents 2 Sks. d^d The Men imployed Squarring⁵⁹ Wood &^c. &^c. –

Tuesday 2nd. – The Watter in the River rises fast -Raine with squals of Wind all day. –

Wednesday 3rd. – The Weither very warm. Nothing New.

6th January 1830 “... Was surprised by the arrival of Neneyazé and wife, has left his brother Natezzé at Fort George, Satzinalkay is toward Slave Point. June last [1829], expressly to search beaver, yet their present hunts are almost little or Nothing. Neneyazé has 40 skins, Natezzé 10 and Satzinalkay 20. Their trip to Mackenzie River will not benefit this post much.

9th May 1830 “... Some are gone to Fort George.” This journal 1829-30 makes June 1829 credit probably delivering furs to Fort Vermilion

⁵⁴ Peter Warren Dease wrote a letter at Slave Fort dated 22 April 1807. He may have remained as the summer post manager. The letter indicated that Chipewyans were to attack the Natives of Fort Biskaga River on the Liard River but Smith's journal indicates the presence of Chipewyans in the Hay River valley that summer. [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 286.]

⁵⁵ Smith had given these Indians Credits to assist in the spring hunt and wanted to receive furs in compensation and not let the Indian hunters doubly benefit from credits received at Hay River and payments for furs traded at Slave Fort.

⁵⁶ Possibly to the distant Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Churchill or North West Company Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca or even possibly if reopened at the Hudson's Bay Company Nottingham House also on Lake Athabasca which had been closed in the summer of 1806 following violent opposition from the North West Company throughout the year 1805-1806. [G. MacGregor, Chapter 8, Facing the Northwesters, Chipewyan, 1802,1806, Peter Fidler, *Canada's Forgotten Surveyor 1769-1822*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1966), pp.143-161.

⁵⁷ Spruce Bark was often used to make shingles to cover the roofs of buildings. [David W. Leonard, Editor, *Dunvegan Post Journals for 1806 and 1808: being an Account of the Activities at the Post as recorded by Alexander Roderick Mcleod*. (Edmonton: Peace Heritage Press, 2014), p.33, “Epinette Bark”

⁵⁸ Skins unit of trade also called Pluis

⁵⁹ Preparing timber for construction of buildings by pièce on pièce process. **Pièces sur pièces**: The building method most commonly used at Fort William also known as post and fill. Horizontal, squared logs were pegged into mortised, vertical posts. The gaps between were then chinked with a mixture of clay, mud and straw to which sand, small stones, horsehair or dung were sometimes added (Fort William Historical Park Glossary)

Thursday 4th. – Laid the foundation of the House and squared severall pieces of Timber for the same. The Weither still very warm. –

Friday 5th. – No News from any quarter. –

Saturday 6th. – The Weither extremely Warm– No News. –

Sunday 7th. – Being holiday the Men did Nothing. –

Monday 8th. – Nothing New. –

Tuesday 9th. – The Hunters arrived– drew in several Skins Crs⁶⁰ and Treaded some fresh meat. Set a Neet⁶¹ in the River and with which and 2 Lines⁶² killed 12 Large Pikes⁶³, on which Dogs⁶⁴ feasted being much in want, the Weomen likewise makes out a lively hood with these Lines. –

Wednesday 10th. – Raine all day– the men doeing little or anything had from the Neet today 17 peices of fish and 6 from the Lines, the best of which we eat and the remender for the Dogs. –

Thursday 11th. – Raine all day. – Nothing New. –

Friday 12th. – Still Bad Weither. Raine &c all day plenty of fish from the Neet and Lines. The Hunters⁶⁵ arrived brought a Moose Deer⁶⁶ & 9 Beavers⁶⁷ and 5 pr of game, which was Treaded.

⁶⁰ Credits

⁶¹ Fishing using gill net of sinew or babiche, spruce root fibres, or twine

⁶² Fishing with a baited hook or lure on a line

⁶³ *Esox lucius*

⁶⁴ Dogs would have been useful in hauling the furs packs from Hay River Fort to Fort Vermilion and supplementary goods in the opposite direction as well as transporting meat from kill sites to the fort. Since Hay River Fort was only established in August 1806, it is most likely that dogs could have obtain from local Indians or brought overland from Fort Vermilion I during the winter season 1806-1807. On the 2 November 1802, Thomas Swain at the Hudson's Bay Company post Mansfield House close by the North West Company, Fort Liard near the mouth of the Boyer River reported "The men are obliged to carry the meat on their backs as there is no Horse in this part of the country and the Natives will not part with their Dogs." [Thomas Swain, Journal Mansfield House Peace River, Nottingham House, Athabasca Lake, Chiswick House, Slave Lake, 1802-04, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, MS Collection 26 Tyrrell (Joseph Burr), item 94, Thomas Swain 's Journal.] Dogs were used by the North West Company in the Peace River area for hauling supplies and provisions. In the late fall of 1802, in a time of crisis caused by icing in of canoes carrying new supplies for the season 1802-1803 in the Peace River District requests were made for many dogs to be sent down to the lower reaches of the Peace River in order to haul sleighs carrying goods to all the forts along the river. Dogs were also eaten when all other sources of food were not available. [in text of letter to Mr. (John) Stuart from Simon Fraser dated 2 November 1802 found in Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Northwest Company Papers 1800-1814, MS Coll 77, Box 2, Folder #6, North West Company Papers #5, pp.87-93]. James Porter makes a reference to Indians and "their Horses" in the Lac Claire area, Athabasca on 13 June 1800 [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.103] James Mckenzie makes reference to feeding dried meat to dogs at Fort Chipewyan 2nd August 1800. [James McKenzie Journal, 2 August 1800, L.R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd., 1960, p.397]. Horses were used for transportation and dogs used and eaten at Dunvegan in 1806[David W. Leonard, Editor, *Dunvegan Post Journals for 1806 and 1808: being an Account of the Activities at the Post as recorded by Alexander Roderick McLeod*. Edmonton: Peace Heritage Press, 2014, pp.19,20,28,37.]

⁶⁵ Local Indians would be chosen on the advice of chiefs and employed as hunters to provide food for the fort

⁶⁶ *Ales ales*

⁶⁷ *Castor canadensis*

Saturday 13th. – Raine part of the day, the fishery still continues good good enough to feed the Dogs and the Weomen –

Sunday 14th. – The Hunters returned on a hunting party – Gave him 5 Meas Amn⁶⁸. to be taken of his first earnings still succesful fishery 13 peices. –

Monday 15th. – Still bad Weither–Nothing New. –

Tuesday 16th. – THE Watter rose today 11 perpendicular feet which has intirely destroyed our fishery the Hunters arrived paid 3 Skins C^{rs}. and Treaded one Meat. –

Wednesday 17th. – The Watter still rising and is within 4 feet of being on a level with the Bank before the Door – of the Fort. –

Thursday 18th. – The Men finished putting on the Ridge Pole of the House Yesterday and are to bringing over the flooring of the old House &^c. the Watter still rises. –

Sunday 11th October 1807⁶⁹. – As soon as we got ashore the Young Indians that was in Company with the Gadoies delivered me the following commission from the Indians at the House , that they had come on before the Canots in purpose to serve as hunters in case of our being taken by the Ice and that the Grand Blanc and Begguer &c had given them particular orders Not on any account to return without bringing them News of the Canots , & the Indians in general are in want of the Tobacco having long since finished smoaking their pipe Steems, and if they meet us Nigh hand they were to return imediatley &^e &^c. After having mead particular inquieres with Gadeiu⁷⁰ concerning the state of affairs at the Fort and finding in every particular that things

⁶⁸ Measures Ammunition

⁶⁹ Sometime between the 18 June 1807 and 13 October, Edward Smith made a journey by canoe by way of the Hay River and the Mackenzie River system to collect at some appointed rendezvous supplies for the upcoming trade year 1807-1808 and take any furs and necessary provisions gathered between the time of his spring journey to Fort Vermillion on 30 April and the 18 June 1807. The date of departure of this summer voyage is not known but most likely would have taken place in late June and July when Great Slave Lake was usually free of much floating ice. Smith may even have attached himself to a brigade that left the Fort of the Forks (Fort Simpson) on 2 August 1807 led by John Clarke from Great Bear Lake as it passed by the mouth of the Hay River about 9 August 1807. The appointed rendezvous for receiving supplies most likely was Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. Here at Fort Chipewyan, the headquarters for the Athabasca District that covered the land of the Mackenzie River system that drained into the Arctic Ocean incoming supplies would be organized for distribution to the Peace River, Great Slave Lake and Mackenzie River. More distant rendezvous points were Portage La Loches (Methy Portage), Lac La Pluie and Fort William. Information from W. F. Wentzel's Journal of 1807 at Fort of Forks (Fort Simpson) and times of travel in this region by Alexander McKenzie and John Thompson lead to the conclusion that Edward Smith and his canoes left Fort Chipewyan about 23 September, 1807 again attached to John Clarke's brigade returning to Great Bear Lake via the mouth of the Hay River and Fort of the Forks. Clarke arrived in Fort of the Forks on 2 October 1807 and both he and Edward Smith were most likely at the mouth of the Hay River about 30th September. Smith arrived back at the Hay River Fort on 13 October following an up-stream journey with two major portages in about 14 days. This is a little longer than the estimated upstream journey by George Simpson made in 1822 [Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp,302, 311.]

⁷⁰ Gadoies(Gadeiu) and Piche were left as summer postmaster at Hat River from July to August 1807.

exceeded my most sanguine expectations, put up a little Tobacco⁷¹, and dispatched 2 of the Young Men early with orders to deliver the same the Piche as accross the Country they will get there to day and by the River we only geet there leat above the last Rapids⁷², so that we have now only an eaven current to steam from here to the House. –

Monday 12th. – By what I can learn from Gadoies his principall reason for remaining such a length of time from the Fort, being according to his calculation to day – 30 days since his departure has been intirely to Stores[Stories] spread amongst the Indians since my departure by the Beaver Indians and Irequoies⁷³, especially by the Beaver Indians who holds this news from

⁷¹ Small portions of a few inches of tobacco were given as opening signs of respect and friendship and a prelude to later formal trading.” Tobacco is a sacred plant among most aboriginal peoples, and tobacco growing pre-dates the arrival of Europeans in the New World. Different varieties were grown in different regions across what is now the United States and southern Canada. As the fur trade expanded, processed tobacco imported from European-run plantations became an important trade item and gradually supplanted Native tobacco cultivation. The NWC purchased at least five varieties of tobacco for the trade, most of it from South America or southern United States. The most popular was North West Twist which came in a rolled form - lengths of tobacco spun into "ropes" and wound onto a roll or spindle. Plug tobacco from Virginia was a compressed brick or cake, flavoured with molasses and licorice, and considered inferior to twist tobacco. Carrot tobacco, also from Virginia, consisted of whole tobacco leaves pressed into a carrot-shaped bundle. Like plug, it was of lesser quality and traded only when twist was in short supply or unavailable” source Glossary of Fur Trade Terms. Fort William Historical Park.

⁷² Possibly Grumbler Rapids. Upstream of Grumbler Rapids there would have been a regular even current and the major slowing down of travel to the fort would be caused by the increasingly meandering nature of the Hay River as one approached the entrance to the Chinchaga River and Hay Lakes. It would as indicated be faster to go overland to the fort than to continue to travel in the canoes loaded with the many packs of trade goods for the new season 1807-1808. Below Grumbler Rapids, Edward Smith and engages would have had to bypass the two large falls Louise Falls (15m, 46 ft) and Alexandra Falls (35m, 106 ft) located in the entrenched river valley 45 kilometers (30 mi) from Great Slave Lake. All rivers that flow north into Great Slave Lake or the Mackenzie River between Little Buffalo River and Trout River are marked by distinct falls or rapids at or near the edge of the limestone escarpment that runs parallel to the southern margin of Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River. Peter Pond makes reference on his map of 1787 to a great fall on the river which became known as the Mackenzie River but there are no other written references to any of these many other falls until the report by Reverend William Carpenter Bompas who journeyed down the Hay River in 1872 [Church Missionary Society, C.1./0 Appendix B, No. 189, National Archives of Canada, Microfilm A 100.] A. E. Cameron describes in detail the direction, width and flow of the Hay River from its source in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to its deltaic mouth at Great Slave Lake. North of Meander River (“Horse tracks”) the river “flows smoothly and sluggishly for a distance of 116 miles through a rather flat muskeg and brûlé country”. This supports the description of the river by Smith. that of an “even current” and affirms the natural environment at the Hay River Post in the Beaver Lands. (A.E. Cameron “Exploration in the Vicinity of Great Slave Lake,” *Geological Survey of Canada Report 1917*, Part C, Ottawa: 1918, 21C-28C in John Warkentin, *The Western Interior of Canada: A Record of Geographical Discovery 1612-1917*, 9 Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., nd.), pp.285,287.

⁷³ Iroquois, During the intense competition between trading companies, Iroquois hunters from the Montreal area were hired by both the North West Company and the XY Company. After the amalgamation, November 1804, Iroquois still continued to work as free contract agents particularly as fur hunters. In 1804-05, at least sixteen such contracts were signed between Simon Fraser and Iroquois at Fort Vermilion I. These hunters were contracted for fur only but were given special rates and prices for furs and supplies. Some of these Iroquois most likely hunted in the Hay River valley in 1807.(Porter’s Journal 23 June 1800, refers to possible Iroquois in the lower Peace River valley in 1799-1800 [Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.106]; Swain, refers to Montreal Indians or Mowhawk Indians at Mansfield House near to Boyer River on the Peace River 11 October 1802 and 30 June to 2 July 1803, Thomas Swain, Journal Mansfield House, Peace River, Nottingham House, Athabasca Lake, Chiswick House, Slave Lake, 1802-04, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, MS Collection 26 Tyrrell(Joseph Burr), item 94, Thomas Swain’s Journal; Trudy Nicks, *The Iroquois and the Fur Trade in Western Canada*, 3rd *North American Fur Trade Conference, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1978*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp.85-101. Montreal Iroquois engages in the Western Fur Trade, 1800-1821. Jan Grabowski and Nicole St-Onge, in *From Rupert’s Land to Canada*. Theodore Binnema, Gerhard J. Ens and R.C. Macleod, editors, (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press,

the Irequoies, – who say Louis Boucher⁷⁴ is there auther, that there was a New Company at Athabaska and would be in all the different Posts of Peace River and Slave Lake early in the Fall, this is from Gadoies and he says Piche and himself has been continually in expectations of having some disagreeable Neighbours⁷⁵ from day to day since my departure , how far this is true I am not judge, but true it is that the Indians belived⁷⁶ it but as yet have not stoped them from being industrious, we continued our Route early and in course of the day had the misfortune to Break one of oure Canots⁷⁷ so completely that in a minute she went to the Botome, but we lost

2001), pp. 23-58. Reference to several Canadians who died near Great Slave Lake in 1809 in Harmon's Journal, *Journal 1800-119/Daniel William Harmon* edited by W. Kaye Lamb, (Surrey, B.C.: First Touch Wood edition, 2006), p.104, entry for March 20 Monday 1809. First published as *Sixteen Years in the Indian Country*. (Toronto: MacMillan, 1957), p.120, Entry for March 20 Monday 1809, "Mr. A. N. McLeod etc. arrived with the melancholy news of the Death of Mr. Andrew McKenzie (natural Son of Sir Alexander Mackenzie) who departed this life at Fort Vermilion on the 1st Inst . We are also informed that several Canadians have starved to death in the vicinity of Great Slave Lake some of whom ate their dead companies. They came up into this Country free [i.e. as independent traders], to hunt the Beaver, and being at so great a distance from any of our Establishments, they could get no assistance before it was too late for most of them." McLeod wintered in 1809-10 at Encampment Island (near Battle River). p.109 October 10[Tuesday] Mr. J. Clarke is this Summer from McKenzie's River which place lies beyond Great Slave Lake" [Clarke went to Fort St. John in 1809 from Great Bear Lake , Clarke came north with Harmon in 1800, was trapped in ice in lower Peace River with John Finlay in October 1802 and was at Fort Vermilion in 1804-05, left Fort Vermilion with A.N. McLeod 17 May 1806, Wentzel reports his presence at Fort of Forks, Mackenzie River 2 August 1807 and 2nd October 1807 returning to Great Bear Lake, and went then to St. John in 1809 but left the north and North West Company in 1810 only to return in opposition with the HBC in 1815 at Fort Vermilion but unsuccessful, Lloyd, 2001, p.365ff, Allan Cooke and Clive Holland, *The Exploration of Northern Canada, 500 to 1920 A Chronology*, (Toronto: The Arctic Press, 1978), pp.136,137.]

⁷⁴ Louis Bouché listed as a North West Company employee in 1798 HBCA F.5/1, fo. 2 North West Company Servants Contracts.

⁷⁵ Rival traders would set up their post buildings very close to one another in order to have knowledge of each other's activities and to prevent by all means often with intimidation, robbing and violence prospective Indian customers going to a rival company. Both Piche and Edward Smith were involved in this situation when they worked for rival companies, that is, the North West Company and the New North West Company (XY Company) at Slave Fort on Little Lake (Ring Lake) in the Slave River Delta in 1802 (Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp.177-182). Piche would also have been involved with similar action at Fort Chipewyan in 1800 [L.R. Masson, 1960, pp. 396-398.]. Also, Beaver and Iroquois hunters would be knowledgeable of the intercompany rivalry close at hand at Mansfield House, Fort Liard, and the unnamed XY post at the mouth of the Boyer River in 1802-1803 (Thomas Swain Journal and letter to Mr. Stuart 2 November 1802.)

⁷⁶ Belief by the Indians in the information being transmitted about the coming of a new company in the whole of the Athabasca Region is strengthened by their past experience of the arrival of many different traders over the last twenty years. Traders have come by canoe and established posts at various location for various lengths of time and for various reasons and with various degrees of success in establishing trade and a daily livelihood. Despite the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company retreated from the Athabasca Region in 1806 after their initial arrival in the summer season 1802 and the unification of the North West Company and XY Company in November 1804 and its combined activities in the following summer season of 1805, there would have been always in the minds of the Indian hunters that the common place pattern of trade and rivalry would continue into the future. Stories or rumors of the presence of a new company at Athabasca according to Edward Smith were circulating after his departure from Hay River Fort in most likely July or August 1807 but he does not make reference to the new company being at Fort Chipewyan, Athabasca where he most likely had gone to collect new supplies for the year 1807-1808. He most likely would have received information pertinent to the coming of a rival company before leaving Fort Chipewyan to Hay River Fort in September 1807.

⁷⁷ Probably there were at least three canoes. There were 14 men under Smith's command in April/May 1807, of these Piche and Gadoies remained at the post during the summer leaving 12 available to man canoes returning from Fort Chipewyan loaded with new supplies. As a result of a possible successful initial year in 1806-1807 more canoes than the single one of the summer of 1806 may have been brought in more trade goods along with more man power. Journal entries for 19 and 21 October indicate that the men began to build their houses and imply the

nothing and the only damage was the loss of 3 heures and weeting of 4 Bales⁷⁸ and a Bag of Salt⁷⁹ with Piche's flower⁸⁰ the greatest part of which was lost intirely. Very Cold with Raine, here Meet 2 Young Men from the House today, who say the Tobacco Carryers got there early yesterday. –

Tuesday 13th. Oct^r. – Snow and very cold so that I abadoned the Canote and took to my heels, at 9 .A.M. arrived at the Fort and at the same time the House was full of Indians, but having nothing to give them they did not trouble us long time, the Canots only arrived at 4, when some Rum was prepared⁸¹ and given to the Indians, they drank all night and pretty quiet. The Montagniers⁸² this Summer it seems has been determined to weep of an old blemish to the

building of new houses for increased man power rather the improvement of accommodation built the previous fall. “Canot du Nord/North Canoe: North canoes were manufactured at Fort William, St. Joseph's Island, Rainy Lake, and sometimes at inland posts. They were 24-27 feet long, carried 20-29 packs, plus 600 lbs. (272 kg) of provisions, 200 lbs. (90 kg) of baggage, 100 lbs. (45 kg) of agret [, plus a crew of five or six men; thus, a total cargo of up to 4500 lbs. (2040 kg). These canoes carried furs from the interior of the continent to Fort William, and trade goods on the return journey. The smaller North canoe was better suited to the western routes where more portaging was required, often on trails less well-maintained than the Montreal - Fort William route. The NWC used approximately one hundred and eighty north canoes to transport supplies and trade goods to the more than eighty wintering posts. This canoe was often light enough to be carried by two men.” “Agret: A collection of materials used by voyageurs en route to make repairs to the canoe and to furnish their camp. According to Alexander Mackenzie, the standard agret consisted of: “two oil-cloths to cover the goods, a sail, etc., an axe, a towing-line, a kettle, and a sponge to bail out the water, with a quantity of gum, bark, and wattape to repair this vessel. Like a modern tool chest or spare tire in the trunk of a car, the agret was intended to keep the canoe in service, no matter what happened along the route.” (Fort William Historical Park Glossary)

⁷⁸ Bales: Generally, the term “bale” referred to the 90 pound (40 kg) packs of trade goods or furs that were transported by voyageurs. (Fort William Historical Park Glossary)

⁷⁹ Salt traditionally began to be collected from the saline deposits on the Salt River below the Slave River Rapids. See Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp. 98, 176, 212.

⁸⁰ Flour. Piche's or François La Misette's contract for 21st January 1799 written in French and signed with his mark and the names of James McDougall and A. Pond [Augustine Pond] indicate that Piche would receive 10 livres of flour, 4 livres of sugar, 2 three point blankets, 2 shirts, 2 handkerchiefs, 5 carrots of tobacco, 2 pairs of leggings [mitasses or metafses or Aboriginal gaiters lower leg coverings made of two pieces of animal hide sewn together and worn on the lower leg. For voyageurs, mitasses took the place of stockings.] 4 large knives, 2 breechclouts [brayettes] and 500 livres for his work as interpreter. HBCA F5/1, fo.8. Contracts for 1812 to 1818 were for 1000 livres. [HBCA F4/32, fo. 493 in North West Company Ledger 1811-1821.]

⁸¹ Alcoholic liquor was brought in kegs each equivalent weight to a standard piece of 90 pounds and watered down to an appropriate level and distributed as a “dram”. “Fiery Double distilled Rum” traded by the NWC was obtained from the slave-labour based sugar plantations in the southern United States and the West Indies. By the 1770s, it had largely displaced the brandy of the French trade. The 9-gallon keg size was standard since it weighed 90 pounds, the weight of any pack carried by voyageurs. Despite the fact it was called “rum”, the alcohol of the trade was actually high wine diluted with water. For Natives unfamiliar with this beverage, 4 or 5 quarts of high wine were mixed with nine gallons of water. For more experienced Natives, 6 to 9 quarts of high wine in nine gallons of water were necessary. As NWC partner Alexander Henry the younger mentions: –

“We do not mix our liquor so strong as we do for tribes who are more accustomed to use it. To make a 9 gallon keg of liquor we generally put in four or five quarts of high wine and fill it up with water. For the Crees and Assiniboines, we put in 6 quarts of high wine and for the Ojibwa, 8 or 9 quarts.” <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/nwc/history/04.htm>

⁸² The Chipewyan were also called Montagneur, Montagnais and sometimes Northern Indians, Caribou Eaters. Closely related to the Chipewyan in language and culture and traditionally occupying the land north and northeast of Great Slave Lake were the Redknives or Yellowknives. They too at times hunted and trapped in the Hay River valley but are not mentioned in this journal. The Dene Tha and Slavey who also traditionally occupied the Hay River valley are also not mentioned in this journal. (Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp. 5, 89, 167, 168, and 299.)

Chipewians, it was generally said that they were so exceedingly fond of fat⁸³ that they never could bring any to the different Posts of Slave Lake and Athabaska, however it is plainly proved that when the Chipewians do not make both Skins and Provisions it is the fault of the Country they are in, and not owing entirely to their own indolence we having at present in the Store 32 Packs⁸⁴ & 70 Pieces of Provisions, 33 of which is Grease. –

Gave the Men a Dram and each of the Indians a Dram and from 6 to 3 Fm⁸⁵ Tobacco each. –

Wednesday 14th. – The Indians finished their drinking Match and we are preparing to Equip them for their Winter hunt, the Men Cut a Flag Staff and are Arranging the same. –

Thursday 15th. – I began early to give out Crs to the Indians, they are usually troublesome but it is hoped that they will do well at least if there is any dependence in what they say they must certainly will do well. At 3 P.M. 4 young Beaver Indians from P. River made their appearance in the opposite Shore the Chipewians Traversed them⁸⁶, after making inquiries with them concerning their Voyage to this place I found them to be deserters and have Treated them as such. –

As the men set up the Flag Staff with a great number of superfluous Ceremonies we hoisted the Flag and having prepared Piche in this purpose he made them long Harangue concerning their past and present behaviour, &c. &c. much apropo for the times and purpose and finishing by telling them that we had fired on the Flag Staff with design that Fort should not be abandoned and those that intended to remain with us should do as much, but to take care if they did not intend to remain at this place and return back in the Spring with their Hunts that they would certainly be pitiful. None of the Chief refused and each of them fired and

⁸³ (Lloyd Keith, 2001, p. 187, in footnote 15 indicates 'Among the Beaver of the Peace River, hare was the food of last resort. Because of the low body fat, a common adage asserted that "one can starve to death on rabbits." Grease was used in the making of pemmican. "Depouilles referred to the back fat on the ribs between flesh and skin. Thompson says "The fat of the Bison is of two qualities, called hard and soft; the former is from the inside of the animal, which when melted is called hard fat (properly grease), the latter is made from the large flakes of fat that lie on each side of the back bone, covering the ribs, and which is readily separated, and when carefully melted resembles Butter in softness and sweetness." *David Thompson's Narrative*, 434.' In Marion O'Neil, *The Peace River Journal 1799-1800*, *Washington Historical Quarterly*, October 1928, pp.250-270.

⁸⁴ The number of furs traded in the summer of 1807 indicate the wealth of the area indicated by Grand Blanc in 1800 and predicted by Alexander McKenzie in August 1806 and the importance of the summer hunt for both furs and provisions. During the month of May, six packs were traded and by 13 October, 32 packs had been traded. These 32 packs were equivalent to the total predicted for the year 1805-1806 by McKenzie, so it was possible that the total for 1807-1808 amounted to over 60 packs. In the years 1817-1818 and 1818-1819, 54 packs and 50 packs respectively were traded (HBCA F.3/2/fo.177). In 1819, William McIntosh, the trader at Fort Vermilion with over thirteen years' service in the area, considered the Hay River post to be a "valuable establishment ... a place which yields two thousand odd Beaver ... with a handsome proportion of other fur." (HBCA F.3/2/ fo. 212.) The production of Hay River compares favorably with other locations. The total production in the Mackenzie Valley from 1809 to 1815 declined from 170 to 64 packs (NAC, MG19, A20, Williard Ferdinand Wentzel, *Account of the Mackenzie River with Chart 1821*. This region included not only the Mackenzie River valley but also the Liard River valley and Great Bear Lake region.

⁸⁵ Fm abbreviation for fathom, length of about 6 feet. Tobacco was made ready for transportation and sale by being twisted into relatively thin long rope lengths that were wound onto a wooden spindle and packed into standard pieces. 3 to 6 fathoms seem a very large quantity but would have to last the owner from the time of the fall receipt of credit to his return to the spring time of trading after a winter of hunting and trapping.

⁸⁶ This indicates that the Chipewyan had canoes and the Hay River Fort was on the west bank of the Hay River.

saying if they lived there Fort should not be abandoned . &c. &c. - not intertaining enough to be laid down here. - - - - -

Friday 16th Oct. – Continued to give C^{rs} to the Indians when we finished with 45⁸⁷ . Still fine Weither, the Young Beaver Indians wanted to tread 2 Beaver Skins but was refused, asked them if they took C^{rs} at Ft. Vermilion to come to tread them to which they said nothing but appeared to be much confused when I finished by telling that I would behave as a theive to Tread what did not belong to me. –

Saturday 17th. – The day has passed doing nothing. the Devill is amongst the Indians by some fresh news from Peace River , famouse – Chief La Bouch⁸⁸ from Fort Vermilion is on his way to this place & the Chipewans will not Sturr till they see him, that is far from being good news and it is plane no men being with those Indians that they have left Ft. Vermilion to come this length without Mr. McIntoshes⁸⁹ orders. The Grand Blanc & Three Thumbs has been in an uproar all day and the impudence to tell us they would not go to Beaver but seet out immediately for their Lands. Lucky for us that far the greatest part of the Chepewans was on oure sides, and we had immediately stoped giving C^{rs} on this News gave them time to think what they were about and seeing those Rascals going to such lengths , we told to go to their Lands, but as they intended to seet out as Thives to return first what they got on C^{rs}–since my arrivall & then pay up all old Balances, as soon as those scores clear they might go and never

⁸⁷ These 45 persons who were given credit most likely were Chipewyan hunters who had been waiting the arrival of the fall canoes. There is earlier reference to Beaver and Iroquois but not until the 20 October did the main body of Beaver arrive with their chief La Bouche. After the damage of the Hay River post in 1818, the number of Chipewyan hunters and family members occupying the upper Hay River decreased. Hunters traded at Fort Vermilion, Slave Fort/Fort Resolution and Fort Chipewyan. The Census of Chipewyans on the Hay River, Outfit 1826-27 indicates the presence of Grand Blanc and fifteen other men and a total of 62 persons. (HBCA. B.224/a/2, Fort Vermilion Report, 1827, at end of daily journal [p.53], in Ferguson, 2016, p. 8.)

⁸⁸ La Bouch, Le Bouche: - The name and activities of a Dunneza or Beaver Indian called La Bonne Bouche is found in the Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Vermilion Journals from circa 1825 to 1844. In 1825, he was a middle-aged man. He acted as a fort hunter and operated in the Caribou River area and towards the Caribou Mountains. He may have been involved in transporting provisions from the Hudson's Bay Company outpost on the Hay River that replaced the Hay River North West Company post in the 1820s at the end of the "Horse Tracks." He may have met the Methodist missionary, Revd. James Evans in the winter 1841-41 when he traveled between Lesser Slave Lake to Fort Chipewyan by way of the Peace River and Fort Vermilion. Ferguson, 1999, pp.4,5.

⁸⁹ William McKintosh was in charge of Fort Vermilion for many years, Most likely between 1805 to 1821. He would have been responsible for ensuring that fur packs brought from Hay River Fort in the spring would be quickly transported to southern Canada. He would also be concerned that Beaver Indians who had received credit at Fort Vermilion would remain loyal to him and not trade their furs and provisions at Hay River Fort. Hay River Fort would become considered part of the Mackenzie River District and Fort Vermilion part of the Peace River District, yet with respect to efficient operation the Hay River Fort needed the assistance of Fort Vermilion. McIntosh was also instrumental in trying to rebuild Hay River Fort after its damage by gunpowder explosion in 1818[HBCA F3/2 fos. 164,165, 212.] William McIntosh/ MacIntosh entered the North West Company as a clerk in 1802 and may have wintered at Fort Vermillion in the year 1805-16. Letters written by McIntosh Fort Vermilion were delivered to Fort Dunvegan 5 July 1806 (David W. Leonard, 2014, p.37.). McIntosh replaced John Clarke as trader in charge of Fort Vermilion when Clarke left Fort Vermilion with A.N. McLeod on 17 May 1806. He was actively involved in the opposition of the attempts by the Hudson's Bay Company under the leadership of John Clarke now employed by the Hudson's Bay Company in establishing posts on the Peace River from 1815 and years following.(Dictionary of Canadian Biography : Mackintosh, William)

more return. Never was there such a chanable seet in the World as those Chipeweans there is no more dependence on what they say than on a Dog that Barks. –

Sunday 18th. – As I was imployed last Night leat planning with Piche what was the Best way to geet Back oure property in Case of those Indians keeping there Words, the Grand Blanc made his aperance when we took no more Notice of him than if he had not been present, and after a long silence he at last spoke, and excussing himself for his behaviore before the Beggure and part of his relations a reconciliation then took place, when Piche's behavoure on this occasion was withoute disglike that of a true & faithful Servant, this bissiness ended in a drinking Match when we promised Leather⁹⁰ in abundance for Winter , which Article we was much in want of. –

Monday 19th. – The Men began to Bouild there Houses , fine weather, the Indians redy to start but waiting for the arrival of the Bever Indians.

Tuesday 20th. – Oct^r. – At 11. P.M. 15 Beaver Indians from Peace River mead there aperance⁹¹. Le Bouche Comander in Chief on their arrival – gave them ea a piece of Tobacco and a Dram . being affaird to use them ill before the Chipeweans as they might have followed our example and come to Blowes with them, but a peaceable reconciliation between the two Nations is what I want to have and not a Battle. –

A young Beaver Indian brought me a Letter from M^r. M^cIntosh by which he mead me to understand that the Bearer was to Hunt at half Wages during the Winter but no advice concerning Le Bouche who has come this length without his orders or knowledge. –

At Night Le Bouche wanted Rum but was refused, firstly as he wanted Rum for nothing, Secondly as we wanted the Chipeweans to leave the House Tomorrow, and Lastly as the risk is too great to give Rum to Indians who cannot agree Sober, the Beaver Indians did not againe taking as I suppose the refusal for an affront. –

Watched the motions of the Camp till very Leat. The Hunter Arrived and Brought part of a Bull⁹² which is not far of. –

Wednesday 21st. – The whole Fort in an uproar The Indians guarding ea other some for Warr others for Peace. –

⁹⁰ Most likely to read as “we [were] promised Leather in abundance for Winter, which Article we was much in want of.” Tanned hides of moose, caribou, deer and bison would provide the leather essential for moccasins (foot wear) and other uses. Moccasins were required in large numbers for foot wear of summer voyageurs especially while engaged in the laborious task of tracking canoes up current in fast waters. In 1869, the Hay River post then operated by the Hudson's Bay Company and located at the mouth of the river provided 150 pairs of moccasins to be used by the trip men. (HBCA B.200/b/36/fo.242.) This indicates that moose hides and associated meat was available to some degree at that time.

⁹¹ The Beaver Indians were generally associated with the Peace River valley and trade with the various Fort Vermilion posts but they were also reported by George Keith 6th June 1806 to have hunted in the Liard River Valley, south of Netla Fort gaining access through the Hay River Valley and the Black River. George Keith the following year reports of Yellowknife Indians hunting in the Liard River Valley (Lloyd Keith 2001, p. 284, April 13th 1807), This indicates that the Indians traditionally associated with the forest-tundra ecotone north of Great Slave Lake were now much more widely ranging in their activities and Hay River post could form an integral location in this expansion.

⁹² Bull -male wood bison *Bison bison athabasca*.

Thursday 22nd. – It would appear that Fortune this Year intends to play Me one here jade Tricks what a situation has mine been for this two days past, on seeing the whole dependence of the returns of Fort Vermilion AND Hay River was intirely depending on the way the two Nations separated if friends no harm if enimys all would have been lost. –

The occasion of all this difference is intirely owing to a Women formerly belonging to Begguer and now come here with the Dans Mall Fait⁹³ one of Le Bouches Band. The Begguer wants the Beaver Indians to return here, but the Beaver will not on this refusal the Chepewians wished to lay claim to here by dint of Arms, but this we put a stope too only for the moment, and try and put a stope to this bissiness for ever sent for the Dans Mall Fait and offered him a Woman in place of his owen that exchange he was to make would be with me and not with the Chepewians to this he immediately agreed and an end was put to all hostilities. The men have been employed building houses⁹⁴ for themselves but advance slowly , and such have been the situation of affairs today that the men did not go for meat⁹⁵. –

⁹³ Dans Mall Fait was a Dunneza or Beaver chief whose hunting territory extended into the upper Hay River valley from the Peace River area. In later Hudson's Bay Journals 1825-1847, he is known as Dents Malfaits [Bad Teeth], Teltonkie and Makasis (Little Fox) Theresa A. Ferguson, Land Agreement of 1842 at Little Red River, *Alberta History*, Winter 1999, Volume 47 Number 1, pp. 2-7. Theresa A. Ferguson, Chipewyan Hunting Groups on the Hay River, 1800-1845, *Alberta History*, Winter 2016, pp. 2-8.

⁹⁴ Building shelter for the newly arrived personal was of priority late in the season and often at a time and location when caught in the ice before the desired destination. This process had to be done quickly before the onset of winter conditions. John Thompsons Journal at Rocky Mountain House located north of the Fort of the Forks in 1800 offers details of the rapidity of construction of a store house ("24 by 20 feet") and living quarters ("32 feet long, 17 wide, & 7 1/2 High") for himself, 8 men, 4 women and 2 children using 4 large axes between 14 October and 28 October (" consequently the Building Work is already finished") (Lloyd Keith, 2001, pp. 136-138.) Improvement and newer buildings could be constructed at a later time as was the case of Hay River.

⁹⁵ The remainder of the bison killed on the 20 October could not be brought to the post by the men because of because of the possibility of danger resulting from the clash between the Beaver and Chipewyan over marital concerns.

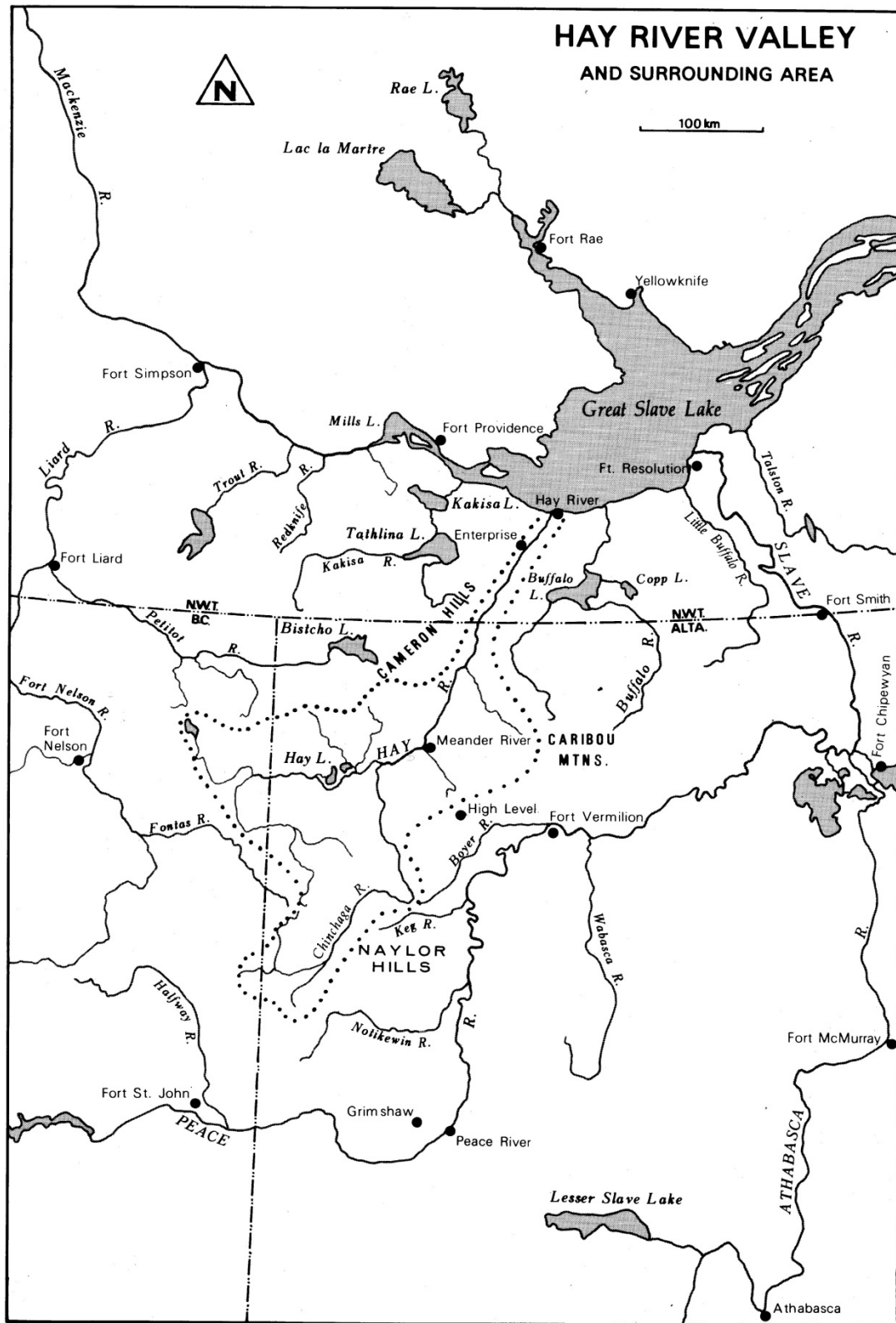
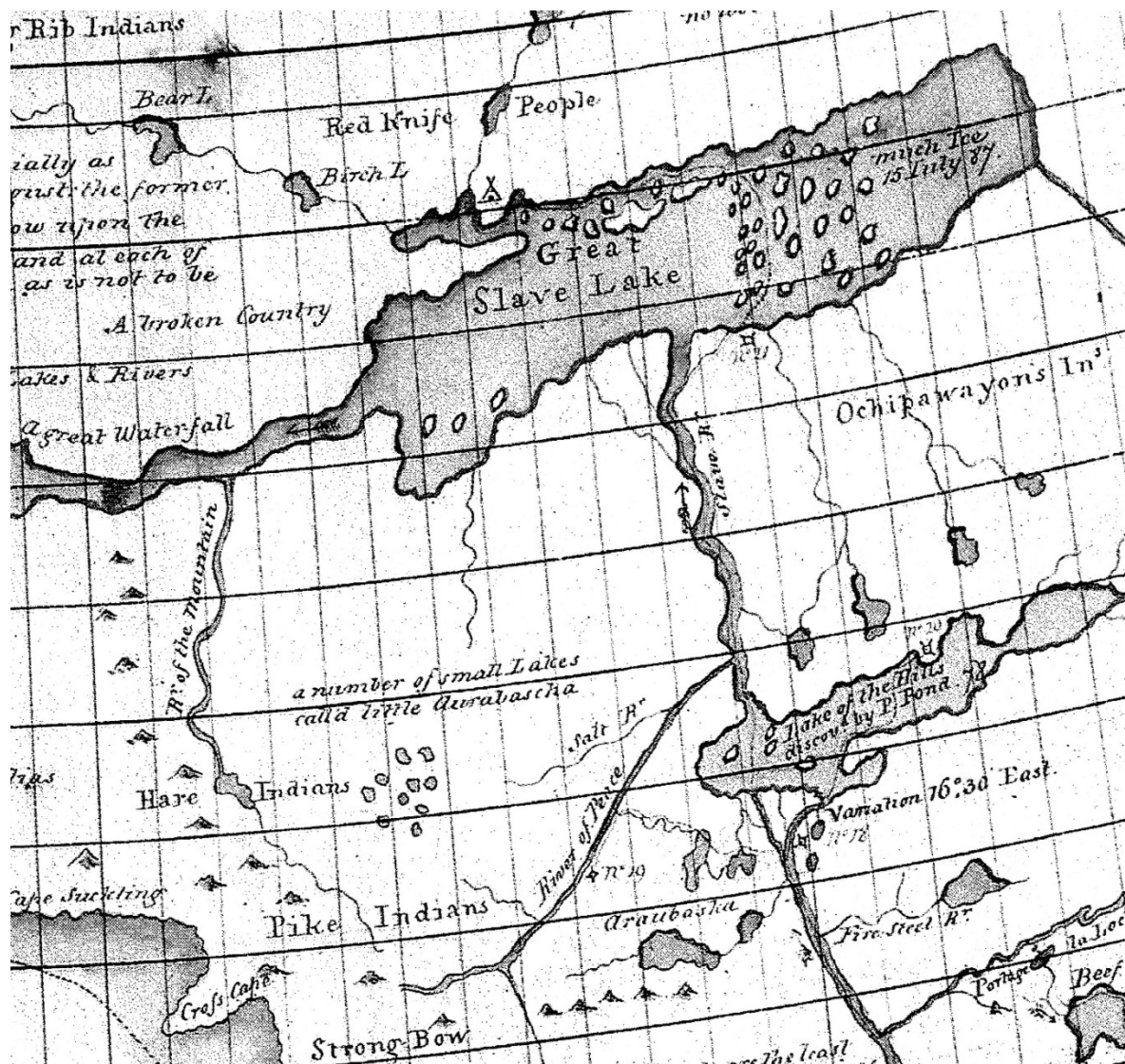


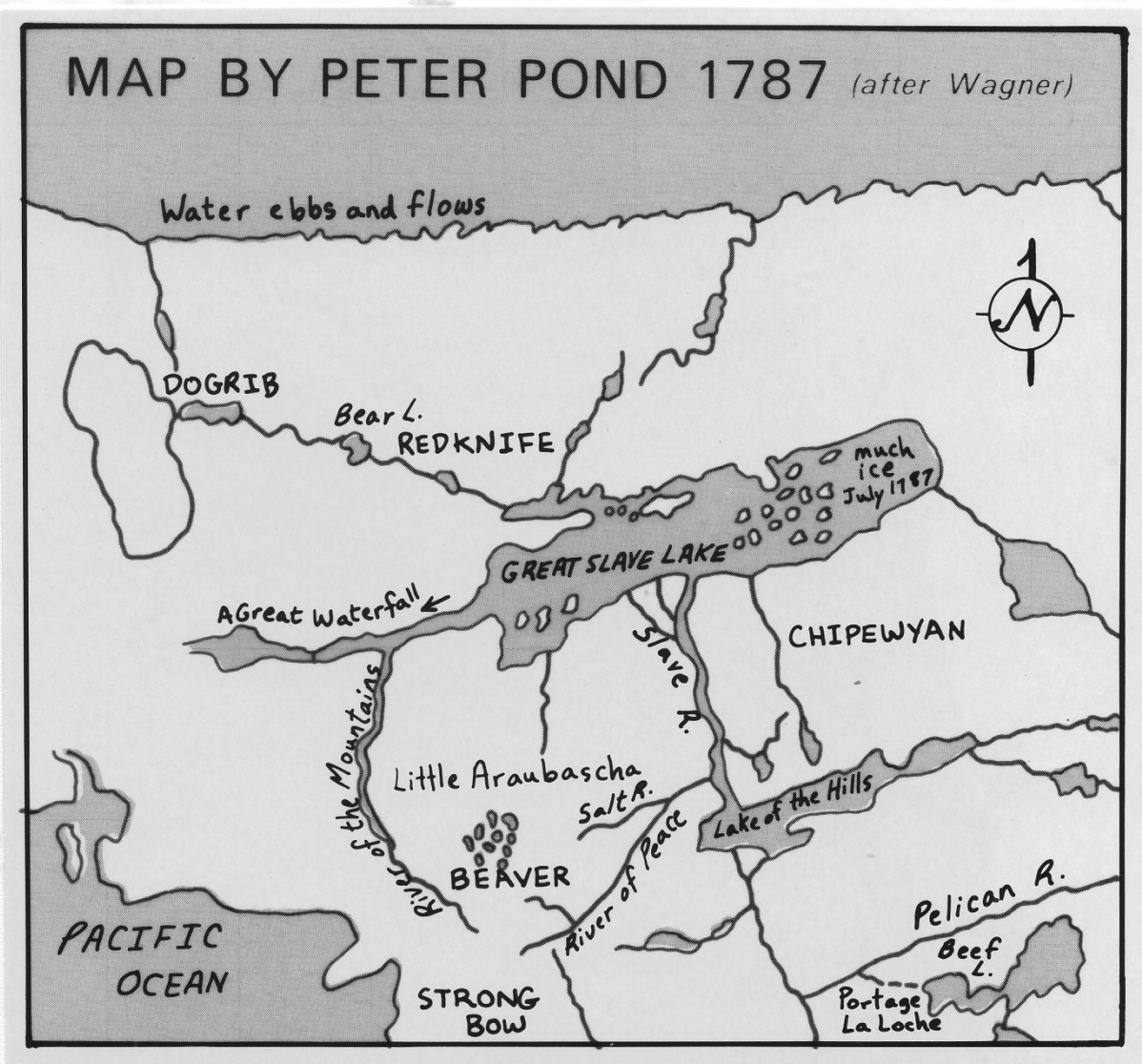
Figure 1

Map One (Harrison 1984)

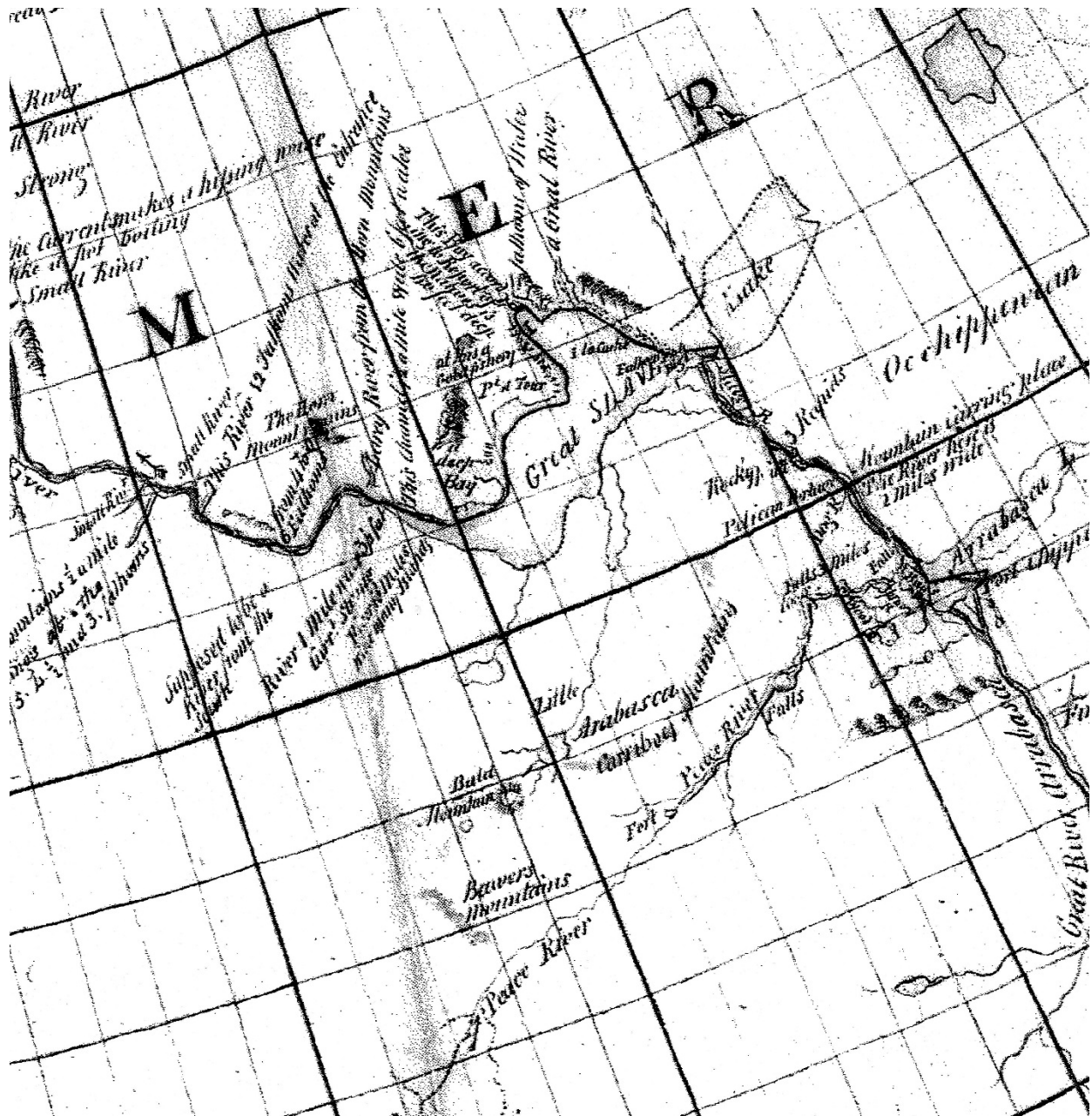


MAP TWO

HAY RIVER AREA Portion of "[Copy of a map of western Canada and the North Pacific Ocean thought to have been prepared by Peter Pond for the presentation by Alexander Mackenzie to the Empress of Russia] Copied from the original signed P. Pond Araubaska 6th December 1787 (marginal notation) Anon. (Peter Pond), 1787 PRO: CO North and South 49" in Derek Hayes, *First Crossing* . Douglas & McIntyre Ltd.: Vancouver, 2001, pp.49, 64 [Wagner rendition of the same area substitutes BEAVER for Pike Indians , Henry R. Wagner, *Peter Pond Fur Trader and Explorer*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Library, 1955, the present day Zama- Hay Lake area is marked as little Aurabascha (Alexander Mackenzie calls the same area Little Arabasca, and F.W. Wentzel in 1822 uses Little Athabascow (Lloyd Keith, 2001, p.75),the depiction of the southern shore of the west end of Great Slave Lake may be only the detail of the Little Buffalo River and Ile de mort and the Burnt Islands area immediately west of the Slave River Delta rather than the whole length of the south west shore.]



MAP THREE (Harrison 1984)



MAP FOUR

HAY RIVER AREA portion of "Chart called Mackenzie's Map, illustrative of his tract from Athabasca Lake down to the North Sea" Anno. (Alexander Mackenzie), c1789 PRO:CO 700 Americas North and South 54, in Derek Hayes, *First Crossing*. Douglas & McIntyre Ltd.: Vancouver, 2001, p.131. [Some details of the south shore of Great Slave Lake are shown although Mackenzie's tract followed the north side of the lake. John Cornelius Vandriel surveyed the lower course of the Peace River in the summer 1789 upstream to (Boyer) Fort and may have obtain information of the upper Hay River valley in the year 1789-1790]



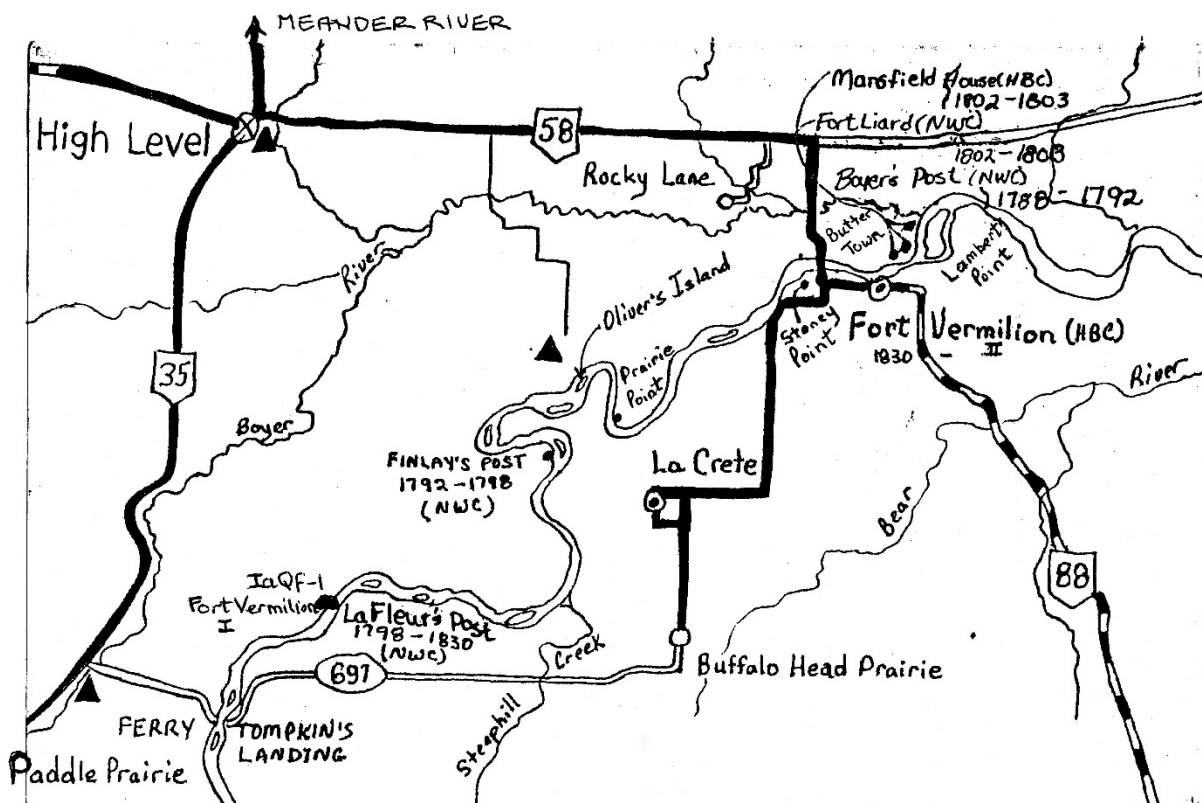
MAP FIVE

HAY RIVER AREA Portion of Arrowsmith Map circa 1794, in Derek Hayes 2001,p.135 [location of the Hay River and its deltaic mouth are more accurately shown but the rivers related to Little Arbusca l. are not shown and the distinctive cuesta of Bald Mountain has been marked as a northern extension of the Beaver Mt.].



MAP SIX

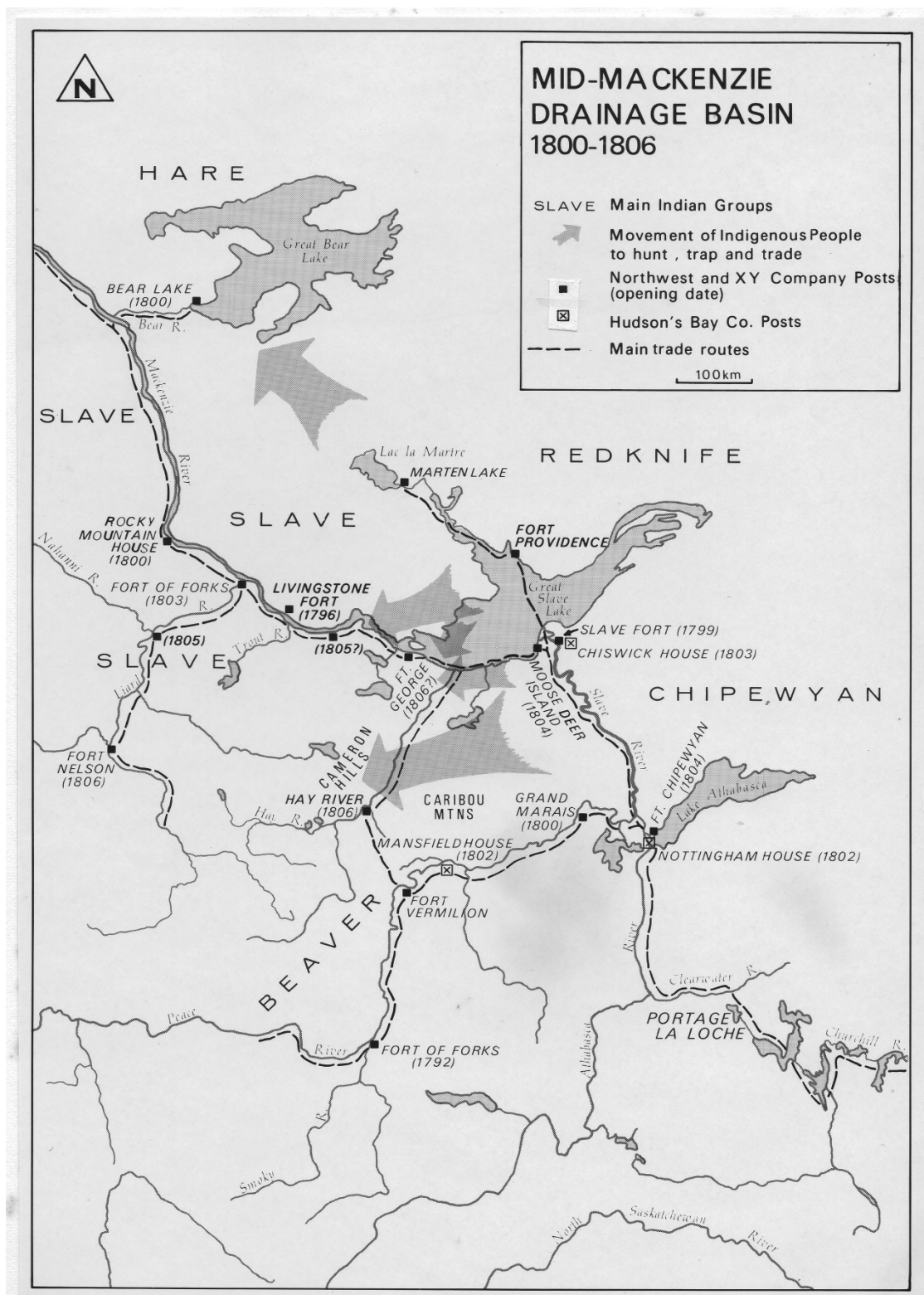
HAY RIVER AREA A Portion of "A Map of America between Latitudes 40° & 70° North and Longitudes 40° & 180° West Exhibiting Mackenzie's Track From Montreal to Fort Chipewyan & from thence to the North Sea in 1789, & to the North Pacific Ocean in 1793. Anon. (Aaron Arrowsmith [?]/David Thompson/Alexander Mackenzie, c1800, PRO:CO 700 Canada 59A" in Derek Hayes 2001, p.250 [the south shore of the Great Slave Lake is shown more accurately with the inclusion of the Buffalo River because by 1800 the canoe route to the Mackenzie River followed the south shore of the lake. However, the earlier information with regard to the upper reaches of the Hay River and areas west of the Peace River Forts is no longer shown.]



MAP SEVEN

FORT VERMILION PEACE RIVER 1786-1830

After Beverly Batt Shawna Ward Marilee Toews , Fort Vermilion and District Centennial Association July 1988



MAP EIGHT (Harrison 1984)

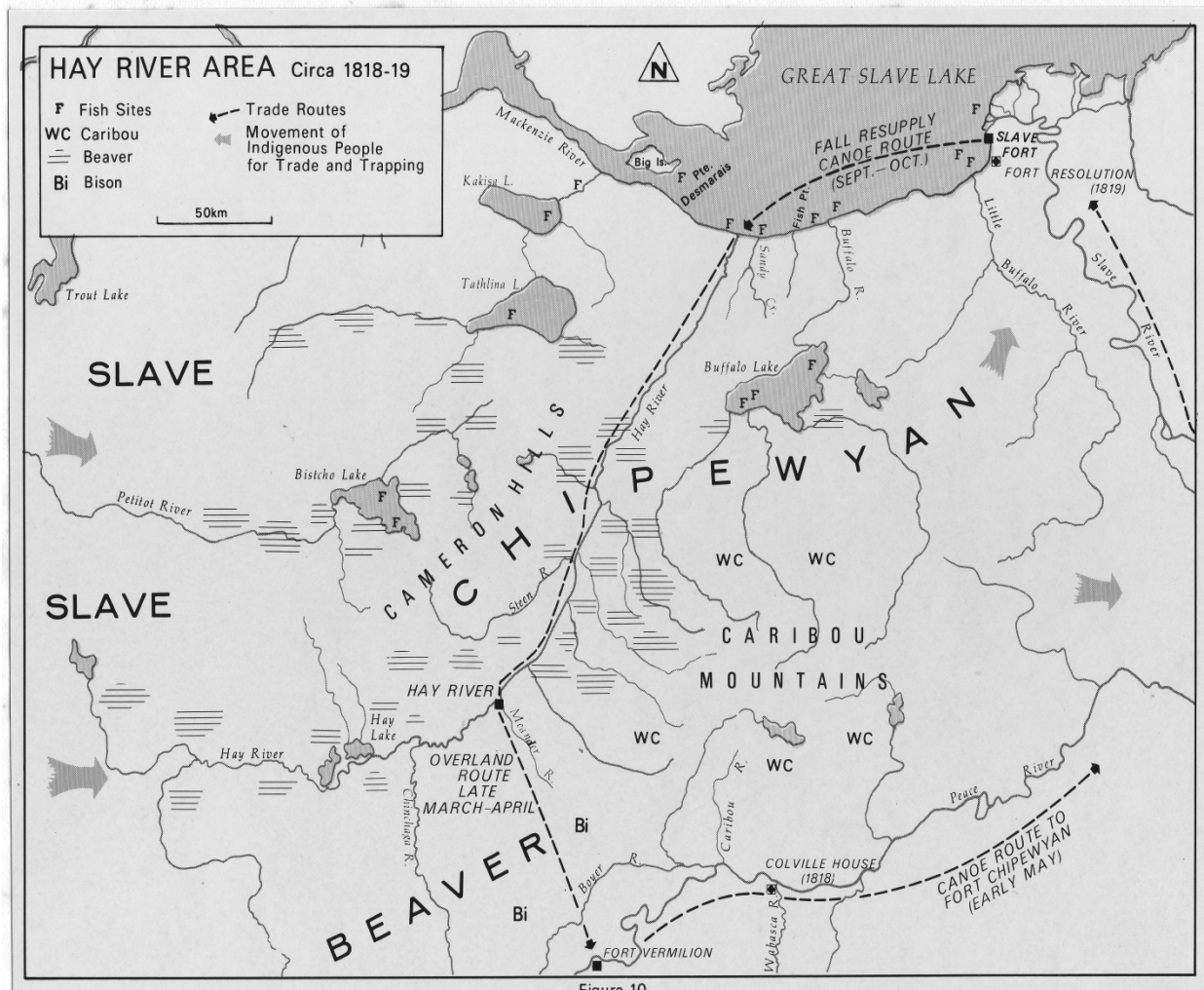


Figure 10

MAP NINE (Harrison 1984)