WHEN THE MOUNTIES CAME.

Mounted Police and

Cree Relations on

Two Saskatchewan Reserves.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the history of Mounted Police and Cree relations on two Saskatchewan Reserves: Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation in the north-east of the province, and Poundmaker Cree Nation in the central south-western portion of Saskatchewan.

Sources include oral interviews of elders from each reserve as well as a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police records.

One of the main goals of this thesis is to present a Cree perspective on contact and interaction with the Mounted Police. Although police policies were supposedly the same towards all Indians, specific elements of the Mounted Police dealings were altered according to a variety of external influences. For example, different environmental features from one region to the other prohibited the adoption of agriculture in the north. Diverse patterns of Euro-Canadian settlement, concentrated in the north but widespread in the south, also influenced relations. In addition, differences in the two Cree groups forced the Mounted Police to realize that not all Indians were the same.

This thesis supplies a brief history of the two Cree groups to provide insight on the existing methods of Cree law enforcement long-established prior to the arrival of the Mounted Police, and the complexities encountered in adapting to the laws of the Canadian government. Consideration is given to the difficulties in creating a law enforcement group to police the newly acquired North West

Territories, as well as the initial phases of Cree and police contact for each region

Each region experienced its own history, which contributed to the relationship between the Cree and the Mounted Police. For example, in the Battleford region the 1885 Rebellion played a key role in denigrating the image of the Poundmaker Cree, whereas the Peter Ballantyne Cree experienced no such event which created such a negative image. Poverty, starvation, and disease among both Cree groups were unfortunate elements which resulted from police enforcement of certain detrimental government policies. All the same, the Cree perceived the police as "protectors", yet were fully aware that they were also forced to carry out the orders of the Canadian government. It is this delicate balance between duty and humanity that had the greatest impact on relations between the Cree and the Mounted Police in Saskatchewan.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis will examine a history of law enforcement among the Cree in Saskatchewan. Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation in north-eastern Saskatchewan will be compared with the Poundmaker Cree Nation in south-western Saskatchewan. A definition of Woodland versus Plains Cree will be provided, including a brief social, political, and economic outline of these two cultures. A condensed history of the formation of the Mounted Police will also be provided. The time period of approximately 1860 to 1900 will be examined when considering the Poundmaker Cree Nation, whereas 1890 to 1940 will be surveyed for the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. These dates were chosen as they encompass the introductory years of Mounted Police activity and development in each region. Sources used in this thesis include not only written historical accounts from the Department of Indian Affairs, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Records, and Sessional papers, but also oral interviews with elders from each of the respective reserves. A historiographical background of events discussed will be provided through literary reviews of previous works on the Mounted Police and the Cree. These historical writings will be compared with information found from other sources.

Oral accounts used in this thesis will help to consider a perspective of the Cree previously ignored by the majority of historical accounts. By addressing the history of the Cree people from their vantage point, this thesis supplies and assesses views from two culturally alien societies, striving to achieve a neutral account of events.

Oral interviews of elders from each reserve in question were conducted to acquire Cree accounts of the arrival of the Mounted Police:

> In the Aboriginal tradition the purpose of repeating oral accounts from the past is broader than the role of written history in western societies.
>
> Oral accounts of the past include a good deal of subjective experience. They are not simply a detached recounting of factual events but, rather, are "facts enmeshed in the stories of a lifetime". They are also likely to be rooted in particular locations, making reference to particular families and communities. This contributes to a sense that there are many histories, each characterized in part by how a people see themselves, how they define their identity in relation to their environment, and how they express their uniqueness as a people.[1]

Oral accounts help to provide a perspective of the Aboriginal society that is of great assistance when considering the impact of the Mounted Police and law enforcement among the Cree. Written accounts of events from a Cree stand-point are scarce, creating a necessity to record and investigate the traditional oral histories provided by Cree elders -- a history that is slowly becoming lost with time as elders pass away.

This thesis begins with a background of the Plains Cree prior to the Dominion government's acquisition of the North West Territories, shifting to the difficulty of creating a sufficient yet economically and legally efficient police force for the region. Adaptations of Cree culture in response to increased European settlement, the establishment of treaties and reserves, and the assimilation policies of the Canadian government will be analyzed in combination with issues of law enforcement. A consideration of the emergence of Chief Poundmaker as a key figure among the Plains Cree in the Battleford Region, the growth of Battleford, the decline of the buffalo hunt and the events surrounding the 1885 Rebellion will be outlined to determine the effectiveness of the Mounted Police. The "Siege of Battleford" and the "Battle of Cut Knife Hill" will be

investigated through both historiographical review and government documentation. The after-effects of the Rebellion such as changes in attitude towards the Cree and resulting law enforcement adjustments involving Aboriginals both on and off the Poundmaker Reserve will be assessed. Accounts from Poundmaker Cree Nation elders, Art Kasokeo, Wallace Semaganis, and Edwin Tootoosis, will conclude this section, providing insight into Cree perspectives of the above events.

Leading into the beginning of a discussion on the Peter Ballantyne Reserve, the focus will shift towards the history of the gradual movement and influence of the Mounted Police in northern Saskatchewan. The involvement of the Canadian government in these regions will also be addressed in relation to the Woodlands Cree. In this portion of the thesis, an examination of the Cree prior to Mounted Police contact will be explored, including a brief history of the Prince Albert Division and its gradual northward expansion. This will provide the background for the development of patrols of the region resulting in detachments at Cumberland House, The Pas, Beaver Lake, Pelican Narrows, and Sandy Bay, all within Peter Ballantyne Cree territory. At this point, the thesis will rely heavily upon interviews of Peter Ballantyne Cree elders, Roderick McDermott and his wife Marie, Ely Highway, and Ely Custer. Documentation regarding this area from Mounted Police records proved to be scarce, yet oral Cree accounts reveal a rich history of Cree and police interaction.

In the conclusion, similarities and differences in Mounted Police and Cree interaction from one region of Saskatchewan to the other will be assessed. Determining why certain variations occurred helps to reveal how particular characteristics of the relationship remained universal.

NOTES

1 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Volume 1 Looking Forward, Looking Back. (Ottawa: RCAP 1996) p. 33.

CHAPTER ONE

> Even under ideal conditions some conflict between settlers and the native population was inevitable.[1]

A brief history of the Plains Cree must be taken into consideration to set the stage for the arrival of the Mounted Police into the North West Territories. Initially, most Plains Cree had their roots in the wooded northern regions of present-day Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Western expansion of European economy vis-à-vis the fur trade promoted a south-westerly movement of the Cree population out onto the prairies. Small bands had traditionally moved out onto the plains to hunt buffalo on occasion; however, the introduction of the horse and firearms into Cree culture strengthened their ability to hunt these herds with greater efficiency year round. Alliances with other tribes such as the Assiniboine and Ojibwa who relied heavily on the prairies for subsistence helped the Plains Cree compete with the Blackfoot and Sarcee whose traditional hunting grounds were threatened by the influx of the Cree:

> They [the Cree] spread over Western Alberta to the Peace river, raided through the country of the Blackfoot to the Rocky Mountains, and southward to the posts of the fur traders of the Missouri River. Smallpox decimated them in the 18th century, as it did many other tribes in the United States and Canada, and between 1835-58 disease and wars reduced their number from about 4,000 to barely 1,000.[2]

It is suggested that Assiniboine and Ojibwa mingling with the Cree also led to the adoption of ceremonies such as the Sun Dance and an annual prayer and smoke offering ceremony to the Great Spirit. Cree dancing and military societies also

developed in close similarity to those of the older plains cultures. However, they were developed to suit the traditions of the Cree, adding their own distinctiveness.

Customarily the Cree had their own system of law enforcement that often involved the decisions of elders and leading band members, as well as those involved in the crime. Forms of punishment dealt out to law-breakers usually reflected the severity of the crime. Criminals would have to make reparations to the injured parties as decided upon by the council and elders within the tribe. Ostracization, for example, was one form of punishment that could potentially result in the death of the offender.[3] The saying "an eye for an eye" could be one method of summarizing the type of justice practiced by the Cree.

The plains Cree were known to have more than one chief, as the position could be held by those recognized for their ability not only as a warrior, hunter, and orator, but also their ability to give.[4] The warrior society, for example was a group of men who held a greater amount of material possessions than other Cree. From this society the warrior chief was selected, a man who was also recognized by the entire band as a war chief.[5] The warrior society was the first to defend the camp against attackers, and also play a key role in policing of the band, particularly during the buffalo hunt. During this important event, the warrior society ensured that the hunt would not be spoiled by the eagerness of other hunters. The punishment for advancing too soon during the hunt was the destruction of all the material possessions of the individual.[6]

In general, crime was minimal, and tended to involve acts of jealousy or anger. Thefts were rare, but any such perpetrator was forced to return the stolen article immediately.[7] Most disputes were solved through the use of the "Sacred Pipestem", a sacred item which demanded that all disagreements be solved in its presence. Rarely were murders committed, but in the event of the occurrence,

families of the deceased could demand blood vengeance. Retributions for most other crimes were most often made through gift exchanges.[8]

Commonly, one specific family within the band would be responsible for ensuring that punishment was carried out. It fulfilled the role of `sheriff' for the community. As R. C. Macleod and Heather Rollason explain, the role of the band and family unit were critical to enforcement of laws among the Cree:

> The outstanding feature of life on the Canadian prairies before 1870 was the absence of any central political authority which, on the one hand, made family and band the most important controls of individual behavior....All the northern plains people were band societies, that is the basic social and political unit was the band, not the larger linguistic and cultural tribe. Bands were extended family groupings of from 50 to about 300.[9]

The groups fluctuated in numbers according to food supply, and were flexible in that they could divide if a serious dispute occurred. In addition, the leadership was not static, and any given chief was subject to the suggestions of elders and council. This system was rather effective within the confines of each band, yet proved ineffective in controlling those outside of band jurisdiction, such as foreign traders and settlers.

Plains Cree in the Battleford area relied heavily upon the buffalo for subsistence. Dried meat, grease, and pemmican from the buffalo were all utilized as main food sources, particularly for the Poundmaker Cree prior to and during initial North West Mounted Police contact. The exchange of buffalo products with non-native traders created extensive Cree contact with non-native society. In conjunction with this commerce came the negative influences of liquor, which was often supplied by "free traders" to Plains Cree. The 1860s witnessed the withdrawal of the Hudson's Bay Company from the region, a void which was quickly filled by American and Metis traders. Liquor became a rampant and

popular trade item in the region and posed a serious threat for the Cree. Disorder and violence prevailed, coupled with imminent depletion of the buffalo.

The Americans faced the identical dilemma as the Dominion government -- how to deal with the "Indian Problem". The American government began a campaign of extermination and an all out Indian War was launched. This route proved costly, an expenditure the Canadian government could not come close to sustaining. In addition, extermination policies were considered unfashionably inhumane, and a more effective ideal of assimilation became the mainstream objective. The annihilation of the buffalo also gained prominence as a key to the assimilation process. The government concluded that the Cree would not take up the way of the plough while the buffalo remained plentiful.

Meanwhile, south of the international border, American policies pressured large numbers of Indian groups to flee north into the North West Territories, increasing the necessity for governmental control over the region.[10] The Canadian government was made aware of the complaints from the area such as the uncontrollable whiskey trade and the devastation of the Cypress Hills Massacre (May 1873). The threat of American expansion into a seemingly lawless territory finally sparked government action. After the North West Territories were acquired by the Dominion in 1869, the west had to wait until 1874 before the North West Mounted Police were fully formed and present in the region as organized law enforcement. Shortly after the Cypress Hills Massacre, increased problems with the liquor trade, large influxes of American traders, and dissension caused by the Red River Resistance made policing of the region imperative.

NOTES

1 R.C. Macleod, The North West Mounted Police 1873-1919. (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association Booklets No.31 1978) p.3.

2 Diamond Jenness, Indians of Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977) p. 316.

3 Wallace Semaganis. Elder of the Poundmaker Cree Nation. Interviewed July 5, 1999.

4 David G. Mandelbaum. The Plains Cree. (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina 1979) p.106-107.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 R.C. Macleod and Heather Rollason, "`Restrain the Lawless Savages': Native Defendants in the Criminal Courts of the North West Territories, 1878-1885." Journal of Historical Sociology. Vol. 10, No. 2, (June 1997) pp. 157-158 & 160.

10 Ibid., p. 11.

CHAPTER TWO

> With emigrants of all nations flowing into that country we are in constant danger of an Indian war, and once that commenced God knows where it may end.1

The difficulty in creating an economically and legally efficient police force for the Territories presented an interesting dilemma. Moreover, how would this imposing organization win over the trust of the Cree? The March West of 1874 marked the arrival of the Mounted Police in the North West Territories. Although most historians agree that relations between the Cree and the Mounted Police were relatively peaceful, with the exception of the 1885 Rebellion or Resistance, historical documents and oral evidence suggest there were radical adjustments to be made. It was agreed that upon arrival, the police would have to follow careful diplomacy due to prior conflict in the area between Euro-Canadians and the Cree. The Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, after much delay, realized that a police force based loosely on the Royal Irish Constabulary would best be suited to deal with the problems presented by the new territory. Initially, the North West Mounted Police force was to be multi-racial with Metis members, but these plans were canceled after the Metis uprising of 1869-70 that led to the creation of the province of Manitoba.

The uniform chosen for the North West Mounted Police included a red tunic, similar to that worn by the British Army. The color was thought to be

important symbolically to the Cree and other Plains Indian groups, perhaps because of their earlier association with the British Hudson's Bay Company traders.[2] Prior to the acquisition of land by the Dominion government, the bulk of European influence upon traditional Cree laws would have been imposed by Hudson's Bay Company authorities, and even then, only at Hudson's Bay Posts.[3]

A picturesque portrait of the Mounted Police's diplomatic achievements in gaining the trust of the Cree is prevalent in the majority of historical accounts. Cecil Denny in The Law Marches West, summarized the role of the North West Mounted Police: "To tame Wild Indian Tribes and Outlaw Whites, through Seas of Grass presently to give place to Seas of Grain -- here come the Mounted."[4]. This simplified account neglects an important issue: the actions taken by Mounted Police had to prove their trustworthiness. Indeed, the Mounted Police were able to gain the respect and cooperation of the Cree, but only after demonstrating they were present to solve the problems that plagued the people -- proving themselves as peace-keepers, paving the way for settlement.

Initially, the Cree were hesitant to cooperate with the North West Mounted Police. They knew the American government often dispatched troops to exterminate or expel Indians from territories they wished to acquire for settlement. How were these "men in scarlet" any different? The Cree were fearful that they would not have their demands recognized after treaty negotiations were concluded, as Indian groups south of the border had experienced. Referring to the North West Mounted Police as the "Queen's Soldiers"[5], the Cree had assumed that they were in truth a military force designed by the Dominion government to procure Indian lands for settlement purposes. Yet the obvious depletion of the buffalo left few options, and desperate times called for decisive action.

R.G. Macbeth condensed this arrival period of the Mounted Police as: ". . . the one in which a mere handful of officers . . . with endless patience, unflinching courage and consummate skill in open diplomacy, kept the peace in an area larger than several European Kingdoms, and within whose precincts thousands of warlike and well-armed Indians composed the reckless, restless and roving population."[6] The author also acknowledged that the establishment of treaty by the Dominion government was critical to affirming that the "Canadian" way of life would overcome that of the Indian. The creation of reserves and treaties would not only extinguish Cree land title, but would also essentially provide a temporary residence for the Cree until they became assimilated, or lived out their "natural existence" until extinction. What Macbeth neglected to mention was that the seemingly lawless situation in the Territories among the Cree had a great deal to do with the whiskey trade, and was a direct result of white influence, contact, and interference. As police historian J.P. Turner has noted, ". . . the white man . . . had introduced much that was subversive. Alcohol, contagious diseases, moral deficiency, coupled with a marked tendency to bargain unscrupulously . . . each had ministered to the disintegration of the once powerful and defiant tribes."[7]. Although the Cree had a system of laws in effect to punish members of their own band, they could not enforce these laws among transient traders. The role of the Mounted Police in enforcing law and order among settlers acquired critical importance. To maintain order, the Mounties would have to earn the respect of the Cree, not only as representatives on behalf of the government, but as officers who could control the incoming Euro-Canadian population.

The Mounted Police pursued a wide variety of duties in the North West. They had been granted authoritative powers which extended into all aspects of government jurisdiction. The police served as Postmasters, Customs Collectors,

Issuers of Marriage Licenses, Justices of the Peace, and Stipendiary Magistrates.[8] They could be called upon for anything from the arrest of a murderer to the delivery of a baby. Although this extensive power could easily have been exploited, it provided the Mounties with the ability to "clean-up the west".

Beginning in 1874, the immediate concern of the Mounted Police was to stop the liquor trade. Although vast numbers of the original Plains Cree population were already devastated by disease, the abuse of alcohol increased the lack of immunity to highly communicable and deadly viruses and infections introduced by the Euro-Canadian population. Violations of the liquor laws by Indians were among the largest group of early offenses documented by the North West Mounted Police. Assaults, petty theft, inter-tribal hostilities, horse theft and even the rare murder case were reported by 1875.[9] R.C. Macleod explained that: "Because the Indians stole mostly from each other and regarded it as a kind of sport, losses tended to balance out. The police tried to stop it but it was not of great concern. But by about 1884, when organized gangs of white horse thieves made their appearance, horse stealing developed from a minor irritant into a major problem."[10] Referring to the records of the Mounted Police, one finds that crime among white settlers seems to have presented an issue which required substantial time and attention from officers.

This so called "Indian Problem" had reached its peak by 1878. Prior to this era, the North West Mounted Police had been active agents in three key steps to assimilate the Plains Cree of the Battleford region. First, they were instrumental in the signing of treaties for cessation of lands in return for reserves and payments. Second, they persuaded the Cree to settle on reserves and abandon their traditional hunting and gathering subsistence. Finally, the Mounted Police assisted in the integration of the Cree into Euro-Canadian agricultural society and economy. The Mounties were entirely responsible for enforcing the settlement of

the Poundmaker Cree on reserves. However, the Police were only partially responsible for the signing of treaties and agricultural instruction of the Cree.[11] Indian Affairs Agents, Dominion Government Officials, and Farm Instructors all played a hand in these latter activities. The Mounties, however, often ensured the distribution of treaty annuity payments, supplied emergency rations in times of famine, enforced the illegal pass system, and administered Indian Affairs duties in the absence of appropriate officials.[12]

The idea of the police fulfilling the role of guardian over the Cree seems to have developed gradually during the later phases of initial Mounted Police and Cree interaction. Treaty Six stipulated that:

> They [the Cree] promise and engage that they will in all respects obey and abide by the law, and they will maintain peace and good order between each other, and also between themselves and other tribes of Indians, and between themselves and others of Her Majesty's subjects, whether Indians or whites, now inhabiting or hereafter to inhabit any part of the said ceded tracts, and that they will not molest the person or property of any inhabitant of such ceded tracts, or the property of Her Majesty the Queen, or interfere with or trouble any person passing or traveling through the said tracts or any part thereof; and that they will aid and assist the officers of Her Majesty in bringing to justice and punishing any Indian offending against the stipulations of this treaty, or infringing the laws in force in the country so ceded.[13]

Clearly, the predominant responsibility of the Mounted Police was to enforce the laws outlined in the treaty, as well as to enforce the laws of the Dominion Government. The obligations of the Cree were to abide by the laws of the Canadian Government, and whenever possible, "aid and assist" officers in bringing to justice any Indian who had broken the law.

In addition to the treaty terms, the 1880 Indian Act specified certain issues which the North West Mounted Police would enforce. The Indian Act's main goals were to ensure that liquor was never in the possession of treaty Indians, to protect Indian lands from encroachment or trespassers, to encourage

enfranchisement, and to "promote a `settled existence' among Indians"[14]. The North West Mounted Police often played a key role in ensuring that these goals were achieved. In the post-Confederation era, changes in the Indian Act tended to reflect the concerns of white society.[15] Indians were viewed as "minors", whereas the government was the "guardian". Because the Mounted Police were granted the powers of Justices of the Peace, they had to make judgments, issue fines, or give prison sentences for a variety of offenses which were defined by the act. Some of the relevant portions of the Indian Act dealt with land surrenders, timber leases, Indian status, band membership, marriage, reserve lands, annuities, protection of reserves, inheritability of lands, location tickets, trespass penalties, prostitution, investment of Indian funds, taxation, enfranchisement, adoption of agriculture, Indian schools, and local government on Indian lands.[16] Although the federal government was primarily responsible for land, property, band membership, local government, and Indian funds, the North West Mounted Police were instrumental in regulating all of these areas, under the supervision and cooperation of the Indian Affairs Department.

By the 1880s the buffalo ceased to be a reliable resource in the Battleford area. The life blood of the Cree had disappeared, forcing settlement onto reserves in order to survive. The North West Mounted Police were now obligated to protect the Cree from the radical adjustments they would face on economic, political, and cultural levels. The police:

> . . . protected the Indians from the more rapacious whites who were disposed to hasten the process of extinction. They fed the Indians if starvation threatened. They employed a few as scouts and special constables. Wherever possible they gave contracts for supplies such as hay, wood and meat to the Indians. Above all they acted as a check on the Indian Agents and as an independent source of information for the government on conditions on reserves.[17]

Whether the Mounted Police performed all these acts out of sheer humanity or strictly to fulfill treaty promises poses an interesting question.

The Mounted Police force now faced a new concern in dealing with the Cree. The inevitable and rapid influx of settlers into the region demanded extreme adjustments from traditional Cree civilization.[18] Although many have argued that the fate of the Cree was dependent upon the charity of the police, missionaries, and traders,[19] this view ignores the active role that the Cree played regarding their own fate. Previous histories of Plains Cree and Euro-Canadian contact have often reflected the era in which they were written, neglecting to consider a Cree perspective on events. Attitudes in these accounts alter with the times, shifting from paternalism -- that the Cree were children and could not help what was happening to them -- to the opinion that the Cree got what they deserved. Perspectives shift yet again in more recent interpretations. These modern interpretations, such as Loyal Till Death by Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, look at the Cree as active rather than passive players in contact history.

The Police had their work cut out for them as settlers flooded the region. Racism prevailed among this group, adding to the difficulty of police investigations. Indians were often mistrusted, leading settlers to blame the Cree for almost any mysterious occurrence, "Every cow that strayed was assumed to have been killed by the Indians."[20]. The Police had to perform a balancing act to avoid conflict between these two diverse groups, reminding ranchers and farmers that the treaties ensured Aboriginal hunting rights. At the same time, without much difficulty, the Police strove to keep the Cree on their reserves. Many accounts demonstrate that the police had their hands full keeping white squatters off Indian lands. As time progressed, the attitudes of the Mounted Police towards the Indians underwent significant change. Policies were altered regarding Cree and police interaction, " . . . based in part on the recognition that some minorities

had disabilities and intended rather to protect than oppress them."[21]. W.L. Morton summarized 1871-1885 as ". . . the years in which the position of the Indian in Canada declined from that of an equal to that of a subordinate."[22], alluding to the changing nature of the relationship between the Cree and the North West Mounted Police.

The character of the Mounted Police also requires analysis. General histories of the Mounted Police portrayed the officers as upstanding, honest, and humane citizens of their time. The Mounties arguably would have to prove themselves as being of impeccable character, in order to gain Cree confidence. Commanding officers of the force were instrumental in emphasizing the importance of good character in the early years of the force:

> "The Commissioner vowed the Natives would now see a different kind of whiteman! There would be no drinking, no private trading. Any dealings a mountie had with the Indians would be strictly in the line of police duty. Very specifically there would be no `blanket' marriages, the term used to describe the white man's custom of taking and discarding Native wives."[23]

These good intentions, however, did not always pan out. Historical records indicate that some incidents which marred the trustworthiness of the police arose. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Records provide evidence of problems with prostitution, to be explored in greater detail later in the thesis.

The racism or ethnocentrism that was also prevalent among members of the North West Mounted Police officers hindered the enforcement of justice among the Cree, especially in criminal cases involving white settlers. The Victorian era promoted ideals based upon the superiority of Euro-Canadian races over others, attitudes which inevitably rubbed off on the police. F.J.E. Fitzpatrick provided an illustration of the racism or ethnocentrism towards Plains Cree that occurred, often as a result of cultural differences. Fitzpatrick, who served as a

member of the Mounted Police from 1879 to 1885, described the Sundance ceremony, a ritual performed by the Cree. His unfavorable terms demonstrated his ignorance of the religious and social importance this event held for the Cree. During the ceremony, Fitzpatrick explained that the old men of the tribe would tell glorified stories of murders and theft to the younger Cree who were being initiated. Fitzpatrick felt strongly about this issue: "Herein lies the well-grounded objection by any civilized government to this ceremonial. The deeds recited by the old Indians, and glorified in by them were all against the laws of God and man, but were put before the eyes and ears of children as proper examples to follow; and it is likely that the latter in turn would not fail to emulate their forefathers."[24] This example demonstrated that Fitzpatrick, like many of the Mounted Police apparently, judged the Cree by the standards and norms of an alien white culture.

Historian William Morrison also suggested that the role of the Mounted Police was quite clear: they were indeed a semi-military organization in 1873, as well as being semi-political. The role of the Comptroller, for example, was to distribute finances within the force, and also represent the voice of government authorities in Ottawa. R.C. Macleod supported this idea, proposing that the North West Mounted Police were formed around models of semi-military police forces in Ireland and India, giving rise to the military nature of the police.[25] Morrison's and Macleod's arguments supported the suspicions of the Cree regarding the military nature of the Mounted Police.

Historian John Tobias provided further insight. He argued that the assimilation process evolved by the Dominion government was highly paternalistic, yet was aimed at incorporating a reserve system as well as legally binding treaties. Tobias also suggested that according to previous historical analysis, the treaties were considered to be "fair-minded" and " . . . far sighted in

offering the Indians a means to become civilized . . ."[26]. Tobias explained, however, that the Dominion government's main goal was to achieve total control over the Plains Cree, even if this meant the possibility of war, as would be proved in 1885. Tobias also suggested that the Plains Cree were well aware of the problems Indian groups encountered in the United States, and encouraged treaties to avoid conflict in the North-West Territories before the arrival of more settlers.[27]

This viewpoint is quite contrary to evidence presented in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police files held in the National Archives of Canada. Many of these accounts clearly outline reports that the Mounted Police constantly feared and monitored the Cree potential for restlessness. The only tie that bound the Cree to government law was the treaty, and the reaction of the Cree to impending radical adjustments to their lifestyle was yet to unfold. The Cree were not a static culture, but how much change was too much?

NOTES

1 S.W. Horrall, "Sir John A. Macdonald and the Mounted Police Force for the Northwest Territories." Canadian Historical Review. Vol. 53. No. 2, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press June 1972) p. 186.

2 R.C. Macleod, The North West Mounted Police 1873-1919. (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association Booklets, No. 31. 1978) p. 5.

3 R.C. Macleod and Heather Rollason, "'Restrain the Lawless Savages': Native Defendants in the Criminal Courts of the North West Territories, 1878-1885." Journal of Historical Sociology. Vol. 10, No. 2, (June 1997) p.159.

4 Cecil E. Denny, The Law Marches West. (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd. 1939) p. 10.

5 Hugh A. Dempsey, William Parker: Mounted Policemen. (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers 1973) p. 23.

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CHAPTER THREE

> The Battle River Indians too rejoiced, for had not their chief, the great Poundmaker, been selected above all chiefs, as guide to the Governor General on his Western tour? Famed as an orator was Poundmaker. He gathered his people together for a feast on his return to the reserve.[1]

Initial relations between the North West Mounted Police and the Battleford Cree were peaceful, cooperative, and mutually respectful. Each perceived the other as a nation to be handled with diplomacy. On August 18, 1876, the Mounted Police, along with several government officials arrived in the region to establish Treaty Six. This treaty covered 121,000 square miles between Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains, and was negotiated to ensure that work on the Canadian Pacific Railway and the telegraph could continue in the region without hindrances.

William Parker, a North West Mounted Police officer present at the time, provided a verbal description of the events that unfolded upon their arrival: ". . . we [the police] paraded past the big Cree Indian camp and they were quite excited, never having seen or heard a (parade) band before. A number of squaws were running into their teepees crying, `We are losing our country.' . . . For the rest of the afternoon the Indians and half-breeds had horse races and kept it up 'till sundown. They have a great craze for horse racing and gambling . . ."[2] Treaty Six, which included Forts Carlton and Pitt, was signed with the Cree of the

Northern prairies, including the Battleford Cree. The police were present to add pomp and ceremony to the treaty proceedings, symbolizing the Queen's power. During this phase, the importance of the North West Mounted Police as protectors of government officials also became apparent as the Dominion initiated a formalized treaty process. There were reports of unrest by Indian groups in the region who strove to maintain their sovereignty. The Mounted Police were dispatched in part to provide protection for the treaty officials. R.C. Macleod noted that: "A report had been received that the Indians had threatened to stop the Lieutenant Governor from crossing the South Saskatchewan River to make a treaty so a general order was issued that "D" Troop was to parade right away in heavy marching order, and leave for Fort Carlton."[3] Fortunately, the Cree had refused to unite with the Salteaux, who had conceived this plan. Perhaps the efforts of the North West Mounted Police to establish a compatible relationship with the Cree had succeeded.

The undertaking of Treaty Six was not entirely the brain-storm of the Dominion government. Pressure from some groups of Plains Cree from 1872 to 1875 to initiate the treaty process for the area forced the government to consider the Qu'Appelle and Saskatchewan districts, just as it had negotiated with the Indians in Manitoba. Once the treaty process had begun in the west, the Dominion Government was under obligation to extend the process for the remainder of the territories. Indeed, the Cree had interfered with the construction of telegraph lines and the activities of a geological survey party in their territory. In order to avoid the same type of conflict that occurred in Manitoba, leading to the development of a new province, the Dominion would have to recognize Cree rights in order to proceed with its plans of settlement and railway advancement. By assuring a legal land cession, Canada could proceed with advancements without the threat of an Indian uprising.

A year before, in 1875, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Minister, and the Deputy Minister of Justice drafted the North-West Territories Act. This act created a legal and moral obligation to sign treaties with the Indians within these territories. It became evident that the Dominion had hoped that by establishing treaties and creating the North West Mounted Police, much of the difficulties in governing the territory would end.

The Mounted Police were responsible for executing the wishes of the Dominion and maintaining the rights of the Indians. Although orders originated within the Dominion Government, Territorial Government, or the Department of the Secretary of State, the Police had to enforce the new treaty among the Cree. Persuasion was the primary method of the police to confine Indians to reserves: "In one or two cases Indians were killed by the police when they chose to fight it out to avoid capture. But these deaths provoked no general resentment because the Indians could be sure that force was used only as a last resort and that it was used against the individual as a law breaker, not because he happened to be an Indian."[4] The power of the police originated from laws passed by the Dominion to ensure their position within the huge territory as law enforcement agents. Under the British North America Act a "sheriff" (or North West Mounted Police officer) as defined in the act was obliged to protect the lands negotiated under treaty. In addition, in regard to law enforcement of Indians, any warrants, writs, summonses and proceedings had to be issued or taken by the Superintendent General, unless the peace officer was given permission by or was assisting the Superintendent General.

Also of note in the Indian Act was the increase of police authority in relation to law enforcement with Indians added in 1879.[5] This act also ". . . forbade liquor sales to Indians, barred people who were not members of a band from its reserve after nightfall, and prohibited the presence of Indian women in

bars."[6]. Later in 1895, the act provided strict control over the practice of the Sundance and the Thirst Dance. To avoid punishment for observing these traditional ceremonial dances in later years, Poundmaker and Little Pine Cree would hold ". . . dances right on the boundary of the two reserves. Since the Indians were not leaving their reserve for another, the agent and the police could not use the Indian Act to deter them."[7]. This demonstrated the inventiveness of the adaptations made by the Cree to remain within the confines of the law.

The Cree played a pro-active role in the treaty negotiations. Mistawasis, chief and one of the predecessors of the Poundmaker Cree, represented his people at the negotiations. Poundmaker himself was present at the talks, and although he was not a prominent leader or counselor for the Cree in 1876, he voiced several concerns during the treaty discussions at Fort Carlton. Crowfoot, Poundmaker's adoptive father, was one of the first plains chiefs to promote the signing of treaties and support the authority of the North West Mounted Police. Poundmaker held a small degree of influence among the Cree of the northern plains, and Canadian officials had hoped to gain his support. Poundmaker, however, had raised strong objections regarding the proposed size of the reserves. His band numbered only about one-hundred and sixty-five Cree [8], leading him to question the parcels of land to be granted: "The government mentions how much land is to be given us. He says 640 acres one mile square for each . . . This is our land, it isn't a piece of pemmican to be cut off and given in little pieces back to us. It is ours and we will take what we want."[9] Reliance upon the land was critical to the Plains Indian way of life, and Poundmaker would not easily be swayed into deserting Cree cultural traditions. He was one among several other Cree who were hesitant to divvy up Cree territory into petty portions. Although he supported the authority of the North West Mounted Police, Poundmaker was not in full agreement with the terms of the treaty. His reputation as "The

Peacemaker"[10] among the Cree was quickly replaced by "trouble-maker" in the eyes of the Dominion Government.

At the conclusion of the treaty-making process, Poundmaker refused to sign, along with several other band representatives for the area, in the desire to hold out for better terms. Not until 1879 did Poundmaker voluntarily settle on a reserve at Battle River.[11] But what factors led to this decision? Poundmaker was in clear opposition to the reserve system, yet other forces were at work that were greater than the Cree were prepared to face. It had become clear that the depletion of the buffalo and the encroachment of Euro-Canadian settlement had compelled the Cree to make a radical adjustment and forced settlement onto reserves in order to survive. These issues will be examined in detail in the following chapter.

By 1881, schools were established on Indian reserves by the Dominion government, including one at Poundmaker reserve. This had a tremendous impact on the Cree. That spring, Poundmaker spoke to his people: "Next summer, or at latest next fall, the railway will be close to us, the whites will fill the country, and they will dictate to us as they please. It is useless to dream that we can frighten them; that time is past; our only resource is our work, our industry, and our farms. Send your children to school . . . if you want them to prosper and be happy."[12] Poundmaker was wise to realize that unless the Cree were quick to adapt, they would inevitably be swept away in the tides of settlement. He encouraged schooling in order to create a generation that would ideally be more suited to deal with the ensuing traumatic cultural changes.

The impact of increased Euro-Canadian settlement in the area was most evident in the growth of Battleford. From 1876 until 1882 the Territorial Government was located in Battleford, chosen because of its ideal location: the transcontinental railroad was proposed to traverse through the township.

Communication was another important issue, as Battleford was situated along the telegraph lines, linking it with the rest of the continent.[13] The North West Mounted Police post at Battleford grew in response to increased settlement.

Initially, as portrayed in many historical writings, Battleford Mounties and the neighboring Cree were respectful of one another as long as everyone was peaceful, cooperative, and law abiding. The police clearly saw the Indians as a forceful presence in the region, and kept close watch on any disturbances among the Cree. Typically, the Battleford Mounted Police acted as representatives of the government. They often were involved in solving grievances between Department of Indian Affairs officials and the local Cree, as well as providing enforcement of law and order to the region. The largest task set out for the Battleford North West Mounted Police was the establishment of good Indian and white relations in order to smooth the transition of the arrival of the proposed railway, adoption of an agrarian lifestyle by enforcing reserve settlement, and preparation of Indians for increased Euro-Canadian settlement.

This was a daunting task at times, considering that the Cree population greatly outnumbered Mounted Police Force members. At the Battleford post, the total of men in 1876 was eleven; in 1878 there were thirty-three; by 1881 the force numbered forty-three, followed by a dramatic increase in 1884 to 103 men, primarily due to the government's fear of rebellion. This small force served a combined population of approximately 2000 Indians who lived in the area surrounding Battleford. The northern and eastern regions where Euro-Canadian settlement had a major foot-hold were the areas of greatest concern to the North West Mounted Police. The "D" Division, Battleford, was not only responsible for local detachments but also for detachments at Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, and Prince Albert, with a combined strength of approximately 200 men. These few men

were responsible for law enforcement among hundreds of white settlers and numerous Indian bands scattered throughout the territory.

NOTES

1 Lewis Herbert Thomas, The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories 1870-97, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1978) p.80.

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3 Ibid., p.21.

4 Thomas, The Struggle..., p. 80.

5 Derek G. Smith (ed.), Canadian Indians and the Law: Selected Documents 1663-1972. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd. 1975) pp. 86-115.

6 J.R. Miller, Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens -- A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1989) p.191.

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8 George F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada -- A History of the Riel Rebellions. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1960) p. 283.

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10 Joseph Kinsey Howard, Strange Empire. (Toronto: Swan Publishing Co. Ltd. 1952) p. 345.

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12 Quoted in Pierre Berton, The Last Spike. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd. 1974) p. 375.

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CHAPTER FOUR

. . . all accounts agree that the Indians welcomed the arrival of the police.[1]

Many radical adjustments made to traditional Cree culture were beginning to take a toll. The Battleford Cree were suffering as they persistently struggled with the adoption of an agrarian lifestyle. Life within the Battleford North West Mounted Police post was filled with continuous anxiety regarding the movements of the Cree in the area and the potential disturbances that large uncontrolled gatherings could create. Officers were perpetually on the lookout for any suspicious or threatening behavior by the Cree, evident in reports made on a regular basis regarding any contact made with the Cree. Although the Cree held the Mounted Police in high regard, tensions increased dramatically with the decline of the buffalo and the awkward adjustment to reservation life. Authorities within the post feared that the Indian populace would focus their frustrations upon the encroaching Euro-Canadian settlers if the pressures of disease, starvation, and general discontent overwhelmed the Cree. A Cree population with nothing left to lose was considered a powerful and dangerous element on the prairies.

The detailed records of the North West Mounted Police at Battleford help to create a picture of the interaction between the police and the Cree. An excerpt from a Battleford Division Letterbook dated July 14, 1879, referred to Indian

supplies that were portioned out to the surrounding reserves by the Police. Superintendent James Walker mentioned that the Plains Indians were ". . . moving about more than usual this year, large bands have been in here that were never here before."[2]. The movements of Big Bear, a powerful Cree chief who was not trusted because of his refusal to sign Treaty Six, were also mentioned. The above quote provides an early example of the role of the Battleford Mounties in monitoring all Indian movements, especially those people who were not yet adhering to the Dominion government's ideals of proper agrarian reservation living. The Mounted Police were ordered to provide rations, relief, and supplies only to facilitate segregation of the Cree onto their reserves.

In August of that same year a letter was sent to Inspector French of the North West Mounted Police from Superintendent James Walker regarding Indian rations. A Metis interpreter named Peter Erasmus was hired by the North West Mounted Police to assist in translating during the police distribution of rations among the Battleford Cree. The letter reported that Chief Ke-Ke-Wire, and Chief Kin-nesayo were present at the distribution of these annuities, suggesting that a degree of ceremony, protocol, and other formalities were observed during this meeting of the Cree and the police. The correspondence provided evidence that Walker fulfilled the role of Indian Agent in the absence of the proper officials by dispersing annuity payments and other supplies among the Indians of the Battleford district.[3]

It is difficult to determine if supplies distributed during annuity payments provided much relief. Only four months after the annuities, during a difficult winter, a report from Superintendent James Walker dated Dec. 15, 1880, summarized the condition of the Cree and Assiniboines in the Battleford area. That year, ". . . owing to the scarcity of game, they were unable to obtain sufficient food and came frequently around the post for assistance which was

given them by the Indian Agent."[4]. From this report it can be determined that the assistance that the government provided was indeed short-term. This entry also gave some of the first indications of the Cree tendency to flock around Mounted Police posts and other areas of white settlement where any sort of relief or government assistance may have been provided. That same year, in 1880, the Department of Indian Affairs was created, to assist in dealing with Indian issues in the Territories. The efficiency of this new department was soon to be tested.

Over the years, Indian groups in neighboring areas expressed their increased discontent. Superintendent Herchmer's Annual Report for Battleford refers in an entry for December 4, 1882, to a Turtle Lake Indian who was arrested for stopping surveys.[5] The relative calm over the previous two years in the area may have been the result of other influences, yet Herchmer's report gave strong credit to the efforts of Hayter Reed, Indian Agent for the Battleford area. The report ignored the influential role of the Mounted Police within the area. It is possible that the Department of Indian Affairs was beginning to take on a stronger responsibility for the region. The enormity of the task set out for the Battleford Division for maintaining the peace in the entire North West Territories must not be taken for granted. Recalling that the force for the Territories numbered forty-three men in 1881, the Mounties justifiably could not be everywhere at once, considering their small numbers and the size of the area they were assigned. Indian grievances were dealt with only if they escalated to a level that threatened Euro-Canadian settlement or governmental authority.

Disease was another factor that had an effect on the Mounted Police relations with the Cree. Any potential outbreak was promptly investigated by the officers to prevent its possible spread. On January 1st, 1882, North West Mounted Police Surgeon Robert Miller's report told of an outbreak of measles among the Cree Indians in the Battleford area.[6] Efforts were clearly made to

control the potential for a massive epidemic. Interestingly, the police register for 1884 made reference to the Indian Department reporting that Surgeon Miller had refused to attend a case of sickness at the Battleford Industrial School. This charge is disconcerting considering the apparent lack of hesitation Miller demonstrated during the measle epidemic. Following the police records closely, correspondence from November 15th to the 22nd of 1884 reveals that Miller did not refuse the case back in 1882.[7] Nevertheless, the question remains as to whether these efforts were made out of humanitarianism and a strong sense of duty, or merely to prevent the expansion of sickness to nearby white settlement. The explanation could be a combination of both of these elements.

Starvation in the early 1880s was also on the rise. On February 1st, 1882, Lieutenant Colonel F. DeWinton wrote on the condition of the Cree: "Since [sic] the disappearance of the buffalo the Indian was self-supporting, independent and contented. Now, however, he is in a very different position, his only means of support is virtually gone, and he has to depend on the Government for assistance, being forced, in so doing, to remain about the Police Posts, Indian Agencies or other settlements."[8] This exemplifies that the Cree, because of their situation, could not avoid white contact and the inevitable problems associated with this forced interaction. The desperate condition of the Battleford Cree reached a climax in 1882, along with the need for government assistance. The consequences of Cree reliance upon Euro-Canadian and Mounted Police settlement for relief resulted in acts of prostitution and vagrancy. A fundamental shift in Cree/Mounted Police relations occurred, from one of mutual respect to one of Cree dependency. A new and dangerous emotion towards the Cree was developing among the Mounted Police -- fear.

Initially, the Mounted Police reacted to the impoverished state of the Cree with sympathy:

> The detachments . . . did their utmost on numerous occasions, particularly after the disappearance of the buffalo, to save the Indians from starvation. The medical officers of the force, one half of whose salaries were paid by the Indian department, treated sick Indians, and vaccinated them against small pox. Courageous action was characteristic of the police, instances of bravery . . . were numerous as the force strove to impress upon the Indians that law and order must prevail.[9]

This argument continued to suggest that the buffalo were so scarce in the United States that vast groups of Indians were forced to remain in the Territories, and many more migrated towards the regions where a few of the buffalo remained. The suggestion was also made clear that those Indians who relied mainly on the buffalo suffered greatly, forcing them to settle in the Territories, thereby increasing the existing Indian population. The Indians were then perceived as a potential danger, for despite government assistance, they would remain a starving people. The police therefore suggested:

> Settlers near Indian reservations must be protected from Indian depredations of all kinds; while, on the other hand, Indians must also be protected from any unfair dishonourable dealings being practiced towards them by renegade white men. It is presumable too, that the amount of public property which will come under the direct and general supervision of the Police force will be largely increased.[10]

Fear increased as the Indian population as a whole became thoroughly impoverished. The North West Mounted Police concluded that crime, including theft among the Cree would rise as a result, and the potential threat that the Cree posed towards Euro-Canadians became the target concern of the Mounted Police. Major relief efforts were made by the police to keep the Cree as calm as possible. One letter in the police files dated August, 1882, outlined the type of rations issued to destitute Indians, specifically smoking tobacco, biscuits, flour, tea, sugar, and beef.[11] The Mounted Police hoped that this display of humanitarianism would prevent the Cree from turning against the authorities in times of desperation. Another contributing factor in North West Mounted Police

concerns developed not only from the recent settlement of the Poundmaker Cree near Battleford, but also the desire of other groups to have their reserve located in the same region.

In 1881 Poundmaker had made a decisive effort to gather Cree and other Indian groups at Cypress Hills to press demands on the government; however, conditions of poverty were so strong by 1882 that he was forced to take reserve. Contrary to the promises of the government, the reserve provided paltry relief to the Poundmaker Cree. In desperation, Poundmaker attempted to gain the attention of the officials of the Indian Department. In what was described as an Indian agitation, Poundmaker ceased work, left his reserve, and encouraged others to follow his example. He demanded a restoration of the control that chief and counselors once held among the band over the affairs of the reserve. Thus, by re-creating influence over reserve matters, Poundmaker was certain that the dire straits of the Cree could be dealt with more efficiently on a local level than by some distant government, represented in the west by obstinate officials of the Indian Department. His efforts were ignored by the Indian Department, who perceived that: "Poundmaker was not sufficiently advanced to be entrusted with the supervision of Indian agriculture, nor was it the government policy to strengthen the hands of the chiefs. The only reply he received was that rations would be with held from any of his band who refused to work."[12] Dissatisfaction combined with a sense of betrayal increased Poundmaker's unrest. He was labeled a miscreant by the government as a result of his voicing Cree grievances. The government had not fulfilled its proposed obligations after he took reserve, leading to a strong desire to regain the independence that chief and council once held among the people.

Surprisingly, the crime reported by the Mounted Police among the Cree did not increase as a result of the crisis they faced. Examples of additional minor

delinquency arose in 1883, but no reports of extreme violence or criminal action undertaken by the Cree during this time. For example, by 1883 it was reported that the Cree actively interfered with the construction of the railway by stealing company horses and cattle, and placing obstructions on the track. Many of those involved in these acts of sabotage, however, were punished quickly and severely.[13] The Mounted Police were also called upon by the Indian Department to deal with squatters who were settling on Indian lands and reserves in the North West. Special permission was granted to a few members of the force to ". . . issue the necessary warrants and give every possible assistance to the Indian Officials in preventing squatting upon the Reserves."[14]. Many of the North West Mounted Police's dealings with the Cree remained as before. A letter dated October 11, 1883, from Inspector W.A. Antrobus to Lieutenant Colonel A. Irvine, Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police, reported that men were sent on escort duty to issue Indian payments at Poundmaker's. Despite the recent increase in unrest, Inspector Antrobus did not send an increased number of his men for this duty, only four men and two horses.[15]

The year 1883 witnessed a dramatic increase in another form of criminal activity. The number of prostitutes and vagrant Indians around Euro-Canadian settlements was on the rise, a problem which the Mounted Police were called upon to deal with swiftly. A letter from the Department of Indian Affairs dated November 15, 1883, described the dilemma of vagrant Indians. L. Vankoughnet, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in Ottawa, made note of the increased number of Indians in the North West Territories who were:

> . . . without any permit from the Indian Agent for the District. It was represented to me at several points visited during the past summer that most of the Teepees pitched by Indians near towns and Villages were occupied by women of Abandoned Character who were there for the worst purposes. The Chiefs of several Bands also made representations in

> regard to the same matter, and stated that they were unable to prevent their women from frequenting these places unless the local authorities would assist in breaking up their establishments . . .[16]

Vankoughnet requested Police assistance in the matter to insure that any Indian encamped near Euro-Canadian settlement be required by law to produce a permit from the local Indian Agent. Without a permit, the Police were given the authority to disband the camp. Vankoughnet's letter continued; "Any Indian wishing to come to a town or village for legitimate purposes, such as trading, need have no difficulty in obtaining a permit from the Indian Agent . . . . The points at which the evil principally prevails are: -- Battleford - A Mounted Police Post . . .".[17] Vankoughnet also listed three other police posts, indicating that the problem was not isolated to the Battleford Cree. The letter gained the attention of Comptroller Fred White, Lieutenant Colonel Irvine, and Commissioner Edgar Dewdney. Dewdney in turn issued a notice on December 28th to the Mounted Police, requesting that all officers be notified at the Police posts to ". . . endeavour to stop the Evil complained of. Under the Vagrant Act there should be no difficulty."[18] The implication of this particular correspondence is that the prevalence of Cree prostitution around Mounted Police barracks and posts was no coincidence. This scandalous vice was no longer to be tolerated. It is logical to conclude at this point that the chiefs were unable to restrain despairing members of their band because of the influence of famine. Food was often the currency paid to prostitutes, and vagrants relied on government rations for subsistence. The cumulative impact of disease and starvation required drastic decisions to be made on an individual level to secure survival. The freedom to choose between right and wrong is a luxury of prosperity; the Cree were forced to do whatever was necessary to fight their extinction.

NOTES

1 R. C. Macleod, The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1905 Law Enforcement and the Social Order in the Canadian North-West. (Michigan: Xerox University Microfilms 1974) p.47.

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3 Ibid, Vol. 3776, Letterbook -- Mar. 10, 1879 to Aug. 5, 1880, Battleford.

4 Commissioner W.L. Higgitt, Opening Up the West -- Being the Official Reports to Parliament of the Activities of the Royal North-West Mounted Police Force from 1874 - 1881 by the Commissioners of the RNWMP. (Toronto: Coles Publishing Company 1973) p.36.

5 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 1020, File 2477, Annual Report 1882, Battleford.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., Vol.635, Register 1884.

8 Ibid., Vol. 1020, File 2477, Annual Report 1882, Battleford.

9 Edwin Charles Morgan, "The North-West Mounted Police, 1873-1883." (M.A. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan 1970) p.112

10 Quoted ibid., pp. 10-11.

11 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 1006, File 267, Aug. 1882.

12 George F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1960) p.284.

13 A. L. Haydon, The Riders of the Plains. (Edmonton: Hertig Publishers 1971) p.103.

14 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol 1007, File 362, Correspondance (letters), 1883.

15 Ibid., Vol. 1009, File 609, Oct. 1883, Battleford.

16 Ibid., Vol 1009, File 628, Nov. 1883. Note: The reference to the necessity for a permit by Vankoughnet should not be confused with the pass system which evolved in the

aftermath of the 1885 Rebellion. Permits were issued in this context to allow Indians to sell their produce off reserve. In the post-Rebellion era, permits often were confused with the pass system. The permit was frequently the reason the individual sought a pass to leave the reserve. The Mounted Police were called upon by the Department of Indian Affairs to enforce this extra-legal system. For more information, consult Laurie Barron's article "The Indian Pass System in the Canadian West, 1882-1935." in Prairie Forum. Vol. 13, No.1, Spring 1988. pp. 25-42.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., Vol. 1011, File 786, Dec. 1883.

CHAPTER FIVE

> The police bluff Indians, all the time, but cannot ever allow themselves to be bluffed; if Crozier cannot manage his bluff as he did at Blackfoot Crossing the Saskatchewan country blows up. I can feel that hanging in the night air; that was in Crozier's furious Irish eyes when Craig reported.[1]

Events leading to the Riel Rebellion led Department of Indian Affairs and North West Mounted Police officials to re-evaluate the strength of the force due to fear of Cree gatherings. The police were also ordered to watch for any potential unification between Poundmaker and Big Bear. A letter dated January 26, 1884, from Hayter Reed, Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Regina, to the Officer Commanding the North West Mounted Police in Regina, called for an increase of the Battleford Division by an extra thirty-five to forty men. The goal of this increase was to ensure that the region between Edmonton and Battleford would be secured from any potential organized gatherings of the Cree. An improvement on the frequency of patrols or "parades" of the region would therefore, ". . . retain good order."[2] Reed also asked that the Officer Commanding respond as to whether this number of men would be available at the earliest possible date in the spring, and if the number of men requested could be increased, ". . . if deemed absolutely necessary in the public interest."[3] Clearly, the prospect of possible Indian gatherings for resistance purposes was all too real

-- government officials set out to establish preventative measures. But was this a scenario of too little, too late?

The North West Mounted Police Register for 1884 reveals that an increase of the force between Battleford and Fort Saskatchewan was the priority for that year. By February 29th, in response to the requests of the Indian Department, thorough letters on the conduct of Big Bear were circulated to keep close tabs on the Cree in the Battleford region. On March 8th, the Register noted that a letter to the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs from the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police confirmed that a detachment of fifty men would be sent to Battleford in the spring, and informed him of the present distribution of the force in the Saskatchewan District. As announced in a telegram to Battleford, April 7th marked the date of the departure of a detachment of extra men from Regina.[4]

Simultaneously, other events were unfolding near Battleford. A letter from Inspector W. A. Antrobus at Battleford dated April 9, 1884, reported that an Indian named "Mussa-chute-wah" was arrested. According to this report, the Indian in question stole a horse from another Cree, and was now up for trial. The letter also provided information pertaining to Big Bear. Antrobus had been informed that although the Cree in the district were, on the whole, calm and working well on the reserves, Big Bear and his followers were reportedly on their way to Poundmaker's Reserve. It is important to note that the reported "general contentment" of the Cree was provided for Inspector Antrobus by a Mr. Quinn, who was a farm instructor for the reserve.[5] Direct consultation with the Cree by the Mounted Police officers regarding their condition was not evident in the letter. Curiously, this was one of only two reports of an arrest made involving the Cree that could be found for this period, when an increase in force was deemed imperative.

By April the 19th, Hayter Reed sent correspondence to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in Ottawa. In this report, Reed paraphrased a telegraph he had received regarding Big Bear and his followers. Under the orders of the Police Commissioner, officers had been positioned at Poundmaker's to prevent any potential disturbance. Although the majority of the Poundmaker Cree remained on the reserve, according to the telegraph, impulsive younger men were willing to join Big Bear. Other groups such as Little Pine and Lucky Man had promised to settle on reserves, but were now hesitating. Reed quoted the telegraph further:

> Order in Council should be passed making criminal to suit this Case. Poundmaker's men working well though he is living apart with Little Pine, Big Bear and whole party expected daily. Poundmaker says all other Bands this District will join him. Deemed expedient to purchase through trader all rifles and cartridges, which I hope will be approved, one man has one thousand rounds, can purchase rifles three or four dollars, ammunition half cost here.[6]

Reed added that he had already purchased the rifles as requested in the telegram for $150.00. In his opinion, this was a wise preventative measure should the Indian groups mentioned in the telegram assemble and take to arms. By preventing the concentration of the Cree and forcing them to settle on scattered reserves, the Indian Department hoped that conflict would be avoided. The requests made by Big Bear, Poundmaker, Lucky Man, and others who wanted a reserve at Buffalo Lake were blatantly ignored. Instead, separate land parcels were designated for each band.[7]

Meanwhile, back at Battleford, an urgent telegram dated April 16th was issued renewing the Division's repeated requests for reinforcement -- forty men with ammunition and rifles. The North West Mounted Police received word that Superintendent Leif Crozier was on his way to the North West, and that Superintendent Lawrence Herchmer was also to arrive at Battleford with more

men. Contrary to the atmosphere of urgency implied by the telegram, the 1884 Register indicated that all was quiet in the Battleford area for the remainder of April and well into May. It can be inferred that reinforcements were sent as planned in response to Big Bear's presence, as well as to control any sizable gathering of the Cree. On behalf of Indian Affairs, Lawrence Vankoughnet wrote to Comptroller Fred White of the North West Mounted Police, in Ottawa. In this letter dated May 2, 1884, Vankoughnet asked White's opinion on where police intervention might be required in anticipation of any large gatherings. White replied:

> ... I am advised by the Indian Commissioner for Manitoba and the North West Territories that in the Saskatchewan District between Victoria and Battleford, Police are required, as well as from Fort Qu-Appelle to Broadview, for in these sections are found most of the Indians who have but lately gone on their Reserves, and thus who have not yet taken up land. There is, the Commissioner says, as the spring appears and the grass grows, a strong inclination among the Indians, consequent upon their confinement to one locality, to wander from Reserve to Reserve, but this spring it is feared that attempts will be made to congregate in large numbers near Indian Head, Broadview, and Battleford; and possibly in moments of excitement efforts will be made to siege unprotected stores. There will also be strong inclination on the part of the Indians to kill cattle when their rations are stopped on their leaving their Reserves, or on their refusing to work. Consequently strenuous and immediate efforts should be taken to prevent these gatherings if possible. With reference to matters at Battleford, I enclose herin copy of letter from Mr. Dewdney's office of 19th ... from which it may be seen that difficulties with some ... Indians are anticipated at that point.[8]

This communication indicated that Department of Indian Affairs officials as well as the Mounted Police were well aware of the imminent culmination of Indian grievances. Cree frustrations were quite clear, and anxieties regarding potential uprisings were prevalent. The North West Mounted Police Register for Battleford Post clearly showed that the force was strengthened, patrols were increased, and all available men were on guard for any potential trouble. In June of that year, a

pass system was again suggested by upper levels of the Indian Department; however, it was "not deemed desirable" in the eyes of Comptroller Fred White.[9] Correspondence did not indicate a rationalization for the system, except to imply that it would prove ineffective and unlawful.

Historians such as John Tobias, and Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser suggest that these fears of a unified Indian uprising were not justified, and that many of the Cree remained loyal to the Queen and their treaty obligations. The concentration of the Cree onto a combined reserve in the Battleford region, however, provided an issue which required serious attention from the government. Tobias has suggested that the number of Cree who followed Lucky Man and Little Pine, for example, were in excess of 2000, and that their reserves would be in close proximity to Poundmaker, which in turn was located near three other Assiniboine reserves.[10] An additional 500 Cree could have been concentrated into this region if Big Bear's request for a reserve next to Little Pine had been granted.

Trouble arose near the end of June 1884. On the 21st, North West Mounted Police records reported that an Indian prisoner was taken by force from Poundmaker's camp. A telegram from Superintendent Crozier outlined the measures taken to prevent rescue. Crozier announced his arrival with the prisoner at Battleford in reports for the 23rd and 24th, adding that all was now quiet, and the Indians were dispersing. The information in these telegrams worked their way up the bureaucratic ladders of the Department of Indian Affairs and the North West Mounted Police. On August 14th, Superintendent Crozier received, ". . . the appreciation of the Honourable Minister for the services rendered by them"[11]. A letter from the Superintendent at Battleford to the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police at Regina dated July 6, 1884, explained the arrest with greater detail. It read:

> On the 16th I sent out a Detachment of a Corporal and five men to Poundmaker's Reserve and on the day following the Non-Com. [sic] Officer returned bringing with him Instructor Craig who laid information against one of Lucky Man's band for assault. I issued a warrant for his arrest, and acted on this warrant as reported to you in full on 22nd June.
>
> On the 23rd I had the prisoner up before me, but his witnesses not being present I remanded him for further evidence.
>
> On the 26th [July] in company with Indian Agent Rae I went to the Reserve, the scene of the recent trouble, and explained to the Indians that anyone of them was at liberty to come in and give evidence on behalf of the prisoner. The prisoner has since been committed for trial and will be noted in the next months report.[12]

From the relative calm with which this report was submitted, it is difficult to determine if the North West Mounted Police at the Battleford Division believed this arrest foreshadowed increased unrest among the Cree.

Secondary historical accounts paint another picture. According to the works of Desmond Morton, George F. Stanley, John Peter Turner, John Tobias, Ronald Atkin, and R.C. Macleod, to name a few, Superintendent Crozier's report pales in comparison to the excitement at Poundmaker's. These interpretations suggest that there was, ". . . almost a pitched battle between Superintendent Crozier's men and Cree assembled for a thirst dance."[13]. These historical accounts continue to suggest that there were from 1500 to 2000 Cree assembled for the dance,[14] and that the chiefs of the bands involved were out to test the mettle of the Mounted Police and the government.[15] Farm Instructor John Craig was said to have refused rations to Kahweechetwaymot, a member of Lucky Man's band, whose child was quite ill. In anger, Craig pushed "Man Who Speaks Our Language" out of the storehouse, and the man retaliated by striking Craig in the arm with an ax handle: "The instructor sent word to Corporal R.B. Sleigh, in charge of a small detachment of police temporarily stationed at Poundmaker's reserve, saying the insult called for immediate arrest. But upon arrival Sleigh wisely decided not to act with so few men in the presence of so large a crowd of

excited savages, and referred the incident to the chiefs who declined to interfere."[16] The accounts of this event generally conclude by noting that the police were lucky that none of their force were killed when they arrived to arrest "Man Who Speaks Our Language". The police had, after all, just barged into a sacred thirst dance which did little to please the Cree. Crozier arrived in the Cut Knife area, emptied out storehouses and, ". . . fortifying the Indian Agency Building"[17], headed to Poundmaker's with John Craig and, according to these historical accounts, sixty police reinforcements. William McKay, a Hudson's Bay Company official from Battleford performed the duty of interpreter; Poundmaker acted as negotiator on behalf of the Cree.[18] Although Big Bear and Poundmaker offered themselves in place of Kahweechetwaymot, he was eventually arrested and received a week's prison-sentence for the assault.[19] The reaction of the Euro-Canadian settlers surrounding Poundmaker's reserve to these events was one of great anxiety, as many fled to seek refuge at Fort Battleford.

Gaps remain in determining what exactly happened during this incident. Corporal Sleigh, to illustrate, was only indirectly mentioned in the police records, along with passing reference to a detachment posted at the Poundmaker reserve. The reference that suggests Crozier was accompanied by sixty men was not accounted for in the Superintendent's report, which clearly stated that he went to Poundmaker's with five men and a corporal. No mention is made of these other sixty men in this particular report. It is possible that Crozier may have neglected to mention that he took with him to Poundmaker's the forty reinforcements that had been sent to Battleford in April, plus other members of the force. However, it is improbable that he would take such action without reporting it to his superiors. If such a display of force was necessary in this incident, Crozier would logically have informed officials of the Mounted Police, Indian Affairs, and the Dominion

In contrast to these opinions, it is important to note that the Mounted Police records did not reveal any substantial conflict between the police and the Cree prior to the period of the 1885 Rebellion. The few disturbances and arrests that were recorded were completely unrelated to the Metis Rebellion. The Cree had continued to uphold their end of the treaty obligations, cooperating with the Mounted Police and often assisting them during investigations. Although Dewdney made use of starvation, submission, and a policy of "sheer compulsion":

> He found that his efforts to use the Mounted Police to break up the Indian councils and arrest Indian leaders only led to confrontations between the Cree and the police. In these confrontations the police were shown to be ineffectual because they were placed in situations in which, if the Cree had been desirous of initiating hostilities, large numbers of Mounted Police would have been massacred.[23]

Indeed, the North West Mounted Police records indicate that the police were used to break up Indian Councils, ceremonial dances, or any large gathering which may have presented an opportunity for rebellion. There was, however, strong evidence that the North West Mounted Police were aware that submission by starvation would prove ineffective. A report from Francis J. Dickens, Inspector at Fort Pitt, dated September 24, 1884, informed that in regard to Big Bear and his followers: "The future conduct of the Indians of his band will depend upon the supply of food: as long as they have enough to eat they will give no trouble. If the rations happened to be stopped, they may give some trouble, but they are not numerous enough to do any serious harm, and would not receive any assistance from the Indians on the Reserves who are contented and quick."[24] Although this report was from Fort Pitt, it may be applied as well to the Cree at Battleford. The correspondence was significant as it implied that most of the potential for danger could have been avoided simply by providing adequate relief and rations to the

Cree. The impact of the starvation tactics more than likely caused a calamity rather than subdued the Poundmaker Cree into submission.

To review, the Department and Indian Affairs and the North West Mounted Police seriously considered strengthening the force in the Battleford region prior to the 1885 Rebellion. Fear of potential Cree gatherings predominated in this period, driving authorities to prevent any potential concentration or gathering of the Cree for any purpose. The Mounted Police kept close watch on Big Bear during this period, which drew their attention to Poundmaker whenever there was any potential for unification between these two leaders. Interestingly, there were only two arrests made in 1884 which involved the Cree, and all remained generally quiet in the region. The culmination of Indian grievances into open resistance was most feared by officials of the Department of Indian Affairs and the North West Mounted Police. Although some Cree groups pushed for one large reserve to be granted for their bands, these requests were quickly abated. Crozier's arrest of Kahweechetwaymot during a Thirst Dance at the Poundmaker reserve was the one incident of 1884 that jeopardized the life of the officers involved. The police were lucky that this display of force did not erupt into a display of violence. The Cree of the Battleford area were starving, yet they remained loyal to the obligations of Treaty Six.

NOTES

1 Rudy Wiebe, The Temptations of Big Bear. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc. 1973) p.170.

2 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 1012, File 872, Jan. 1884.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., Vol. 634, Register 1884.

5 Ibid., Vol. 1015, File 1135.

6 Ibid., Vol. 1012, File 854.

7 John L. Tobias, "Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885.", in J.R. Miller (ed.), Sweet Promises -- A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991) p.220.

8 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 1012, File 854.

9 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 1009, File 609.

10 Tobias, "Canada's Subjugation...", p.220.

11 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 635, Register 1884.

12 Ibid., Vol 1017, File 1515.

13 Desmond Morton, The Last War Drum -- The North West Campaign of 1885. (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd. 1972) p.17.

14 John Peter Turner, The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893 Vol. II. (Ottawa: King's Printer and Controller of Stationery 1950) p. 59.

15 George F. G. Stanley, The Birth of Western Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1960) p. 285.

16 Turner, The NWMP..., p.59.

17 Ronald Atkin, Maintain the Right: The Early History of the North West Mounted Police, 1873-1900. (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada, Ltd. 1973) pp. 208-209.

18 Ibid., pp. 208-209.

19 Ibid., p. 209.

20 A fire in the Comptroller's Office in 1897 caused gaps in the correspondence files for the years 1877 - 1887 and part of 1891.

21 Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, Loyal Till Death -- Indians and the North-West Rebellion. (Calgary: Fifth House Publishers 1997) pp. 56-57.

22 Constable R.J. Friesen, "Prelude to Rebellion." in R.C.M.P. Quarterly. Vol. 26, No. 4, April 1961 p.262.

23 Tobias, "Canada's Subjugation...", p. 220-222.

24 NAC, R.G. 18, Vol. 1018, File 1996.

CHAPTER SIX

> We all know the story about the man who sat beside the trail too long, and then it grew over and he could never find his way again. We can never forget what has happened, but we cannot go back nor can we sit beside the trail.[1]

The 1885 Rebellion was distinguished by individual Indian disturbances unique to specific regions of the Saskatchewan District. Fears were rampant of a prairie-wide Indian uprising, yet this level of unification among the various Cree, Assiniboine, Saulteaux, and Blackfoot tribes throughout the prairies was never realized. For example, although there were threats of Big Bear, Lucky Man, and Little Pine joining forces with Poundmaker's followers, their goals were far from treasonous. As suggested in Loyal Till Death, Poundmaker remained loyal to the Queen throughout the Metis Rebellion. Extreme northern Cree groups were unaffected during this time period, and had not experienced the massive impact of starvation and Euro-Canadian settlement as had the bands of Cree in the southern regions. To them, the 1885 Rebellion practically did not exist, as they continued to pursue traditional hunting and trapping, as well as trading with the Hudson's Bay Company. This illustrates that isolation of Cree groups from the impact of Euro-Canadian settlement limited if not excluded them from the Rebellion.

Among the Indian groups that were negatively affected by adjustment to Euro-Canadian ideals of settlement, uniform dissatisfaction developed. However, each band experienced its own particular adversities. It is important to note that

although authorities feared a unified Indian uprising, many bands were unable to agree to coalesce into a large resistant force because of the individuality of each tribe. Alliances and rivalries formed between bands traced back many years prior to Euro-Canadian settlement in the region. It was difficult for some bands to trust other Indian groups who had for centuries been their antagonist. In addition, many groups took their treaty promises earnestly; many felt that taking treaty precluded the use of force against the Queen. Nevertheless, the pressures of struggling to maintain even a meagre livelihood had created some unusual alliances. Government authorities suspected that the potential for unification was a real threat, particularly if rebellious Indian groups outnumbered North West Mounted Police and military forces.

During the North West Rebellion of 1885, Chief Poundmaker and his Cree were considered by government authorities to be fully enmeshed in the turmoil. In the initial stages of the Rebellion, the Metis attempted to gain the support of the Cree as well as other Indian bands throughout the North West. Metis communications were sent to Poundmaker and other reserves in the Territories. Initially, Chief Poundmaker did not support the Metis, and openly volunteered the information he received to Superintendent Crozier and the Mounted Police. Louis Riel, leader of the Metis rebellion, saw in Poundmaker a strong ally. It was hoped that by allying Poundmaker with the Metis cause, the Cree as well as the Blackfoot would follow in support.[2] Poundmaker even went so far as to alert Dewdney and the police to Little Pine's attempts to unify the Cree and the Blackfoot to join the Metis resistance. During the summer of 1884, and January of 1885, Little Pine had planned to meet with Crowfoot to discuss his plans, but was hindered because of blindness which may have resulted from malnutrition.[3]

Metis justifications for rebelling against the police and government were not universally applicable. The grievances of Poundmaker and his people were

separate and distinct from those of the Metis. Poundmaker remained trusting in the protection of the Mounted Police, yet became aware that the citizens of Battleford were feeling threatened by the proximity of the Cree -- fearing that they too would join the Rebellion. Officials considered Battleford to be in danger, jumping to the conclusion that Poundmaker would partner with Riel, in striking contrast to his reputation for supporting the Mounted Police.[4] The correspondence Poundmaker received from Riel and Dumont was reportedly sent along with tobacco. In the letters, Riel had urged the Cree to, "Capture all the police you possibly can . . . render the police of Fort Pitt and Battleford powerless."[5]. Further the message read, "Mutter and growl . . . neither kill nor molest nor ill-treat any persons unnecessarily, but take away arms."[6]. Poundmaker was placed in an awkward position. Even if he decided not to support the Metis, he would have to make his endorsement clear to the police.

Spring and the events at Duck Lake pressured Poundmaker to question the motives of the Dominion government, and consider the victory of the Metis. Historical accounts have presented a diversity of motives for Poundmaker's decision to head to Battleford after he received news of Duck Lake, in what would later be termed the "Siege of Battleford". Historian John Peter Turner stated that Chief Poundmaker and his neighbours, had decided to head to Battleford to meet with the Indian agent, and discuss, ". . . the truth about the Duck Lake affair."[7]. Turner continued to illustrate that the Metis had called upon Poundmaker and his people to take back the land that was their rightful inheritance. Reportedly Poundmaker commented to Robert Jefferson, farm instructor on his reserve:

> Of old the Indian trusted in his God, and his faith was not in vain. He was fed, clothed and free from sickness. Along came the white man and persuaded the Indian that his God was not able to keep up the care; the Indian took the white man's word and deserted to the new God.

> Hunger followed, and disease and death. Now we return to the God we know; the buffalo will come back and the Indian will live the life that God intended him to live![8]

This statement provided support for the theory that Poundmaker was siding with Riel. Most historians have followed this argument, claiming that Poundmaker and his Cree departed for Battleford looking for trouble. On that March 28th day, dressed in war paint and armed, Poundmaker's objective was reportedly to raid and sack Battleford.[9]

In opposition to these popular interpretations, A. Blair Stonechild argued that Poundmaker and Little Pine were indeed concerned about the events at Duck Lake and had ". . . decided to travel to Battleford to express their loyalty to the Queen. Poundmaker also decided at the same time he would take the opportunity to attempt to gain government concessions for food and other treaty provisions.".[10] Stonechild expanded upon this theory in conjunction with historian Bill Waiser in Loyal Till Death. In this rendition, Poundmaker's intentions were honourable, and rumours that the Cree were dressed in war paint were perpetuated in a telegram by fearful Battleford Indian Agent John Rae.[11] These two contrasting histories directly oppose one another regarding Poundmaker's motives: he was either treasonous or loyal to the Queen, with no middle ground.

Recent historical interpretations which take Cree perspectives into consideration provide the strongest case. If the Poundmaker Cree had indeed intended to organize a resistance against the government, their actions would have been openly hostile. It is important to note that the Cree were in no condition to fight, were clearly headed to Battleford in order to meet with the Indian Agent, and would have gained nothing by participating in a Metis Rebellion. Riel and his supporters viewed the Cree as pawns, and the Cree were aware of this factor. The Battleford Cree had made admirable efforts to take up

agriculture on their new reserves, as well as to participate in schooling. They demonstrated a history of respect for the authority of the North West Mounted Police, and were well aware that the Mounted Police were the symbol of the Queen's law in the Territories. The majority of grievances the Cree had with the Dominion Government were predominantly voiced to the Indian Agents. The Poundmaker Cree's first priority would have been to gain relief and rations from the Agent. By professing their loyalty to the Queen, the Cree expected to remind the Indian Department of their treaty obligations and gain much needed rations.

Inevitably, word spread like prairie fire that Poundmaker and other Indians were en route to Battleford. Along the way, several abandoned farms and houses were reportedly raided[12], an occurrence which was foreshadowed in North West Mounted Police correspondence with the Indian Department in the spring of 1884. Euro-Canadian settlers flocked to Fort Battleford to seek police protection. The town of Battleford was under attack, as rumours told, and upon arrival Poundmaker was astonished to find the town completely empty that March 30th. Approximately four to five hundred residents had sought shelter within the North West Mounted Police Fort.[13] Poundmaker and Lucky Man gathered and waited patiently at the office of Indian Agent John Rae, sending a messenger to Fort Battleford to inform Rae that they wished to meet with him. The blatant refusal of the Indian Agent to meet with Poundmaker created a curious dilemma. Rae sent in his stead Hudson's Bay Company Factor McKay, and Peter Ballandine, who was a spy for Edgar Dewdney, and an informer for the Mounted Police.[14] McKay agreed to distribute the food in the Company's stores to Poundmaker and Little Pine's followers until proper assistance from the Indian Department could be arranged. Upon the return of Ballandine and McKay to the Fort, a telegram was sent to Dewdney; "Indians willing to go back to reserves tomorrow if their demands for clothing are met. Strongly urge you to deal with

them as we are not in a position at present to begin an Indian war."[15] Dewdney's response, although received too late, was rather poignant. He stated he wished to meet with Poundmaker; "You have full authority to deal with Indians. Use discretion and ask Poundmaker to meet me in Swift Current with copy of any arrangements you make. He can bring a couple of his best Indians with him. His expenses will be paid and I guarantee his safety."[16]. Poundmaker was informed prior to Dewdney's response that he should quietly return to his reserve to await instruction from Indian Affairs.

Historians have volunteered a conflicting interpretation of this event. According to these accounts, other Indian groups were coalescing at Battleford -- not just Poundmaker and Little Pine Cree. Stoney and Metis were reportedly present, and were responsible for shots at Ballandine and McKay as they returned to Fort Battleford. The Stoney and Metis engaged in looting the empty stores and houses of Battleford, and as a result, some of Poundmaker and Little Pine's younger and easily influenced Cree followed suit.[17]

Opposing historical accounts suggest that there were other forces at work. Blair Stonechild argued; "They had been too hurried to take much; the principal looting was the work of white men. As soon as the coast was clear in the morning they came over in detachments and finished what the Indians had begun. They made a clean sweep."[18]. Poundmaker and Little Pine returned to their reserve the next morning as promised. However, Department of Indian Affairs assistance never arrived. Chief Little Pine died shortly after the return of the band, making Poundmaker the primary Cree chief for the Battleford area. Upon Poundmaker's return, he spoke with Farm Instructor Robert Jefferson, who had remained on the reserve. The chief made it known that he was no longer able to control his Cree followers. Historian John Turner claimed that:

> ... the chief sought the instructor and exclaimed `I am glad you are still alive. Nobody shall harm you now ... Henceforth you are safe.'. Later the troubled chieftain unburdened his mind to the instructor, saying that he thought the Indians all over the plains would rise as these had done ... but the plains Indians had long since learned to respect the authority and honesty of the Mounted Police.[19]

The outcome of this episode at Battleford reflected very negatively on Poundmaker and the Battleford Cree. The pillaging was blamed entirely upon the Cree although it was evident that other forces were at play. The Cree were in Battleford to seek assistance, not to attack the townspeople. A few individual members of the band may have caused some minor vandalism, but verbal permission was given for the Cree to obtain supplies from the Hudson's Bay Company store. Fear influenced those within Fort Battleford, both settlers and Mounted Police, who jumped to rash assumptions. Poundmaker returned to his reserve as promised, yet the Dominion government believed the rumours which had arisen, and now considered the new chief a traitorous follower of the Metis, and a dangerous cohort of Big Bear.

Shortly after the "Siege of Battleford" the Mounted Police were denounced for their lack of concern and failure to intercede. Historian Ronald Atkin summarized the cowardly behaviour of the Battleford North West Mounted Police: "Crozier excepted, the criticism of `lack of vigour' could be directed at quite a few of the Mounted Police . . . . Inspector William Morris had hardly distinguished himself by watching from the shelter of his fort while Poundmaker's Cree pillaged Battleford."[20] While this is Atkin's personal observation, it is quite applicable in describing the behaviour of the Mounted Police. Instead of confronting the Cree who were supposedly ransacking Battleford, they remained within the safe confines of the police fort. Although the Mounted Police may have remained inside to keep restraint over the Battleford citizens under their protection, they ignored the scenario which unfolded within the township.

Perhaps if even a couple of officers had escorted Ballandine and McKay, rumours and misinterpretation of the intentions of the Cree would have been avoided. It is also particularly curious that a few of the police were not sent to patrol the abandoned township to provide a presence of law, and to hinder potential vandalism. Rash assumptions were made that the attack on Mounted Police which occurred at Duck Lake was destined to repeat itself at Battleford. This particular incident exemplified that the Mounted Police did not have control over a situation which required their immediate intervention. As representatives of the Queen's law, a strong presence of the North West Mounted Police was essential to maintain an effective alliance with the Cree. Had the Mounted Police gathered courage and fulfilled their duties at Battleford, they could have achieved an important level of diplomatic unification and trust, effectively halting government concerns of an Indian uprising by Poundmaker Cree.

The Fort Battleford Post Journal of 1885 does not provide any significant revelation regarding these varied interpretations of Cree and Mounted Police predicaments that spring. The Journal demonstrates that the North West Mounted Police were negligent in recording their investigation of the situation. For example, it noted that an assembly of Indians was observed around Fort Battleford, and that shots were heard, but there was no attack on the Fort as feared on the 30th of March. Barney Freemont (Bernard Treemont, stock-raiser in historian Alexander Begg's account [21]) was reported to have been killed by Indians: Applegarth, Payne (Stoney Reserve farm instructor), and Cunningham also were said to be killed. The Journal also recorded that Indians were burning and plundering in the Eagle Hills and up the Battle River. Although it is not clear if all participants were strictly Poundmaker Cree, the Journal stated that Indians had entered all the stores and houses on the south side during the night and had taken away all goods and clothing, destroying what could not be carried. The

entry for Tuesday, March 31, reported that the Stoney Indians were on the war-path, and on Monday, April 1st, "Indians and breeds robbing stores on south side took Gun down to Cottons and fired several shells at them."[22]. Applegarth and Cunningham who were earlier reported dead were actually found to have escaped to Swift Current. The Journal recorded that on Monday the 13th of April, Colonel Herchmer sent a scout to Poundmaker's. On the 14th, "Miller and Spence . . . reported that 9 stony [sic] Indians arrived there and stated that `Poundmaker with the Indians of six reserves are crossing the Battle River and intend to attack the Barracks tomorrow.'" An Indian scout was sent out on the 14th, and on Wednesday the 22nd of April, Frank A. Smart was shot by Indians while on patrol. Again, scouts were sent out to Poundmaker's on the 27th, and it was discovered on the 28th that several Indians had concentrated on Little Pine's reserve.

All of these entries were a simple record of occurrences which, in regard to the uproar at Battleford, illustrated that minimal action was taken to arrest or confront those directly responsible for the damage in town. At this point, the proud, noble, and fearless portrayal of the police fades. Perhaps they too were fearful and believed the rumours of rebellion, placing their own protection above the maintenance of law and order at any cost. One might go so far as to suggest that had a thorough investigation been made, proper protocol followed and guilty parties arrested, the police would not have had to wait for the Dominion Government to send in the troops. Why had the Mounties lost their gusto? Had they received orders to disregard illegal activities? Was Battleford now in a state of lawlessness? If Superintendent Crozier was valiant enough to arrest one Cree for assault, in the middle of a gathering of over 2000 restless Cree, why was he unable to locate and arrest the perpetrators of the vandalism at Battleford? It seems apparent that the mentality of warlike conditions had fully taken hold of

Fort Battleford, and police duty had become the protection of the fort. Fear had escalated to a level which paralysed the Mounties into helplessness.

Regardless of whether or not Poundmaker was behind the sacking of Battleford, his Cree were blamed for the killing of Freemont, Payne, and Smart, although it had been rumoured that a group of Assiniboine had been responsible.[23] He, as chief, was therefore held primarily responsible.[24] Historical accounts vary in their interpretations, reflecting the misinformation and confusion that prevailed during this chaotic period. The Dominion Government's anxiety pertaining to the Metis Rebellion automatically transferred over to the Battleford Cree. Historian John Tobias put forth the suggestion that Dewdney and the government used the crisis to their advantage, as an excuse to attack the Cree leaders. The irrational assumption was made by the government that all Indians were in direct support of the Metis, although no clear alliance had been declared. Commissioner Hayter Reed, sent a letter to Poundmaker and other Indians of the Battleford District which stated:

> We have sufficient police here [Prince Albert] to overpower Riel's party, but intend waiting the arrival of 3,000 well trained soldiers in the country in order to avoid more spilling of innocent blood if possible. I pray you now, and you know my words are always good, to return quietly to your homes and attend your work, for I fear some of you will do what you will afterwards be sorry for; and if you do this, the law will certainly punish you ....[25]

This warning demonstrated that the Indian Department was fearful that the Indians would actively seek to join forces with Riel, and hoped to dissuade any treasonous activities by forwarning of the arrival of troops who were to provide reinforcement for the government. Further notice was given, hinting that if everyone returned to their reserves peacefully and resumed work, they would not be punished by the Government.

Poundmaker had done just this, remaining on his reserve and encouraging others of his group to follow his example. However, Poundmaker's efforts were nullified because of a scandalous letter he had supposedly written on April 29th. A reply from Poundmaker to Riel, the letter was intercepted by Government agents. It read:

> I want to hear news of the progress of God's work. If any event has occurred since your messengers came away, let me know of it. Tell me the date when the Americans will reach the Canadian Pacific Railway. Tell me all the news that you have heard from all places where your work is in progress .... Here we have killed six white men. We have not taken the barracks yet, but that is the only entire building in Battleford. All the cattle and horses in the vicinity we have taken. We have lost one man, Nez Perce killed, he being alone, and one wounded. Some soldiers have come from Swift Current, but I do not know their number ....[26]

This correspondence could not be verified as genuine, and was suspected to have been fabricated. Indeed, it is odd that Poundmaker would, on one hand, have spoken passionately regarding the abandonment of the white man's God to ensure the return of the buffalo, yet in a later scenario crave the news of "God's work". In the trial of Poundmaker this letter was revealed to be fraudulent.[27]

In reaction to the "Siege of Battleford", Colonel W.D. Otter of the Canadian Militia marched to Battleford with plans to attack the Poundmaker Cree. Although Poundmaker's rumoured alliance with the Metis was unconfirmed, and prior to the Battleford incident he held a relatively positive reputation among most authorities, punishment was to be dealt out swiftly. In the words of historian A.L. Haydon, Colonel Otter had decided to, ". . . take the bull by the horns."[28]. Traditional historians suggested that Poundmaker was known to have been discontented with the terms of treaty, and was, therefore, a trouble-maker. In addition, he was well aware that the Cree treaty provided poorly, and was an insult to the Cree in comparison to the terms and provisions arranged with the Blackfoot. Although Poundmaker eventually signed the treaty,

he supposedly "had recently declared that unless the Cree settled close together and put forth a united plea their outlook was hopeless."[29]. This discontent, in conjunction with the vandalism at Battleford, vexed the North West Mounted Police and authorities. The "Battle at Cut Knife Hill" developed out of Otter's personal decision to take aggressive action against Poundmaker.

Once more there is a wide assortment of historical accounts of the events that took place during the battle at Cut Knife. The R.G. 18 files provide minimal insight regarding the conflict between the North West Mounted Police and the Cree. By combining the descriptions of a diversity of historians, a reasonable history of the turmoil emerges, although many opinions regarding Otter's motives and his offensive against Poundmaker have been offered. G.F.G. Stanley in The Birth of Western Canada, suggested that many of Poundmaker's men were young and impulsive warrior types, and Otter was under the impression through misinformation that he and his troops would confront vast numbers of Cree who had taken hold of Battleford, and had blockaded the Mounted Police post.[30]

Desmond Morton explained that Otter received firm orders from General Middleton of the Canadian Militia to remain at the post, ". . . until you ascertain more about Poundmaker's fort and the kind of country he is in."[31]. Morton also observed that Lieutenant Governor Dewdney was aware of Otter's intentions, and Dewdney warned, "Think you cannot act too energetically or Indians will gather in large number."[32]. Dewdney further advised; "Herchmer knows country to Poundmaker's reserve. Sand Hills most dangerous country to march through. Be sure to secure good reliable scouts."[33]. If this account is accurate, the Department of Indian Affairs took an active role in supporting the attack on Poundmaker and his Cree.

A.L. Haydon in "The Riders of the Plains", maintained that Poundmaker and Big Bear were planning to make their way to Duck Lake to assist Riel and

Dumont in Metis Rebellion efforts. On May 1, Big Bear had supposedly decided to move off to join Poundmaker, but along the way had received information about soldiers at Battleford, and chose to camp at Frenchman's Butte.[34]

According to another explanation by historian R.C. Macleod, Otter chose to march based on a rumour that Poundmaker held in hostage several Metis families.[35] Regardless, the majority of these assorted accounts agree that Poundmaker was blind-sided by the attack that May morning.

May 1, 1885, after spending a few days at Battleford, the Canadian Militia set out for Poundmaker's encampment at Cut Knife Creek near Cut Knife Hill, approximately thirty to forty miles west of Battleford. Securing the approval of Lieutenant Governor Dewdney, Colonel Otter, " . . . marched out with 320 men -- including seventy-four Mounted Police -- two seven pounder guns and a Gatling machine gun."[36]. A similar account listed that Otter's company consisted of "75 police, 50 of them mounted, most of the men of "B" Battery and "C" Company 20 men from Foot Guards 60 of Queens 45 of Battleford Rifles."[37]. The Mounted Police participated as back-up support, their actions were clearly militaristic, and they had no intentions of performing the duties of law enforcement officers. They were acting as the Queen's soldiers, as a "kind of army police"[38]. Saturday, May 2, in the early hours of dawn, the Canadian Militia attacked the sleeping camp of Cree, accompanied by a column of North West Mounted Police under the command of Superintendent W.M. Herchmer. The battle lasted six to seven hours, killing five members of the militia, and injuring thirteen others.

An article in the R.C.M.P. Quarterly confirmed these numbers yet added a piece of interesting information. Corporal Ralph Bateman Sleigh was killed at Cut Knife on May 2; however, Corporal William H.T. Lowry and Constable Patrick Burke died May 3rd from wounds. More important was the mention of

Regiment. No. 973 - Constable Frank O. Elliot who was reportedly killed by Indians near Battleford while on scouting duty on May 14th.[39]

The North West Mounted Police Fort Battleford Post Journal for 1885 gave one entry that pertained to the conflict at Cut Knife:

> Troops returned from Poundmaker's about 9:30 having had an engagement with the enemy lasting from 5:15 a.m. til 11:45 a.m. The Indians had been lying in wait for the troops and attacked them while they were crossing a creek about 3 miles S.W. of Poundmaker's, at 11:45 the order was given to retire which was done in good order. 7 pdr. guns broke up generally. Result: Corpls Lowry and Sleigh and Const. Burke killed, Sgt. Ward seriously wounded, Dobbs B. Rigles killed, 2 "C" coy. killed, 1 teamster killed, 1 Foot Grd. missing, N.W.M.P. and B'ford rifles behaved heroically![40]

This brief description has been the basis for many descriptions of the Battle and the role of the North West Mounted Police in the attack of the Poundmaker Cree. It emphasizes three key points: that the Cree lay in wait for the attack, that the Mounted Police suffered serious losses, and, finally, that the assistance of the Canadian Militia was courageous. Oral sources provide contrary evidence, which will be examined in greater detail in chapter eight. Poundmaker elder Art Kasokeo, for example, suggested that the Cree were warned to relocate camp by spiritual means, however they were still caught largely by surprise that morning.[41] Although it is true that the Mounted Police suffered losses, the Poundmaker Cree also had casualties. Women, children, men, and elders all slept in the same camp. Elder Wallace Semeganis categorized the actions of the Mounted Police as an "invasion", adding that no one knew for certain how many of the Cree people were killed.[42] Finally, although the North West Mounted Police were categorized as heroic from their actions in Battle, it must be emphasized that the conflict may have been avoided if the police had displayed more courage during the so called "Seige of Battleford".

Historians have not always been accurate in determining what occurred during the Battle. In a description given by R.C. Fetherstonhaugh, for example, Constable Elliot went missing during the retreat. He had supposedly fallen off his horse, and had fired all his ammunition but was killed by Indians. He was then found buried by a Roman Catholic priest who was reported to be one of the prisoners of Poundmaker's band.[43] This account conflicts with the North West Mounted police records which reveal that Constable Elliot died during scouting duties on the 14th of May.

The conflict at Cut Knife weighed heavily upon Poundmaker's reputation. He fought only in self-defense and had during the retreat of the militia, ordered Cree warriors, "to leave the Canadian soldiers in peace."[44]. Nevertheless, Poundmaker was now committed to the rebellion by circumstance, and had no choice but to flee his reserve.[45]

Reports reached Battleford that Poundmaker relocated his camp after the conflict, and captured a supply train from Swift Current on May 14th. A few hours later his band encountered a reconnaissance party of police and scouts from Fort Battleford. A conflict must have ensued, as one officer was wounded and one policeman was thrown from his horse -- left to fight and die alone.[46] Constable Elliot was killed as Poundmaker and Battleford Cree fled the area, reportedly en route to join Riel at Batoche.

In the aftermath of the Battle at Cut Knife, the North West Mounted Police records provide a greater amount of information regarding interaction with Poundmaker and the Cree. A contributing factor to this increase in historical evidence is the availability of detailed court records for this post-rebellion period. Not surprisingly, just as there are at least two different versions surrounding the death of Constable Elliot, there are varying positions regarding the treatment and actions of Poundmaker and Battleford Cree following the Cut Knife episode.

The Battleford Post Journal indicated that on Wednesday May 20th, Poundmaker chose to place himself and his people at the mercy of the Dominion Government authorities. By this time, Riel had already been captured, which has often been depicted as the factor that clinched Poundmaker's decisions. Poundmaker consulted farm instructor Jefferson who relayed to the chief that some Indians would be hanged and some would be sent to prison. Poundmaker released the members of the Swift Current supply train:

> At 7 p.m. some waggons [sic] appeared on the south side, the foremost carrying a white flag; they proved to contain the teamsters held prisoners by Poundmaker .... also some Halfbreeds and the priest; the latter brought a letter from Poundmaker proposing or asking for terms, for a surrender. Baptiste Fontaine ... came in with the teamsters they are unanimous in stating that they have been well treated by the Indians.[47]

The hostages also served as messengers for Poundmaker. They had in their possession a letter from the chief addressed to General Middleton:

> Eagle Hills, May 19, 1885.
>
> Sir:
>
> I am camped with my people at the east end of the Eagle Hills, where I am met by the news of the surrender of Riel. No letter came with the news so I cannot tell how far it may be true. I send some of my men to you to learn the truth and the terms of peace, and I hope you will deal kindly with them. I and my people wish you to send the terms of peace in writing so that we may be under no misunderstanding from which so much trouble arises. We have 21 prisoners, whom we have treated well in every respect.
>
> With greetings.
>
> Poundmaker (his mark)[48]

Poundmaker also requested assurances that when the police had settled matters with the Metis that they would not direct their anger towards the Cree. Middleton offered no such terms, only an agreement to meet with Poundmaker at Battleford in his response sent on May 21st.[49] On Tuesday May 26th, Poundmaker presented himself to General Middleton. Arriving at noon, Poundmaker was accompanied by Yellow Mud Blanket, Chut-chu-wa-sen, Lean Man, Crooked

Leg, and Man With No Blood.[50] The meeting was quickly transformed into an improvised court trial with Middleton fulfilling the role of judge and jury.[51] Poundmaker and his men were considered traitors, and were to be held as prisoners. Middleton announced, "Poundmaker, you are accused of high treason.", for which there was no Cree translation, so the interpreter said, "You are accused of throwing sticks at the Queen and trying to knock her bonnet off."[52] Colonel Otter persisted:

> The Indians [,] even Poundmaker who had been so well treated, rose and robbed because they thought the whites were in difficulties. All around you attacked stores, and killed men and women ... instead of saying `This is the time for showing ourselves grateful to the white people', you turned on them whenever you got a chance. This very band (pointing to Poundmaker's) deliberately went out to join the enemy, and if they had beaten us would have gone on plundering, and would have committed more murders .... Let all Indians understand that if one white man is killed, ten Indians will suffer for it ... and if you, Poundmaker, had not come in I would have hunted the band down until I had killed everyone if possible.[53]

From Colonel Otter's words it becomes apparent that the outcome of General Middleton's trial was predetermined. After the speech, two other members of Poundmaker's band openly admitted to the murders of white settlers in the district.[54] Regardless, Otter proceeded to detain Poundmaker as a prisoner, and placed him in the guard room, along with a few other of his men. The remainder of the band who were present were ordered to return to their reserve.

Several other impromptu trials were to follow in the months after Poundmaker's detention. Efforts to deal out swift punishment were in full swing. The Battleford 1885 Post Journal indicated that on June 3rd, Poundmaker, Yellow Mud Blanket, Breaking Thru The Ice, Lean Man, Chas. Bremner, Jas. Bremner, Wm. Frank, Hy. Sayer, Baptiste Sayer, and Itka were moved from the guard room to the Government House by order of Colonel Otter.[55] In late June, at the

Battleford Post, additional charges were issued against the following for charges relating to involvement in the rebellion: Jacob, Tah-Cot-Gan, Wee-e-Nus, Mistatinanas, Guillamme Villebran, Louison Sayer, Na-Too-se, Basil Favel, Fred Armason, Eli Francis (or Whitford), and Moses Sayer (who was discharged).[56] The Post Journal also revealed that on July 2nd, Colonel Herchmer left for Poundmaker's reserve with a body of police for some "purpose unknown"[57], returning the next morning. Perhaps this was to conduct investigations into the affairs surrounding the Battle at Cut Knife, the reported murder of settlers in the area, or the vandalism at Battleford earlier that spring. By July 7th, the reports revealed that Pa-pe-qno-sit-ance, Se-ah-ka-ta-mo, Ne-as-askive-en, and Ka-se-no-wah-se were committed for trial. All were sentenced on July 22nd to "6 years in the penitentiary, except Ka-se-no-wah-se who was discharged."[58].

On Saturday July 4th, with police from both Battleford and Ft. Macleod, Herchmer left for Swift Current with twenty-five prisoners: Poundmaker, Ely Francis, Chas. Bremner, Man With No Blood, Jas. Bremner, Louis Goulet, Natoose, Breaking The Ice, Wm. Frank, Baptiste Sayer, Andre Nault, We-e-nus, Itka (Crooked Leg), Abraham Montor, Leon Francis, Chas. Poyack, Tah-cot-gan, and Joseph Henault. Also included were some of Big Bear's men: Four Sky Thunders, Miserable Man, Bright Eyes, The Talker, Hawk Talking, Ka-pah-ees, and Kah-pay-too-sa.

At this point there is an assortment of documents in the police records which help to describe the events at Battleford. Major Butler wrote to the Mounted Police on August 17, 1885, regarding warrants for the arrest of Peasis, Kolasis, Newasis (Little Egg) and Muskoose (Little Bear). Butler continued to communicate that although the warrants were issued on June 26th, they had not been received. Butler added that he held in his custody the afore-mentioned Little Bear: " and assume that this is the same Indian as you refer to in your letter. He

is charged with the murder of George Dill at Frog Lake, but in case he should get clear on this charge, it may be well to have another to fall back upon, therefore I write to you to ask you as you have charge against him to forward your arrest information and to have your witnesses present at the next sittings of the `Saskn District Court' . . ."[59] It is apparent from this correspondence that officials were determined to ensure that there would be no acquittals in this case, possibly even neglecting the justice system to ensure an expedient sentence was delivered.[60] Another example of negligence regarding proper court procedure became evident in a letter to N. S. Morris, Inspector Commanding Battleford post from A. D. Stewart, Public Prosecutor in Battleford. The Public Prosecutor requested that sentenced prisoners be kept separate from those who were untried, all of whom had been jailed together up until this point.[61] The only solution that the Inspector Commanding could offer was to set up a "bell tent" which seemed unsuitable and rather informal considering the seriousness of the charges laid -- charges whose sentence could result in death. Having the tried and untried mixed together allowed for conversation which easily could have corrupted testimony, witnesses, and accounts of the events under question.

Further evidence of disturbances involving the Mounted Police and the Battleford Cree also emerge at this time from a letter dated September 28th. This correspondence from John Carney at the Indian Office in Battleford to Edgar Dewdney reports that Carney had: ". . . been informed that the Indians are gathering at the Two Ponds, between Poundmaker's Reserve and Tramping Lake where Lucky Man and Nacotan -- Little Poplar's brother, are said to be the leaders. A number of Indians have recently left Little Pine's and Poundmaker's Reserves, it is supposed, for the purpose of joining them . . . ."[62] The news was in turn reported to Colonel Morris of the North West Mounted Police and he was asked to send officers. Morris replied that he would do so a few days after court.

This communication demonstrates how in the immediate aftermath of rebellion, there remained a perpetual fear of renewed uprising among the Cree.

Writings from November 21, 1885, gave indications of Cree migration south and westward to join with the Blackfoot or other reserves in the desperate era of post-rebellion. Inspector Morris communicated his search for members of reserves from the Battleford area, especially youth who had left Poundmaker's reserve with Indian Department horses. The problem was greater than what appeared on the surface. Morris reported that seven horses and seventy-five Indians had left the reserve and indicated that there were some major internal problems on the reserves:

> Daniels the Interpreter had frightened the Indians by telling them that they would be arrested. I also interviewed the Rev. Father Cauchin. He informed me that the Indians were continually complaining about Daniel saying that all of them that were in any way connected with the late Rebellion were to be arrested this winter and also that the Indians had complained to him of Indian Agent Carney stating that he was too often drunk to attend to his business and that their rations only give them one meal per day. A good many of them are now ill and will very likely die as there are no medicines for them .... the Indians on this reserve are very much dissatisfied and are continually complaining about their food. They explained to me that they were willing to work but were too weak as one square meal is all their rations would allow.[63]

Morris explained that the Poundmaker Cree had planned to join the Blackfoot because they had heard that better rations were received on Blackfoot reserves than Cree reserves. In addition, poverty and illness continued to rise among the Battleford Cree.

As a final note for that year, the Battleford Post Journal documented that on October 5th through 9th, Itka, May-wah-nitch, Wapace, and Apischaskoos were sentenced to death, and the executions of all who were sentenced to hang took place in Battleford on November 27th.[64] Three members from Poundmaker's band were accused of ". . . feloniously uttering a certain letter

addressed to Louis Riel during the rebellion". Casting His Hair, Spotted, and Taking Lives were sentenced to two years in prison for signing the famed and fraudulent letter which was falsely credited to Poundmaker.[65]

The Department of Indian Affairs translated Poundmaker's actions as those of insolence and insubordination. On August 17th and 18th, the trial of Chief Poundmaker for treason-felony was held. Poundmaker pleaded not guilty. He was also charged for North West Mounted Police and Army losses during the May 2nd struggle at Cut Knife; cooperation with the Metis Rebellion efforts as indicated in the intercepted letter from Poundmaker to Louis Riel; and for taking hostages from a supply train in the Eagle Hills.[66] Contrary to his reputation as an avid supporter of Mounted Police authority, and as a pacifist in the region, Poundmaker was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for what the Dominion perceived as active participation in the Rebellion. Responding to these charges, Poundmaker stated, "Everything that is bad has been laid against me this summer, there is nothing of it true."[67]

Poundmaker was certain that he would not live long after his imprisonment at Stony Mountain Penitentiary. At his trial, Poundmaker begged, "Hang me now, I can die. I would rather you kill me than lock me up for three years."[68] His plea fell on deaf ears, although one concession was granted. Poundmaker was allowed to keep his long hair during his incarceration.[69] Sadly, his fatal prediction came true: Poundmaker died of tuberculosis two years after his release.[70]

William Parker, a member of the North West Mounted Police during this period, was present at the Battleford hangings. Eleven Indians in total were condemned to death, forty-four sentenced under a variety of related charges, and eight were sentenced to hang publicly.[71] Parker was witness to the tensions

prevalent at Battleford and the desperation of officials to quickly deal out punishment to those who had broken the law during the rebellion:

> From [Regina] I was sent in charge of a large party of released Indians and half-breed prisoners, twenty-six in all who were to be taken back to Battleford via Swift Current .... for about two months I did several guards, watching between sixty and seventy Indian and half-breed prisoners. Eight of these Indians were charged with murder, with others getting long terms of imprisonment, and still others being released.[72]

The eight Indians hanged on that November 27th day were: Wandering Spirit, Itka, Little Bear, Iron Body, Round The Sky, Man Without Blood, Bad Arrow, and Miserable Man. One Cree, Miserable Man, was innocent. He was charged with the shooting of Farm Instructor Payne, but had only shot Payne's dog; someone else shot the instructor.[73] Yet again, strong evidence is revealed that authorities who were quick to punish were prone to atrocious errors in judgment.

To recap, the role of the North West Mounted Police in the Battleford area in 1885 was quite different compared to the pre-Rebellion area. They fulfilled the function of a military force during the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, yet appeared to remain mere bystanders during the "Siege of Battleford". Finally, they were quick to guarantee the swift punishment of any Cree who were suspected to have been involved in the 1885 Rebellion.

The events which unfolded involving the Battleford Cree were separate from the Metis Rebellion. Poundmaker and his followers remained loyal to the Queen; there was no mass Indian uprising. The adjustment to Euro-Canadian ideals of settlement had created dissatisfaction among many of the Cree, which the Government perceived as just cause for a unified Indian resistance. Metis grievances differed from Cree concerns, yet the authorities tended to lump these two diverse groups together, and called upon the North West Mounted Police to keep a close watch.

Battleford was considered to be in constant danger from Poundmaker, whom the Government regarded as a trouble-maker, contrary to his reputation prior to the Rebellion as peace-maker. Riel had attempted to contact Poundmaker, but the Cree leader refused to cooperate with the Metis. In an attempt to clarify his loyalty to Indian Agent John Rae at Battleford, Poundmaker became the object of fear; rumours spread that he and his Cree followers were on the war-path. Although the Poundmaker Cree returned to their reserve as requested, they were blamed for vandalism that had occurred in the abandoned township. The Mounted Police, meanwhile, cowered within the safe confines of Fort Battleford to await the reinforcement of the Canadian Militia.

Colonel Otter arrived at Battleford in anticipation of battle, but was disappointed to find that the fort was not under siege. In the accompaniment of several members of the North West Mounted Police, the Canadian Militia marched on Cut Knife Hill to attack the Poundmaker Cree, using the ransacking of Battleford as justification for their actions. Mounted Police officers were killed during the battle, a needless loss of life which proved to eventually become an embarrassment for officials. This was the first recorded death of officers in the line of duty for the Battleford region in an incident which also involved the Poundmaker Cree.

Poundmaker ensured that the militia was allowed to retreat in peace, and quickly fled Cut Knife Hill. He surrendered to General Middleton at Battleford in the hopes of attaining reasonable terms, but was disappointed to discover he was to be charged as a traitor. The trials were swift in Battleford, resulting in Poundmaker's imprisonment and the hanging of eight Indians who were entangled in the Rebellion. The Mounted Police served the Dominion Government well, ensuring that there were no acquittals.

NOTES

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3 J.L. Tobias, "Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885." in J.R. Miller (ed.) Sweet Promises -- A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991) p. 227.

4 Turner, The NWMP..., p.102.

5 Ronald Atkin, Maintain the Right: The Early History of the North-West Mounted Police 1873-1900. (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada, Ltd. 1973) p.222.

6 Frank W. Anderson, The Riel Rebellion 1885. (Calgary: Frontier Publishing Ltd. 1955) p.26.

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10 Blair Stonechild, "The Indian View of the 1885 Uprising." in 1885 and After -- Native Society in Transition. (Regina: University of Regina 1986) p.159.

11 Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, Loyal Till Death -- Indians and the North-West Rebellion. (Calgary: Fifth House Publishers 1997) p.91.

12 Stanley, The Birth..., p.335.

13 For further insight, consult Robert Stewart's Sam Steele: Lion of the Frontier. (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Ltd. 1979) pages 130 through 160. This book provides the memoirs of Superintendent Sam Steele, one of the more celebrated members of the North West Mounted Police who was stationed at Battleford during the 1880's. His memoirs focused primarily upon the battle at Fish Creek between Middleton and Big Bear, and related information concerning the Frog Lake Massacre and the murders committed by

Wandering Spirit. The Superintendent admitted that during the events of 1885, he perceived that the Battleford post was unquestionably under serious threat of attack. Even after the uprising, Battleford feared renewed rebellion from the Natives in the surrounding area.

Initially, at the commencement of the unrest, all Cree were relieved of firearms by the Mounted Police, yet Steele felt that further provisions needed to be made. Steele was, according to his memoirs, in command of the Battleford District and the "D" Division -- some 225 Mounted Police. He recalled that he undertook systematic patrols of the nearby Cree reserves in order to strengthen and reinforce Mounted Police/Cree relations, hoping to provide a forum for native grievances and routinely establish the condition of the Cree. He noted that the Cree were in an "unsettled state" and that the "Battleford post was a shambles". In addition to these problems, it was noted in Steele's memoirs that he too had orders to deal with the issue of Native prostitution at Fort Battleford. He went to efforts to raise funds for the regular patrols of the surrounding Cree reserves, and provided supporting evidence of the impact that increased patrols had on the Battleford area.

14 Stonechild, "The Indian View...", p.160.

15 Ibid., p.160.

16 Stanley, The Birth..., p.335.

17 Stonechild, "The Indian View ...", p. 160.

18 Ibid.

19 Turner, The NWMP..., p.125-126.

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22 David Ross, North West Mounted Police Fort Battleford Post Journal, 1885. (Winnipeg: Parks Canada 1987) No pages designated.

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49 Ross, NWMP Fort..., No pages designated.

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53 Begg, History of..., p.234.

54 Anderson, The Riel..., p.67.

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61 NAC. R.G. 18, Vol. 2962, Microfilm T-7132, Letterbooks, Battleford, 1885-1886.

62 Ibid., Vol.1025, File 3521, Correspondence, 1885, Battleford.

63 Ibid., Vol. 1025, File 3533, Nov. 1885.

64 Ross, NWMP Fort..., No pages designated.

65 Haydon, The Riders..., p.248.

66 Quoted in Ibid., p.242.

67 Stanley, The Birth..., p.271.

68 Haydon, The Riders..., p.244.

69 Atkin, Maintain..., p.250.

70 R. G. Macbeth, Policing the Plains. (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd. 1922) pp.123-129.

71 Morton, The Last..., p.164.

72 Quoted in Dempsey, Hugh A. William Parker: Mounted Policemen. (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers 1973) pp.75-76.

73 Stanley, The Birth..., p.272-273.

CHAPTER SEVEN

> The attention is warranted, of course, but it should not obscure the fact that thousands of Indians continued to live in the prairie west after the death of ... Poundmaker and continued to struggle ... [1]

The relationship between the Poundmaker Cree and the Battleford North West Mounted Police shifted from cooperation and mutual respect to fear, suspicion, coercion, and paternalism. The affairs and interests of the Cree were placed into the hands of the Indian Department, allowing the Mounted Police to focus on the concerns of Euro-Canadian settlers. After 1885, suggestions were put forth to combine the Mounted Police with the militia as a force to "overawe the Indians"[2]. Indians in the North West Territories were already forming a minority group in the prairies, and were considered easy prey for assimilation processes.[3] Once a primary concern of the government, this minority was pushed aside, as changes in the attitudes of the Mounted Police and radical changes in Indian Department policies revealed. Dewdney utilized the aftermath of Rebellion to crack down upon Cree and other Indian groups. The Battleford Cree were branded as having played a major role in the uprising of the Metis. However, contrary to this label, many Cree had remained on the reserves during the conflict and did not interfere with authorities.[4] Persuasion, cooperation, and respect shifted to coercion, paternalism, and pity.[5] For example, "A sign of the times was a General Order issued in 1890 which instructed all detachments not to

allow Indian prisoners out of the guardroom without ball and chain . . . along with instructions to avoid feeding Indian prisoners at hotels and restaurants if at all possible."[6] The Mounted Police developed a new relationship with the Cree, one based on mistrust and suspicion.

The changing sign of the times was evident in more ways than the above. The North West Mounted Police and Department of Indian Affairs officials were quick to punish those who were suspected of having directly or indirectly participated in or supported the Metis Rebellion. The Mounted Police regulated the sale of ammunition to those bands who were under suspicion, took away firearms and horses, and withheld annuities. The force was also increased in strength, ". . . from 500 to 1,000 men in view of their increased activity and the fact that, since Indians were now powerless, more settlers would migrate to the North West Territories."[7] The primary concern of the Mounted Police was to ensure the safety and enforcement of law among new Euro-Canadian settlers flooding into the plains region. Less emphasis was placed upon policing among the Cree, unless there were complaints from members of the Euro-Canadian settler population.

By December of 1885, a report on the destitution among "Northern Indians" around Battleford and Prince Albert emphasized that assistance was required. False allegations made by Indian Agent Rae implied that Indians had congregated that winter to create "mischief".[8] A letter from Superintendent Perry at the Prince Albert Division confirmed that the Cree of that district were not renewing an uprising, and confirmed that they were quiet and peaceably inclined.[9] Evidently, the decline of police protection and law enforcement among the Cree was having a detrimental impact. Correspondence in the police records revealed that fears regarding an Indian uprising continued to be addressed in February, 1886. A report written on February 27th analyzed the conditions on

the Battleford reserves. The report indicated that in comparison to the Sweetgrass Reserve, members of the Poundmaker Reserve were, ". . . in a very much better state . . . . They have a few discontented spirits among them but the majority of the band can be depended on and they are only anxious to be assured that there is a sufficient military force to protect them as well as the whites."[10] Also in February of that year, scarlet fever broke out on the reserves. By April 6th, the Comptroller of the North West Mounted Police sent a letter to the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, L. Vankoughnet, advising that Mounted Police surgeons would continue to practice on the reserves with Indian Affairs paying for transportation costs. However, he noted, ". . . I would suggest that the Medicine Chests of the Indian Department should be kept on the Reserves and quite distinct from `Police Medicines'."[11]

It was clear that the Cree were increasingly becoming the responsibility of Indian Affairs. Mounted Police involvement with the Cree was limited to scheduled patrolling to ensure that Indians did not leave the reserve. Any purpose such as hunting,[12] which was common as food and rations remained scarce, was deemed undesirable. On September 10, 1886, for example, about sixty Cree deserted the Poundmaker reserve, as reported by Indian Agent MacKay. Joseph Howe, Inspector for the North West Mounted Police responded rather unenthusiastically that this situation was "not of a very serious nature."[13]. The police had a new list of priorities.

Police attitudes had shifted. Samuel Steele of the North West Mounted Police in the Battleford District reported to his superiors on May 4 and June 22, 1886, regarding the constant necessity for patrolling Cree reserves. The report alludes to the tediousness of these continuous patrols, emphasizing that the local Indian Agents, as well as officers sent on patrol reported that all reservation Cree were calm and thoroughly submissive. Steele also made note that he had

experienced difficulties in finding a suitable interpreter for the patrols, one who could speak both Cree and Assiniboine. The only excitement that called for the involvement of the police took place on June 22 of that year. Steele reported that he had arrested an Indian named "Breaking Through the Ice", who was a suspected runner for the Blackfoot Camp. His letter questioned the arrest of the man and proposed the release of the prisoner. Steele suggested the runner be escorted to a local reserve because the man was non-treaty; yet, he was hesitant because "Breaking Through the Ice" had been a prisoner of Colonel Herchmer the previous summer. Short of this example, very minimal contact with the Cree was evident, unless deemed an absolute necessity by the Mounted Police.

The year 1887 witnessed a continuation in this reserved attitude that the police held regarding Cree relations. Monthly visits to the Poundmaker reserve were made, otherwise the only other Mounted Police presence occurred during treaty payments when officers escorted Indian Department officials. Commissioner L.W. Herchmer argued that the police were, ". . . not displaying their old firmness and dash when dealing with criminal Indians . . ."[14] because of fear of retaliation. Herchmer warned that should the Cree choose to partake of criminal activities, they now had innocent settlers to prey upon. Prior to the influx of scattered Euro-Canadian settlement, Herchmer explained, the Cree sought retribution aimed only at the Police or at worst a few traders.

Population censuses of the Poundmaker and Little Pine reserves were conducted in 1888 by the North West Mounted Police to ascertain how many possible male participants could volunteer should a new rebellion occur.[15] The records indicated that on January 11th, 269 people inhabited the reserves, fifty-five of whom were males who fell into the category of potential participants. In correspondence dated September 21, 1888, Herchmer sent orders to the Battleford Mounted Police requesting that, "Indians without passes must be kept

out of Battleford. Arrest all those without passes, and after due warning if they do not leave neighborhood of town try them as vagrants."[16]. This is another indication of the new attitude of the force towards the Cree. This "pass system" was designed to provide control over the movement and actions of Indians who ventured off reserve for any reason.[17] Although technically extra legal, the system was actively enforced by the Battleford Mounted Police[18] until 1892, at which time officers were informed they could no longer enforce the "high-handed methods of the Indian Agents."[19].

Prejudices among the Euro-Canadian population against the Cree increased dramatically during this period. Many of the Mounted Police also reflected the prejudices of the populace, regarding "Indians as inferior beings to be tolerated only as long as they stayed out of the way."[20]. Although this Victorian attitude may have been the mainstream, it was not all-encompassing. Some Cree were hired as special constables, scouts, and interpreters, particularly in the late 1880s and early 1890s. These men were efficient in assisting in police investigations as well as making arrests, as they were often familiar with the history of the suspects. Special constables, it is important to note, were only used during manpower shortages within the detachment, and could not carry arms, or hold the equivalent power of a regular constable.[21]

To illustrate, Mounted Police records indicate that Cree were hired to perform tasks in and around the Police Posts. On October 16, 1891, local Indians were hired to mud and whitewash the Police Barracks at Battleford. They were paid eighty cents per day, and the employment lasted 190 days, totaling $152.00. [22] Although the Cree made up a portion of those employed by the police, this does not provide proof positive that Indians were given the same amount of employment opportunities and respect as Euro-Canadians employed by the Mounted Police.

The North West Mounted Police were instrumental in ensuring that Indian students would attend and remain at Industrial and boarding schools. The Superintendent Commissioner at Battleford received a complaint on January 28, 1891, "Industrial School boys were in the habit of sliding down the hill at South Battleford leading to the Bridge over Battle River and the hill was rendered dangerous to passengers, several accidents having occurred."[23]. The Mounted Police ensured that this minor irritation was rectified. By 1895, compulsory education of Indian children was introduced to the Battleford area.[24] In June of that year, a case was reported where Constable Jarvis and Corporal Holmes were sent out with a guide by the name of Ballantine to find four runaway boys from the Industrial School. The boys had apparently deserted to attend a Sun Dance.[25] One other instance of Police involvement regarding boys from the Industrial school was reported on May 18, 1896, by Superintendent Cotton at Battleford. A fifty dollar fine and one month's imprisonment was dealt to Simon Smidt, "a young half-breed," for giving liquor to an Industrial School Boy.[26]

The Police continued to remain a strong presence during treaty payments. Annuity payments at Battleford for 1890, equaled $4,975.00.[27] For 1891 and 1892, this total was $4,745.00.[28] Finally, by 1901, payments at Battleford totaled $4,185.00 and in July, 1902, treaty payments totaled $4,190.00.[29] That same year, vouchers were sent via the Mounted Police to reimburse the Hudson's Bay Company for relief of destitute Indians.[30] These numbers provide an indication that the systems and payments established by the Indian Department remained in effect without alterations for quite some time.

Within the R.G. 18 files was a copy of a letter which appeared in the editorial section of the Winnipeg Free Press. The letter was written April 18, 1893, by H. Taylor of the Breysalor Settlement, a community located north-east of the Poundmaker Reserve. Although from the article it is difficult to ascertain

whether Taylor was of Euro-Canadian or mixed-blood ancestry, his letter was significant enough to attract the attention of the public. More importantly, the North West Mounted Police felt the letter to the editor was important enough to be included, along with other complaints, in an investigation into the condition of the Cree that summer. The letter provided reasons why many Aboriginal people from Poundmaker reserve desired to relocate to Blackfoot reserves, and addressed the issue of the impoverished state of the Cree. The editorial letter was extremely sympathetic, although prejudices against the Cree were evident. It is probable that the general farming populace, both Euro-Canadian and mixed-blood, desired Indian destitution to be resolved swiftly, primarily to avoid dealing with beggars or witness the appalling state of the Cree. The letter outlined the atrocities of Cree poverty that farmers in the Battleford area were forced to witness on a daily basis.

The letter to the editor began with an explanation that the crops of the local Cree were insufficient to feed them over the winter. As a result, many were forced to beg for food, even offering to sell their clothing to secure nourishment. Taylor added that many of the people of Breysalor, himself included, could speak Cree, and were able to discuss Indian grievances. Taylor wondered, "When is this going to end? Are we going to have a second 1885 because the Indian Department will not give them something to eat? They certainly get a ration but it is not sufficient to keep a dog alive."[31]. The report continued to note that many of the local Indians had attempted to head south, or leave to Blackfoot reserves without the permission of the Indian Department. Those few who returned to their reserves told of how much better off the Blackfoot and Southern Indian groups were in contrast to the Cree who were:

> ... practically starving and naked, the consequence of this is naturally enough great dissatisfaction. We farmers with the help of the

> Missionaries are doing our best to keep the Indians from absolute starvation, but it is impossible for us to perform the duties of the Indian Department and keep a whole tribe of Indians in food. What can the Missionaries do to evangelize starving people? Their work is very uphill indeed and they are almost pestered out of their lives by those to whom they are ministering the Cause of Christ asking for food, the consequence being that it is impossible to raise the Indians from out of their uncivilized state unless their thoughts are taken from their feelings of starvation, the only way to accomplish this being to give them food.[32]

Taylor mentioned that many of the Cree were ill, and doctors were helpless as the average sick person required at least three-quarters of a pound of beef each day. This portion was never allotted to an Indian, even when ill. To conclude, the letter argued; "What farmer can bear being constantly asked for food especially when it is all we can do to `make both ends meet' in our own families? But then again how many of us can look at even a starving dog and not throw him something to eat?"[33] Taylor's letter closed by hoping that the next time the issue was addressed, he could write to say that the problem had been solved.

The letter to the editor proved a source of embarrassment for the North West Mounted Police and the Indian Department. The withdrawal of police from the affairs of the Cree left a void that the Indian Department did not adequately fill. The Mounted Police initiated an active involvement in Cree affairs, although they had previously been encouraged to leave Indian affairs in the hands of the Indian Department. On June 24th, a few months after Taylor's letter was published, Inspector J. Moodie launched an investigation into complaints of the alleged starvation of the Cree. In his report he related information concerning daily rations allowed Indians, distributed by Farm Instructors. Inspector Moodie stated that each person on Poundmaker and Little Pine Reserves was granted a daily allowance of, ". . . 8oz. Flour, 6oz. Beef or 3oz. Bacon".[34] During May planting the Cree were issued, "a full ration (8oz.) of Flour per head daily and a total issue of Beef during the whole month of 1 1/2 lbs per head.".[35] This meant

that each Cree member of Poundmaker Reserve received a beef ration that only met the requirements of three days' subsistence -- not an entire month's worth. Moodie emphasized that this ration proved extremely inadequate, particularly in consideration of spring seeding, when all on the reserve required higher calorie intake. Furthermore, twenty Cree had been forced to cross the United States border in pursuit of game to feed their families. One doctor who was treating cases of illness on the reserves informed Moodie that starvation was the root cause of all the sickness on the reserves, and that the Cree could not possibly survive without proper rations. Regardless of Moodie's report, little was done to provide relief for the Cree.

A year later, in contrast to Inspector Moodie's report, a letter dated June 21, 1894 from D.C. Scott of Indian Affairs, to Comptroller Fred White of the North West Mounted Police suggested that their department had received news of general contentment among the Cree. Scott was responding to an inquiry White had made about the Indian Department's inaction to relieve starvation among Battleford Cree. Scott's letter suggested that a "Mr. Assistant McIlree" had been misled in believing that the Cree were in dire straits. He emphasized that patrol reports received from Sergeant Major A. G. Mountain of the Battleford district on April 7th reported that all was well. The only issue of concern was an investigation into "Sioux Dances", otherwise referred to as the "Ghost Dance", on the reserves which were revealed to be "Dog Dances". In addition: "I may add that during the Month of May just passed one of our staff from the Regina Office visited all the Reserves in the Battleford Agency, and conversed with the Indians, and found them with every appearance of happiness and contentment, and all expressing satisfaction with the treatment they receive from the Farming Instructors, the Agent, and the Government."[36] The Indian Department had

painted a rosy portrait, and was not to be easily convinced that this picture was fraudulent.

On July 14th, Superintendent Joseph Howe Commanding "C" Division wrote to the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police in Regina. Howe confirmed that Assistant Commissioner McIlree had mentioned that the Cree were ill supplied. According to a conversation Howe had with McIlree during a recent visit, he voiced his opinion that the Cree were receiving inadequate rations. In Howe's letter he summarized that he was told not to meddle in Indian Affairs: any complaint regarding the state of the Cree should be voiced to the relevant Agent.[37] This issue regarding relief reveals that the perceptions of the Department of Indian Affairs differed from the North West Mounted Police. Indian Affairs refused to consider complaints of Cree starvation based on a handful of reports they had received from the region. The Mounted Police, conversely, had to deal with complaints of Cree starvation on a regular and first hand basis.

Superintendent Howe then continued to enlighten the North West Mounted Police Commissioner about an incident that occurred on the Red Pheasant Reserve. That spring, he explained, Farm Instructor J.W. Price threatened to withhold rations for a three-day period. This was the instructor's method of punishing the few members who were gambling their portions away with Stoney Indians from a neighboring reserve. According to Howe's report, the Indians then threatened to break into the store-house and take their rations by force if Price attempted this disciplinary action. Referring to information Howe received from the Thunderchild Reserve, dances were still held on reserves in the region, and that complaints regarding poor rations were on the rise. Specifically, in March a Indian named "Fine Day" had been rallying under Indian grievances,

but seemed to have dropped the cause. Howe's letter also raised the issue of recent trouble on Poundmaker's Reserve:

> With regard to the use of threatening language towards the Police the case of which I spoke to the Assistant-Commissioner about was as follows: On the 26th March last "Man-nee-screw" an old Cree Indian from Poundmaker's Reserve came to me and laid an information against another Indian named "Ne-pech-e-wan". After I had taken the information and as "Man-nee-screw" was going out I heard him speak to the Interpreter. I called him back and asked the Interpreter what the Indian had said when I was informed that "Man-nee-screw" had said that I wanted to be very careful about sending the Police on the Reserve to arrest "Ne-pech-e-wan" because the first man who attempted to arrest him would be shot. I informed him that I would send a Corporal and one man the next morning to make the arrest and that if the Indians made any trouble it would be a most serious thing for them. Next morning I sent Corporal Newbrook and one man to the Reserve, they made the arrest, brought the prisoner to the Guard Room and I gave him one month's hard labour.
>
> I feel sure that the rations are forwarded correctly to the Instructors but whether or not the Instructors issue them in proper quantities I am not in a position to state. I have ascertained that the rations supposed to be issued are 10oz. Flour, 2oz. Bacon and 2oz. Beef per day.[38]

From this report it became clear that the Cree were reaching levels of desperation, that members of the Battleford Division of Mounted Police began to suspect that the Farm Instructors were withholding rations, and that the Indian Department Officials were in a state of blind denial.

Assistant J.H. McIlree re-assessed the issue. Earlier that spring he had issued a stern memorandum to the Officer Commanding the North West Mounted Police at Battleford, responding to reports gathered from patrol of the reserves in the Battleford area by Inspector Scarth. He warned that the Police had no business involving themselves in the affairs of the Indians. In McIlree's opinion:

> Indians as a rule will always make complaints if they are in the slightest way encouraged. Inspector Scarth appears to have taken a good deal of trouble in collecting these reports as he states he `interviewed several Indians separately and elicited the facts, etc., etc.,'. The Indians have their own Agents to whom they can address their complaints and are

> visited occasionally by higher officials of their own Department and I think it most unwise that we should appear to interfere in the slightest with the management of any Indians on a reserve by going amongst them and questioning them regarding any complaint they may have in connection with their treatment by the Indian Department.[39]

McIlree made it clear that the Cree should not voice their complaints to the Mounted Police. Instead any grievances should be brought to the attention of the Indian Agent from the reserve. The police, who had played an instrumental role as "protector" of the Cree, were now to remove themselves from any involvement, except in circumstances pertaining to law enforcement.

After reviewing evidence from his visits to Battleford as well as reconsidering reserve patrol reports, McIlree altered his opinion. McIlree sent correspondence to D.C. Scott of the Indian Department revealing the impoverished state of the Cree. This viewpoint was quickly rebuffed by the department.[40] Once McIlree discovered his reports were ignored, he wrote a letter later that same year on July 23rd, to the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police. In contrast with the letter of stern warning to the Officer Commanding Battleford earlier that spring, this letter had a different tone. The letter reminded the Commissioner of McIlree's repeated visitations of Battleford reserves in February, March, and May. McIlree admitted that there was an increasingly uncomfortable atmosphere in the district concerning the Cree. While on his visit in May:

> ... a number of Indians arrived and camped near the School in the evening. The rumour immediately spread that they had come in to burn Battleford and there was high commotion amongst the inhabitants for a while. It is reported that one employee of the Indian Department was so badly scared that he would not cross Battle River that night. I, no doubt, could have got more information by enquiring amongst the people but of course I took no such steps.[41]

Discontent among the Cree was growing. McIlree cited H. Taylor's letter to the editor of the Winnipeg Free Press as well as Moodie's report to provide evidence

that the Cree were indeed, according to his calculations, receiving insufficient rations. He also strongly emphasized that he related this information accurately, that to the best of his knowledge he was not misled as was implied in the June 21st letter from Acting Deputy Supt. General of Indian Affairs, D.C. Scott.

In 1895, the situation continued to worsen for the Poundmaker Cree. Corporal Smith reported to the Battleford Post on October 28th that a great deal of the harvest that year was lost to prairie fires. The fire had jumped the Battle River, and although all the Cree fought the fire, losses were severe. Eleven stacks of hay equaling approximately 250 tons were lost to the fire, even though, according to Smith's report, Farm Instructor DeGear had ensured that there were fire guards around each stack. The wind was so strong that the sparks could not be controlled. To worsen matters, a second fire broke out, caused by cinders from the smoke stack of an engine which ran the threshing machine. In this fire, all the grain from both Little Pine's and Poundmaker's reserve, which was stacked together, totaling approximately 1000 bushels of wheat, barley and oats, was lost. Again, strong winds ensured that the fire could not be extinguished in time and all was lost.[42]

The Department of Indian Affairs remained unmoved concerning the poor rations and the loss of crops on the Cree reserves. Rumors began to circulate that as the Cree were returning to a state of desperation, rebellion would repeat itself. During the 1890s, the Mounted Police were ordered to keep an eye on the Cree, yet simultaneously ensure they did not become actively involved with Indian affairs. An August 1894 report, for example, told of hostilities at Jack Fish Lake and Turtle Lake. The Hudson's Bay Company said that the Saulteaux, who were non-treaty Indians, were unifying under Chief Yellow Sky. There were even rumors that Gabriel Dumont was going to be called into the area to lead another rebellion. These rumors, however, were quickly proved false after the police

made inquiries.[43] Two murder cases involving Charcoal and Almighty Voice also occurred in 1894 and, contributed to fears of an uprising.[44] L. Cochin at Poundmaker's reserve, sent a report on December 21st to Superintendent Howe at Battleford, complaining of the hundreds of inquiries that he received on a daily basis from surrounding Euro-Canadian settlers. The settlers, who had been unsettled by rumors, feared that the Cree were going to start a rebellion in the spring.[45]

Around 1896, the emphasis of the Mounted Police shifted towards controlling the illegal trade in alcohol, particularly among the Cree. Up to and including the first decade of the 20th century, the North West Mounted Police records for the Battleford region only refer to dealings with Cree when liquor laws were violated or annual treaty payments were made. As the Cree slipped from relevance in the police records, fears pertaining to a renewed uprising also declined. The aforementioned incident with Chief Yellow Sky was discovered to be an attempted organization of a dance for the younger men in the band. Chief Yellow Sky apologized for "frightening the whites". On December 3, 1894, Samuel Ballendine, guide and interpreter for the North West Mounted Police, confirmed Yellow Sky's apology. He wrote:

> I have known most of the head men of the Northern Cree since they have been young men. I am quite satisfied that the talk about trouble last fall was all lies and that the Northern Indians have never had any intention of making trouble with their white friends. The Indians are undoubtedly in a sad condition for the means of obtaining a living; their families are ill clothed and ill-fed; they are food hunters but have no ammunition and have no means of obtaining it. They are a very industrious pleasant and contented class of Indians.[46]

The Cree in the Battleford region had become a thoroughly subjugated and apparently submissive class in Euro-Canadian society. Criminal activity dealt

with by the North West Mounted Police was from this point onward linked to increased Euro-Canadian settlement and population, and rarely involved the Cree.

To recapitulate, in the aftermath of the 1885 Rebellion, North West Mounted Police attitudes shifted. A growing gulf between the Mounted Police and the Department of Indian Affairs developed as the Department discouraged police involvement in Cree matters. Persuasion and cooperation, two elements which typified Mounted Police interaction with the Cree prior to the Rebellion gave way to reliance upon coercion. The police often viewed the Cree with mistrust, suspicion, and pity, all combined with paternalism. Euro-Canadian interests and settlement became the priority in the region. The Cree had been branded as rebels and fell from the priority lists of the North West Mounted Police. Ethnocentrism among certain members of the Mounted Police predominated this period, and most Cree were viewed by Euro-Canadians as inferior beings. Only a few rare exceptions to this rule existed, such as the employment of some of the Cree as interpreters, special constables, or laborers by the police.

Throughout this period, fears continued regarding potential Indian gatherings. As a result, the Indian Department intervened in law enforcement issues that implicated the Cree with greater frequency, while other issues such as poverty and starvation were treated with apathy. Mounted Police patrols became routine checks to ensure that none of the Cree were leaving their reserves. Further, the majority of the patrols reported that all was calm, and that the Cree were thoroughly submissive.

Disease and starvation remained a problem among the Poundmaker Cree, particularly with the prairie fires of 1895 which destroyed many crops. Drastic policy changes pertaining to the Battleford Cree also came into effect during this era, such as the pass system, which was extra legal but imposed for a brief time.

Compulsory education at either boarding or industrial schools was also enforced by the Mounted Police. Discontent was as widespread among the Cree as starvation and destitution, but the Cree were not the only ones to complain. The Mounted Police and neighboring settlers all made protests to Indian Affairs regarding this issue, complaints which were often ignored. The Department of Indian Affairs ordered the Mounted Police not to meddle, to simply keep an eye on the Cree, but not to get involved. When an investigation was launched, however, the police revealed suspicions that farm instructors were withholding rations from the Cree, explaining much of the destitution.

Although repeated fears of an Indian uprising were common in the latter portion of the century, the Mounted Police had shifted their primary concern to the suppression of the liquor trade by 1896. Enforcement of these liquor laws among Treaty Indians tended to be the only time the Mounted Police interacted with the Cree.

NOTES

1 Gerald Friesen, The Canadian Prairies -- A History. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987) p. 156.

2 R. C. Macleod, The North West Mounted Police 1873-1905. (Michigan: Xerox University Microfilms 1974) p. 271.

3 Ibid., p. 167.

4 J. L. Tobias, "Canada's Sujugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885." in J. R. Miller's Sweet Promises -- A Reader on Indian/White Relations in Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991) p. 229-230.

5 Macleod, The NWMP..., p. 168-169.

6 Ibid.

7 Lorne and Caroline Brown, An Unauthorized History of the R.C.M.P. (Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel 1973) p.22.

8 National Archives of Canada (NAC). R.G. 18, Vol. 1026, File 3724, December 1885.

9 Ibid., Vol. 1038, File 68.

10 Ibid., Vol. 1038, File 69, February 1886.

11 Ibid., Vol. 1039, File 87, pt. 1 & 2, February 1886.

12 Supt. J.S. Cruickshank, "The Early Years." in RCMP Quarterly. (Ottawa: Vol. 22, No.1, July 1956)

13 W.L. Higgitt, Law and Order 1886-1887. (Toronto: Coles Publishing Co. 1971) p. 76.

14 Ibid., p. 9.

15 NAC. R.G. 18, Vol. 1100, File 134.

16 Ibid. Note: This letter from Herchmer to the Battleford police was the earliest recorded document I was able to locate in the RCMP files which related to the pass system and the Battleford Cree. It is important to point out that it has been suggested that this system had been enforced at Battleford some three years prior to this document. See Laurie

Barron's article "The Indian Pass System in the Canadian West, 1882-1935." in Prairie Forum. Vol. 13, No. 1, Spring 1988.

17 Laurie Barron's article "The Indian Pass System in the Canadian West, 1882-1935." explains with greater detail the evolution of the pass system, and the hesitations of the North West Mounted Police to enforce this illegal measure of the Department of Indian Affairs.

18 Macleod, The NWMP..., p. 171.

19 Ibid., p. 169.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., pp. 175-176.

22 NAC. R.G. 18, Vol. 2179, File 7.

23 Ibid., Vol. 1222, File 287, January 1891.

24 Ibid., Vol. 1295, File 82, Part 2.

25 Ibid., Vol. 1329, File 76.

26 Ibid., Vol. 1354, File 76, Pt. 3.

27 Ibid., Vol. 2179, File 34, 1890.

28 Ibid., Vol. 2179, File 3.

29 Ibid., Vol. 1505, File 143.

30 Ibid., Vol. 2517, File 48.

31 Ibid., Vol. 1296, File 82, Pt.3.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 As was stated in Scott's letter of June 21, 1894 to Comptroller Fred White.

41 Ibid., Vol. 1296, File 82, Pt. 3.

42 Ibid., Vol. 1344, File 143, 1895.

43 Ibid., Vol. 1295, File 82, Pt.1.

44 Macleod, The NWMP..., p.113.

45 NAC. R.G. 18, Vol. 1295, File 82, Pt.1

46 Ibid., Vol. 1295, File 82, Pt.4.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Se-ma-ga-nis[1]

Histories told by elders from the Poundmaker reserve provide a Cree perspective of the arrival of the North West Mounted Police into the Battleford region. In light of the historical documents and written works which have touched upon relations between the Mounted Police and the Poundmaker Cree, stories from elders of the reserve become easier to understand. Additionally, the oral interviews provide enticing descriptions of events with additional information that was not as strongly apparent in other historical sources. This thesis will now turn to interviews that provide additional material regarding interaction among the Cree and the police.

Art Kasokeo, an elder of the Poundmaker Reserve born in 1928, was interviewed on March 25, 1999. His grandmother, Ethel (Little Ethel) Ewaysecan and his grandfather, John Ewaysecan, told him many stories about the Mounted Police. He began the interview with some very strong feelings about the Police and explained that he only told the history that he had learned from his grandmother and grandfather, not what he heard from people nowadays. Mr. Kasokeo explained that in the early days the police usually came alone from Battleford to check on the people: "No one knows why the police came with guns, or why the police didn't like the Sun Dance. Everyone was afraid that they would be shot, because the police always had guns."[2] He added that the old

people used to say that the police always came to boss around the Cree and tell everybody what to do. The people did not like this very much: "Everyone spoke only Cree and no English, no one could understand the red coat, and when they first came, everyone had figured that they had come to fight. Quite a few times there were fights."[3]. Mr. Kasokeo paused in his story to explain that the Cree name for the Mounted Police was "se-ma-ga-nis" which meant to find something that was hiding or lost. Mr. Kasokeo illustrated further, saying that it was like having something on an arrow that is used to find it easily if you were to shoot it into a haystack or lose it in the leaves on the ground. The thing used to find the arrow is called a "semaganis". This is an interesting definition, as the name suggests a fairly benign view of the Mounted Police.

Mr. Kasokeo remarked that the main reason why the people had fights with the police was, "because the Semaganis were always after the women"[4]. This type of behaviour was only partly alluded to in the R.G. 18 files. In these instances, complaints were made regarding the conduct of the North West Mounted Police and the frequency of Indian prostitutes around the Mounted Police posts. There were no indications given of the police sexually assaulting Cree women at their camps. This is not to suggest that Mr. Kasokeo's recollections were invalid; in fact, just the opposite. It is quite conceivable that individual officers submitted to base instincts and carried out acts which for obvious reasons would not have been noted in their patrol reports.

Art Kasokeo continued the interview to explain that in general, people co-operated with one another to survive, so there was no real necessity for a formalized police force. He added that, "a long time ago if you did something terribly wrong they would just kill you with a bow and arrow or a knife. If a young man did something so wrong that the people had to kill him, his parents were not even allowed to say anything."[5]. Mr. Kasokeo clarified that this was the

way things were before the police came, as told to him by his grandmother who passed away in the winter of 1936, when he was about twelve. Once the North West Mounted Police arrived, the scenario changed. Worse, there was no one to support the Cree. If the police did anything wrong, there was nothing the people could do except fight: "They had nobody to go to so they had to fight sometimes because the police did wrong too. Many times."[6]

Art Kasokeo gave an example of how the Mounted Police were always, "bossing the people around". He said that the Cree used to have a Sun Dance, or a Chicken Dance, or other ceremony, which they would always go to great efforts to keep concealed from the police. Somehow, the Mounted Police would always find out: "How would they know? They would hide, but someone would tell on the people. And maybe he was paid to tell the police. The last time they did that, tried to hold a Sundance, the police came and said `Oh no, Tootoosis, that has to come down!'."[7] Mr. Kasokeo clarified that the people set up poles each time they held a Sun Dance. Tootoosis was chief, "around 1900, maybe 1920"[8], at this time. He also added that as a result of police interference, the people no longer tried to hold Sundances. The example he gave was the last time that a Sun Dance was attempted. Mr. Kasokeo added that the people were told that they would be put in jail if they continued to hold the Sun Dance or have any similar ceremony. The Cree were afraid of being arrested or jailed, and so they discontinued the ceremonies.

Mr. Kasokeo changed the topic to speak about the Battle at Cut Knife. He said that everything was so confusing then because the North West Mounted Police would not listen to the Cree. Art Kasokeo said that he remembers his grandfather saying that everyone believed, "that Riel guy"[9], but Riel would make up stories. In those days, he explained, "the Mounties would go back and forth between Battleford and here. The Indians too. One day the Mounties came and

were very mad, and said something wrong to the Cree that Riel had told them. The people said `that's not true', but the Mountie would go back and tell something else to his people."[10] Mr. Kasokeo was told by his elders that Riel would make up stories regarding the Cree, and conversely the police would also create rumours. He added that the biggest problem was that the police and authorities would not listen. In addition, "the interpreters were not so good,"[11] a problem that often led to confusion or misunderstandings.

The Battle was the only story from the elders that Art Kasokeo could remember being told where the Poundmaker Cree were ever fired upon by the Mounted Police. When asked, he said that he knew only a few of the people had been shot, "maybe seven but I can't say for sure because my grandma and grandpa could not say for sure."[12]. He continued to explain what had happened at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill. Mr. Kasokeo stated that the policemen were like watchmen the whole time. He remembered being told that a while before the battle, the Mounted Police held a meeting with the people. Just after the meeting they returned to the police camp, back at Battleford. Mr. Kasokeo explained that during this time the Mounted Police were a "kind of army police"[13], asserting that the Mounties must have alerted the troops at Battleford that the Cree would all be sleeping by the time they arrived for attack.

Mr. Kasokeo deviated from the story to briefly discuss his grandfather. He asserted that many times, his grandfather would dream of an owl who would warn him of bad things that were about to happen to the people, or to alert him about someone's arrival. Art Kasokeo explained that, "a lot of times we old Indians know when someone is coming. If you follow the old ways."[14]. Mr. Kasokeo recalled that his grandfather, John Ewaysecan, had a dream about the owl, who told him in the dream, "tomorrow something bad will happen. Someone is coming, you and the people will have to do something."[15]. John awoke from the

dream and immediately had a meeting with the leader of the people, Poundmaker. John told Poundmaker that the Cree had to relocate because someone was coming, and that they had to do something. That day the people moved their camp to the other side of the Cut Knife Hill. When the police came upon the old camp they were astonished because it was empty!

Mr. Kasokeo's recollection is quite similar to an account of how the Cree were warned of the impending approach of the military forces which appeared in Loyal Till Death. Authors Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser suggest that "Old Man Stone"[16] warned a man named Jacob (Kohsakahtigant) who was the keeper of this stone. The warning did not occur until the arrival of the troops at the second location of the camp in the story which appears in Stonechild and Waiser's work. It is important to note at this point that an inconsistency occurs, although this does not mean that the description is invalid. The interview which was conducted for Loyal Till Death was in Cree. The interview for this thesis was carried out in English, which was not only a second language for Mr. Kasokeo, but often provides a great deal of awkwardness in translating original Cree to English terms. Regardless of the difference in these two accounts, a similarity exists in both versions in that someone within the Poundmaker camp was warned through supernatural or spiritual means. A contrast remains in that there was uncertainty as to whether Art Kasokeo's grandfather John Ewaysecan was warned, or whether an old man named Jacob was alerted. Another final inconsistency should be mentioned. According to historians Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, the Cree were warned only at the advance of Otter upon the relocated camp. According to Art Kasokeo's recent account, the Cree were warned prior to Otter's arrival, which caused the relocation. This second version helps to provide an explanation as to how the Poundmaker Cree knew to re-position their camp to a higher vantage point.

At the new camp, the people dug a trench in the ground from which to keep watch. Art Kasokeo recollected that his grandfather, John, and a man named "O-kee-che-tow" took turns watching from the dug-out. While one slept, the other stayed awake. They saw a man who was a scout for the "army police" who was sneaking around at night. One of the men in the trench went back to inform Poundmaker. Finally, the police and army found the relocated camp. Mr. Kasokeo recalled that his grandfather informed him that the battle occurred in early summer, in May. John Ewaysecan remembered that when he was awakened, the sun was just starting to come to the edge of the sky which would have been around 5:00 in the morning. He also arose because he heard something -- wagons. "`Oh, that's the Semaganis coming!', he cried, and ran to tell the people." Some of the Cree, ran from the camp, and a few of the men went to confront the, "army police on the other side of the hill"[17]. At this point the battle began, but it was ended quickly. Art Kasokeo clarified: "Poundmaker came and said we have to stop this, let them go. We have to stop this and let them go, even though they came to fight."[18]. Mr. Kasokeo thought that this was a good, brave, and wise action because, "it doesn't pay to fight"[19]. He concluded by stating that the same kind of fighting exists today, "but now we fight our war with paper and money."[20].

Wallace Semaganis was interviewed on July 5th, 1999. He began his interview by explaining that he had a strong knowledge of his own family's history, and would assist in answering my questions to the best of his ability. Mr. Semaganis, a man in his seventies, actively participates as one of the elders advising on the Police Management Board for the Poundmaker Reserve. Wallace Semaganis said that his family name, Semaganis, does not mean "Mounted Police" as many often assume, nor is his family related to any of the Mounties. Instead, the family name derived from the word "lance" in Cree, and "lancer"

would be a literal English translation of his surname. Mr. Semaganis said that his ancestors were one of the original families to come with Poundmaker from the Red Pheasant Reserve, noting that, "My great grandfather was number forty,"[21] on his treaty card. John Semagan, Mr. Semaganis' grandfather, wandered mostly in the western areas of the northern plains region, and as a result, may possibly have been on the Edmonton lists as well as the Poundmaker Reserve list. Gladue was Wallace Semaganis' grandmother's surname, and she was from the Saddle Lake area. She had three sons and one daughter. At this point, Mr. Semaganis made note that he was in search of what happened to the daughter, Genevive Semagan, who was given in marriage by his grandfather. She was never heard from again, leaving her brother John to continuously wonder what became of her. Wallace Semaganis added that she would most likely not be alive today, because his father would have been ninety-one this year, and she was an older sister. Mr. Semaganis noted that his mother was from the Poundmaker area: "Mistawasis was where all my mother's side came from and I may be one of his descendants. That's maybe my only claim to fame."[22]

At this point, the topic of conversation turned towards the May 1885 Battle at Cut Knife Hill. From the veranda of his house, which was located on the east side of the hill where the conflict occurred, he motioned off to the distance. "The camp was over there, in among the lakes,"[23] he began. "They had runners telling that the North West Mounted Police were coming and they moved camp uphill, a bit west of the centre."[24] He again motioned, indicating the area uphill from his back-yard. "If they had stayed uphill, the Mounties may never have found them."[25]

Mr. Semaganis paused and stared off into the distance towards the Sweetgrass Reserve on the horizon towards the east, where a rise of land in the distance stopped abruptly:

> Behind that hill, where the hill stops is where they came -- Sweetgrass -- and crossed by the [Battle] Creek. And my uncle ... he was a First World War veteran and had a house just down from here ... we were going up this hill ... I remember we were walking behind a horse with a bell on. In those days they had bells and my uncle said that this is where the first American [Nez Perce] got killed. According to my uncle and my dad, there were two.[26]

He motioned towards his front yard once again to indicate where the two Nez Perce fell.

Mr. Semaganis diverted to explained the process of ostracization. He said that when a person was ostracized, he or she became outcast, cut off from the band. However, they usually managed to convince a "buddy" to come along with them. The two Nez Perce, according to Wallace Semaganis' recollections, had been ostracized from their band, but were adopted by the Poundmaker Cree.

> We were always a kind people and gave others a second chance. If you committed a crime you were ostracized as a form of punishment. It was quite the adjustment to get used to the idea of jail or death sentences. [With ostracization] there was always hope that you could prove yourself useful, or straighten yourself out to become accepted by another band. Mostly, before the North West Mounted Police came, everyone got along.[27]

At the Cut Knife incident, Mr. Semaganis explained, the two Nez Perce were the first to confront the arrival of Otter's army and the Mounted Police. The Nez Perce: "came together and got killed when the mounties came. They were looking over the hill and got killed. This is the `story of the brave man' that I was told. The man who walked towards the North West Mounted Police was the other American [Nez Perce] friend of the guy who got shot."[28]

Mr. Semaganis referred to the Battle of Cut Knife Hill as an "invasion" or "last stand" for the Cree, and described the battle as a chance for Colonel Otter to gain power. Mr. Semaganis theorized that Otter must have been thinking, "Let's put these Indians in their place.". This attitude was bewildering to the Cree:

> . . . We weren't even looking for a fight. Middleton was at Duck Lake, Steele was at Frog Lake, and Otter attacked us here all at about the same time. ... As far as the North West Mounted Police, the history can be easily obtained from the records as to who was here. [The only] actual casualties that my dad ever talked about were the two Americans [Nez Perce] that died here.... There was animosity after Cut Knife. As far as we know the North West Mounted Police had to come with the Army because the police were supposedly besieged at Battleford. But really, there were only a handful of people begging for food. The idea the government had as far as the Indian was concerned was `divide and conquer'.[29]

Mr. Semaganis' brief explanation of what took place at Battleford was in line with more recent historical works which suggest that the Poundmaker Cree did not attack Battleford. Instead, his suggestion is in line with theories which suggest that the Poundmaker Cree had travelled to Battleford with an intention of obtaining food.

Wallace Semaganis continued to explain that the policies of the government towards the Cree manifested themselves in many forms: "Our grandfathers were not allowed to leave the reserve without a piece of paper from the Department of Indian Affairs or Farm Instructors."[30]. In Mr. Semaganis' view, this interference infringed upon basic legal rights of the Cree, although he did not seem to hold a grudge against the Mounted Police for enforcing this extra-legal pass system.

Prior to the arrival of the Mounted Police, the Cree had their own legal system in place. "Everyone had their understood or universal laws. Ostracization, for example, was a universal understanding."[31] This universal understanding was how the people knew that the two Nez Perce had been ostracized:

> There were always look-outs around the camp. The two Americans approached camp, stopped and waited on the outskirts for someone to approach them. When no one came forward, they moved in some more, and waited again. So, from these actions everyone knew they

were ostracized, and by the third time, the councillors met with them to find out the reason for the ostracization. Chances are we would take them in for the winter as long as they worked and got along.[32]

The interview then returned to the scene of the Cut Knife Battle. The two Nez Perce would have been eager to prove themselves worthy of their new band. The two former outcasts:

> ... would jump up and down throwing stones until one of the Mounties picked them off ... The one who committed the crime leading to his ostracization would have been more willing to push the limits, and played a game with the Mounted Police and the Army waiting at the bottom. There is one casualty that happened just in my pasture that I don't like to talk about -- one of the Mounties were killed by one of their own when retreating.[33]

This is an interesting addition to events which unfolded at the Cut Knife Battle. Recalling the previous historical accounts, the only officer who was killed at Cut Knife was Corporal Ralph Bateman Sleigh. The circumstances surrounding his death were not known. Mr. Semaganis' depiction of the actions of the Nez Perce were quite similar to an account described in Waiser and Stonechild's Loyal Till Death, in which a Nez Perce man was killed in the action. There was some inconsistency, in that this narrative suggested that the Nez Perce who was killed was a refugee from the United States who had survived the 1877 defeat of Chief Joseph.[34]

According to Mr. Semaganis, the Battle at Cut Knife was the single significant conflict between the Poundmaker Cree and the North West Mounted Police from the stories of his elders. There were a few minor incidents which arose due to interference by the Mounted Police, but, as Wallace Semaganis explained, this was because the police were the hands of the government, and were merely enforcing government policies:

> There was an awareness of the North West Mounted Police in the earlier days but not a real strong presence... Histories get lost, we were sent to Boarding Schools or turned into farmers... There is no specific

> feeling of how the people felt [when the Mounties arrived], but I imagine there would have to be some adjustments made... As far as detachments go, all the information can be obtained from Cut Knife... The first permanent detachment down here [on the Poundmaker Reserve] was in the 1920's, and was a joint venture between Little Pine and Poundmaker. The Police Management Board was formed consisting of two members and one elder from Little Pine, and two members and one elder from here, which started recently around '92 or '93, when the talks started about on-reserve policing.[35]

The role of the North West Mounted Police as enforcers of government policies had a negative impact: "My dad told me of how the people were treated during the de-tribalization era."[36]. Here, Mr. Semaganis paused to emphasize that he is not an "Indian", but rather a "Northern Plains Cree", emphasizing that each band is different, and unique in its language, culture, and heritage.

> [The government] cannot make us what we are not. Overall, we have gotten along pretty fair [with the Mounted Police], but problems arose when the government introduced the Indian Act. According to the act, things such as religion of the `heathen' can't be practised. We are a part of creation and anything that is here is here for a reason. The Sun Dance was one thing they wanted to abolish, but this was more the government's idea.[37]

Mr. Semaganis defended the actions of the Mounted Police at this point, adding that, "Assimilation was number one in the Indian Affairs books, not really the Mounties. The Mounties had to abide by or follow the government's policies. There was a log in the middle of the ravine . . . ."[38] Wallace indicated a wooded area in the valley downhill. "The ravine was the area for the Sundance, and the one ceremony my dad remembered in which the Mounted Police broke up before they could finish. The final song was never sung . . . . they used to wonder what would happen if they sung the closing song."[39]

Times had changed since the North West Mounted Police arrived and initiated interaction with the Poundmaker Cree. According to Mr. Semaganis, there was not much of a necessity for police services:

> Basically I think we got along a whole lot better before than now. Everyone shared. There wasn't much crime. `K-say-no'. It used to be that if someone had something another admired, you would lend it away. The change to possession or ownership was rough.... Marriage, for example, is different in that in the vows we don't make a promise, and you don't own the other person. You ask to hope to be together for a long ways.[40]

Mr. Semaganis' final note was to suggest that the Cree were told to be on guard of the Mounted Police because they were the right hand man of the government. He said the Cree, "Never really called the police in, they usually came looking for something to report.[41]".

Edwin Tootoosis, an elder of the Poundmaker Reserve, was briefly interviewed on July 5th, 1999. Although the meeting was informal, he provided a general session of questions and answers regarding the history of the North West Mounted Police and Poundmaker Cree interaction. Mr. Tootoosis is a Medicine Man who resides at Poundmaker, and has developed an active interest in the history of the Cree. He is also the brother of the late John B. Tootoosis, a political leader and historian who specialized in gathering the traditional oral histories of Poundmaker elders. Edwin Tootoosis was able to provide verification of the accounts collected from elders for this thesis from discussions he has had with others familiar with the local history.

Mr. Tootoosis confirmed that the North West Mounted Police undertook regular patrols of the area as part of treaty obligations. The general perception among the Cree was that the police were present to act as protector of the people. Edwin Tootoosis mentioned that he had few stories of conflict that were passed down to him by his elders, with the exception of the Cut Knife incident. He added that his family and his parents always respected the authority of the Mounted Police and instilled this respect into their children.[42]

Pertaining to stories which revealed the attitudes and behaviour of the Mounted Police when dealing with the Cree, Mr. Tootoosis confirmed that

communications were generally peaceful. As for issues surrounding Cree women who were forced into sexual relations with the Mounted Police, he mentioned that it was not an uncommon occurrence. Mr. Tootoosis explained that when the North West Mounted Police arrived in the area, there were few white women in the country. Those who were present were married, and so stories of inappropriate relations between police officers and Cree women were not uncommon. Temptations were strong and sometimes prevailed, resulting in negative reputations for officers.[43]

In consideration of the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, Edwin Tootoosis emphasized that in his opinion, this was the only significant issue of conflict between Poundmaker Cree and the North West Mounted Police. One important issue that Mr. Tootoosis addressed was the embarrassment that the Cut Knife Battle created for the Mounted Police. It quickly developed into a situation that the police wished would be forgotten.[44]

Mr. Tootoosis also provided additional insight regarding Art Kasokeo's story of the Cree being alerted by spiritual means to the arrival of the Canadian militia. He mentioned that a few of the Poundmaker Cree were blessed with the ability to foresee someone's arrival, or to gain knowledge about certain events that were yet to occur.[45]

The difficulty in obtaining oral histories which apply to one particular subject increases with time. Limitations regarding reliable sources who were knowledgeable on the subject, hesitations to reveal information which may have personal consequences, and the loss of histories with the passing of elders are but a few examples of the difficulties which occurred. Conflicting information can also lead historians to examine the validity of oral traditions. Edwin Tootoosis' condensed summary of North West Mounted Police and Cree relations assisted in

providing enlightenment on certain issues which were discussed by the other elders, as well as helping to tie major themes together.

To summarize, the stories of the elders held some intriguing similarities and discrepancies. Art Kasokeo told that the Mounted Police usually came individually on patrols, and that the Cree often had difficulty understanding the police. He provided a definition of "Semaganis", which he described as something which helps to find or mark an object or thing that might be lost, such as an arrow shot into a pile of leaves. Prior to their arrival, there was no real necessity for the Mounted Police. Art Kasokeo added that the Cree had their own laws and enforcement methods in place, and everyone cooperated out of necessity and basic survival.

On occasion, Mr. Kasokeo noted, the Mounted Police partook in undesirable sexual relations with some of the Cree women. The testimony was substantiated to a certain degree in the Mounted Police records, which had a memorandum asking that the issue of Cree prostitution around Mounted Police posts be dealt with expeditiously. Mr. Kasokeo said that the main complaint the Cree had regarding the North West Mounted Police was that they were responsible for ensuring that the people could not hold any ceremonial dances. As a result, the Poundmaker Cree eventually gave up trying to hold these dances. This too was supported in the Mounted Police records, and was passed as law in the Indian Act, enforced by the North West Mounted Police.

Art Kasokeo told that the only major incident of conflict with the Mounted Police in the history of the Poundmaker Cree happened during 1885. The clash became known as the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, and was the only occasion where shots were fired between the Cree and the Mounted Police. Mr. Kasokeo related the story of the owl, who helped warn his grandfather, John Ewaysecan, of the impending arrival of military forces in a dream. Because of

the dream, the Cree relocated camp. This description was very much like an account which appeared in a contemporary history entitled Loyal Till Death, in which a similar story of "old man stone" was related. In addition, Mr. Kasokeo's account mentioned how Poundmaker told the Cree not to fight the retreating militia. This was another issue which has also been raised in contemporary histories.

Wallace Semaganis' oral interview revealed certain similarities and differences compared to Art Kasokeo's account. He deviated from Mr. Kasokeo in the definition of the term "Semaganis" which he said meant lance or lancer. He also differed in his account, stating that the Cree were forewarned of the arrival of the Canadian Militia by Cree runners, leading to the relocation of the camp.

Mr. Semaganis did corroborate with Mr. Kasokeo on certain issues. For example, he agreed that the Cree had their own laws in effect, and made use of ostracization as a method of punishment prior to the Mounted Police. He agreed that everyone mostly cooperated with one another, and everyone shared. Mr. Semaganis corroborated with Mr. Kasokeo's information regarding the Mounted Police and the prevention of Cree ceremonies or gatherings. Mr. Semaganis added that the Mounted Police were the hands of the government, and as far as the Cree were concerned, the government's policy was "divide and conquer". When strict government policies were enforced, then problems arose.

Wallace Semaganis stated that the Cree travelled en masse to Battleford in 1885, not to attack but to search for food. This proved to be quite similar to accounts found in recent histories which proposed that a similar goal was in mind of the Cree; not only were they in search of food, but also wished to proclaim their loyalty to the Queen. Wallace Semaganis added that the Battle at Cut Knife Hill was indeed the only major incident of Cree and Mounted Police hostilities.

During the battle, he stated that two Nez Perce, and even one Mounted Police officer, were killed by the government forces. He added that in his opinion, Colonel Otter viewed the battle as an opportunity to put the Cree in their place.

The short but concise oral interview with Edwin Tootoosis helped to provide further confirmation of information already provided by Art Kasokeo and Wallace Semaganis. Mr. Tootoosis stated that the Mounted Police undertook regular patrols of the region, primarily as part of the treaty obligations. He added that the Mounted Police were generally perceived as the protectors of the Cree, and that the Cree cooperated with the police. Edwin Tootoosis also confirmed that on occasion, the police did have sexual relations with some of the Cree women, and explained that it was something that just happened, particularly considering how few Euro-Canadian women were in the territory at the time. One additional issue of interest that Mr. Tootoosis confirmed was the ability of certain gifted Poundmaker Cree to foresee someone's arrival through spiritual means. This confirmation helped to provide added strength to the story of the owl's warning told by Mr. Kasokeo. Mr. Tootoosis agreed that the only significant conflict between the Cree and the Mounted Police was at the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, which evolved into an embarrassment for the Mounted Police, another point which was evident in written historical sources.

NOTES

1 Interview with Art Kasokeo, March 25, 1999.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, Loyal Till Death -- Indians and the North-West Rebellion. (Calgary: Fifth House Publishers 1997) p.140.

17 Interview with Art Kasokeo.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Stonechild and Waiser, p.142.

35 Interview with Wallace Semaganis, July 5, 1999.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Interview with Edwin Tootoosis, July 5, 1999.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

CHAPTER NINE

> The Indian has remained true to the various treaties signed by him. He is loyal to Canada. I often wonder if some of our white inhabitants are as loyal. History has been unkind to the red man, yet he has submitted to a great transition and accepted the new life with a grace and dignity that would tax many of us to emulate.[1]

The influences of the illegal liquor trade drew the attention of the Mounted Police northward to the region of the woodland Cree. At this point, the focus of this thesis shifts to a different geographical setting, moving from the central western prairie region of the Poundmaker Cree Nation to the north-eastern woodlands of present day Saskatchewan. Chronologically the thesis will concentrate on 1890 to 1940, the initial phases of Mounted Police involvement with the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation for this area.

The Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation inhabits a region stretching from Pelican Narrows, Southend, Deschambault, Sandy Bay, Amisk Lake, Sturgeon Landing, as well as parts of Cumberland House, Creighton, Flin Flon, The Pas and Prince Albert regions. This area is the traditional hunting, gathering, and trapping grounds for the Woodland Cree who inhabit this portion of north-eastern Saskatchewan. The Woodland Cree in these areas fell under the jurisdiction of the Prince Albert Division of the North West Mounted Police. Although the Peter Ballantyne Reserve was not included in treaty number ten until 1906, the Mounted Police had performed patrols of the region prior to this date. Due to the

limited amount of contact or disruption by Euro-Canadian settlement, the Woodland Cree did not experience the extensive and immediate impact of starvation that marred the history of the Plains Cree. Instead, Peter Ballantyne Cree were able to continue the pursuit of traditional fishing, hunting, and trapping with limited intervention. The fur trade maintained prominence among the Woodland Cree well into the twentieth century. Unfortunately, furs and supplies were not the only commerce. The liquor trade gained prominence as well as the attention of the North West Mounted Police.

Contact in Northern Saskatchewan between the Mounted Police and the Peter Ballantyne Cree differed from the experiences of the Poundmaker Cree. The Cree in these northern regions were already well accustomed to European interaction because fur traders and company posts had existed in the region for over two hundred years.[2] Storekeepers were well established at Cumberland House, Beaver City, Pelican Narrows, Deschambault, and Sandy Bay. This was perhaps a positive factor, as the Peter Ballantyne Cree had already been introduced to a portion of European customs, culture, religion and economics. There were no recorded incidents of hostilities between the Cree of this region and the Mounted Police from the early contact period in the 1890s until the present. This lack of conflict is surprising, considering that the police officers who came into the region held strong prejudices from earlier dealings with the Plains Cree. Yet, as officers were quick to discover, with the exception of a few treaty payment escorts, liquor crack-downs, and routine marking of government territory, there was not a strong necessity for the Mounted Police in the region. The people of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation remained autonomous for several years even while under pressure from Indian Agents, missionaries, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Perhaps their relative isolation from scattered and

sparse Euro-Canadian settlements contributed to this independence, along with their ability to successfully continue to pursue their traditional lifestyle.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police files from 1890 to 1940 proved to contain insufficient information regarding contact with the Cree in the Cumberland House to Sandy Bay area. The records from 1900 until 1910 contain only minimal reference to the area. All of the documents that concerned the Peter Ballantyne region fell under the jurisdiction of the Prince Albert Division. Prince Albert was the headquarters of the "F" Division, and by 1910 it was responsible for the policing of one-third of the province of Saskatchewan.[3] It was here that the protocols for law enforcement pertaining to the Woodlands Cree were forged.

During the 1880s, the Prince Albert Division of North West Mounted Police had experienced the same difficulties as the Battleford Division when dealing with the Plains Cree. Recalling that the Prince Albert Division had sprung from the Battleford Division, it is no surprise that they too suffered losses during the 1885 Rebellion and were at the centre of a majority of the pitched battles with the Metis. As a result, much as had been the case with the Battleford Mounties, the Prince Albert Mounted Police had to deal with the same fears of renewed Indian uprising throughout the 1880s and 1890s. Their duties among the Cree in the northern portions of the Territories usually consisted of enforcement of liquor laws through jail terms or fines, or the delivery of treaty payments.[4] The Prince Albert Local Orders indicated that treaty payments were made at Fort a la Corne by Constables Kerr, Wilkinson, and Stanly as early as August 20, 1886. The patrols of the Mounted Police expanded further north and east out of Prince Albert, along with the obligatory treaty payments.

The Department of Indian Affairs records at this time indicate that the department's main concern regarding the Woodland Cree was the delivery of treaty payments by the Mounted Police, enforcement of liquor laws, and ensuring

that "vagrant" Indians would not begin to camp outside reserve areas around localized and comparatively southern Euro-Canadian settlements. Horse stealing and disturbing the peace were also concerns around Prince Albert and other Euro-Canadian settlements.[5]

Cooperation of the Woodland Cree was another concern of the Mounted Police. As suggested in an article by historians R.C. Macleod and Heather Rollason, the Hudson's Bay Company often had to assist the police and Indian Agents, "for guidance as to how to gain the cooperation of local bands."[6]. Although this particular article focused upon Northern Plains Cree, the point regarding the assistance of the Hudson's Bay Company was of extreme importance in the northern regions of Saskatchewan as well. The Hudson's Bay Company supplied provisions, medical supplies, and often room and board for police officers and Indian Department agents.[7]

The Local Orders book from Prince Albert dated October 29, 1888, provided the guidelines for proper patrol procedure. Once an officer left the division headquarters, he had to note the time of departure, give an accurate record of the duties performed each day absent, report the distances travelled each day, and provide the details of when and where each daily camp was set up. The Local Orders further demanded that if the distances covered were not satisfactory, the officer must give an appropriate explanation. Guidelines of expected distances were also given. Light load transports were granted forty miles per day, at six miles per hour; heavy transport, thirty miles daily at three miles per hour, and a Mounted party was allowed forty miles per day only for a short distance at six miles per hour.[8] Methods of travel on patrols included canoe, dog team, by foot, or steamboat, and in later years, motor boats, automobiles, train, and aeroplane. The patrols were either routine or special. Special patrols were only issued according to necessity, usually to perform a specific police duty, such as

the apprehension of a criminal, or to establish a detachment. Routine patrols were made according to the schedule of the post, on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis to check up on communities, deliver mail, or carry out some other form of government duties.[9]

Historian William Morrison provided an interesting analysis of the role of the Mounted Police in northern regions of Canada, which is applicable when considering the Peter Ballantyne Cree in Northern Saskatchewan. He suggested that the federal government, using the Mounties as well as Indian Agents, successfully managed to impose laws, regulations, and culture in such a smothering manner that the result was the complete submergence of northern Aboriginal peoples into a welfare system. The Mounted Police then served as the first welfare agents in the region.[10] According to Morrison, the Mounted Police were useful to perform "symbolic" or "developmental" acts of sovereignty in the north. Symbolic sovereignty usually consisted of "planting flags", and making the presence of law enforcement officials in the area known to Euro-Canadian settlers and miners, as well as regional Indian groups. The developmental sovereignty followed when the Mounted Police actively enforced the laws, such as mining codes and liquor laws.[11]

Morrison's assessment may hold true for the period from approximately 1950 onwards. However, as oral interviews reveal, the Peter Ballantyne Cree remained independent from government assistance and interference until the 1940s, when family allowance was introduced into the area.

Indians had already played an active role as interpreters and guides for the North West Mounted Police. They were also engaged to haul wood or perform other chores and maintenance around the police headquarters well into the 1890s.[12] Prejudice on the part of the Indian Agents and other government officials was a problem that was evident prior to the 1890s. A letter from

Assistant Commissioner Crozier, written January 6, 1886, argued that if the northern Cree were not treated with respect by the Indian Agents and other officials of government, they would not accept the authority of the Mounted Police. Crozier also emphasized that if the Indians of the north were treated as slaves, or were given the impression that there was no sympathy in the transitions they would have to make, then there would be resistance and discontent. He concluded that:

> ... a fair, just and humane treatment on the part of the agents of the government -- towards the Indians is not only necessary for the successful management of them and for restoring confidence between the whites and Indians in this Northern section of the Territory, but, that the state of the Indians in the north will be, whether for good or bad, a very important factor in influencing the actions of the Indians in the south .... [13]

This illustrated that the Mounted Police had perhaps learned from the uprisings during the 1885 Rebellion, and were wary of creating a similar atmosphere that could lead to insubordination by the Woodlands Cree.

The Prince Albert North West Mounted Police also had a strict code of appropriate behaviour regarding law enforcement among the Cree. An Order Book kept by an officer known only by the name of "Hancock" from 1894 to 1899 provided a good source of these protocols:

> Never strike but in self-defence, never treat a prisoner with more rigour than may be absolutely necessary to prevent his escape... [further, under the title Prevention of Crime] Constable should always be on the alert he should acquire the habit of observing and noting everything he sees or hears, he should be all eyes and ears, and should be very reluctant in what he says. The habit of observation requires constant practice on joining a detachment. First acquire a thorough knowledge of the surrounding country, trails, settlers, Indians, reserves, number of Indians. Learn to know as many of the Indians as possible: constables should know everybody in his district, go anyplace and find any person wanted .... The movements of Indians should be carefully watched. Patrols should be made frequently and irregularly. Duty on Patrol will vary according to the part of the country in which you are serving... [14]

There was only one documented case on April 10th, 1888, of a Constable Henderson (Reg. No. 1533) who was fined ten dollars for striking an Indian prisoner by the name of "Loud Sounding Voice".[15] It is conceivable that to prevent the occurrence of another such incidence all officers were encouraged to follow the above guidelines.

From the Royal Canadian Mounted Police volumes, the patrols sent from Prince Albert included Cumberland House in their area as early as 1891 in order to provide escorts for various treaty payments.[16] Reports of Northern Saskatchewan Cree obtaining liquor from Metis traders who travelled the district were received by the Prince Albert division by 1892. Superintendent Cotton of the North West Mounted Police admitted that the issue would have to be addressed. However, there was a certain amount of confusion involved. The liquor law in place only made it illegal for treaty Indians to be in possession of intoxicants. Cotton pointed out in a letter dated August 19th of that year that, "There is a difficulty in discriminating between `Indians proper' and men who though really Indians are classed as Half-Breeds through having left the treaty. This class of men have undoubtedly as much right to purchase liquor from the licensed stores as a white man."[17] The North West Mounted Police were ordered by Commissioner L. W. Herchmer in a letter dated November 15th to carefully check all freight destined for the northern areas of Saskatchewan -- that regular inquiries should be made of Hudson's Bay officials, missionaries, and traders to ascertain if there was transport of any liquor in the region. In an effort to control and regulate liquor in the northern regions, especially near Cumberland House, regular patrols were sent out and a seasonal detachment was established at Cumberland by 1892.

The records for the Prince Albert North West Mounted Police indicate that treaty payments were to be made October 25th of 1892, in the Cumberland

House region. Suggestions that the treaty payments be made by "dog train" with a Mounted Police officer as escort were put on hold as a result of previous correspondence from R. MacFarlane Esquire, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Cumberland District. MacFarlane had advised that spring was the best time for treaty payments to be made, as Indians were employed as hunters during the winter months by the Company. The North West Mounted Police's dependency upon the Hudson's Bay Company is evident in these records. The Company had set up its first inland trading post at Cumberland House in the early eighteenth century, and had a strong knowledge of the history of the people and the region. The Company was also important in providing supplies and lodging for officers in the years prior to the establishment of a permanent post.

In light of this previous information from the Hudson's Bay Company, Comptroller Fred White of the Prince Albert Division wrote to the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police Headquarters in Regina. In this letter, dated September 15th, the Comptroller requested that Corporal Connor at the Cumberland House detachment be recalled to Prince Albert, since the Cree in the area would be off hunting for the company during the winter months. He further noted that an officer would be sent again in the spring to re-open the detachment, perhaps with an increase in force if necessary, and added that a patrol would be sent mid-winter by dog sled.[18] The Commissioner agreed with the suggestions made by Comptroller White.[19] It was generally felt by the police that as long as the Cree were busy with their employment, bootlegging was not a problem.

Meanwhile, at Cumberland House, residents protested the removal of the Mounted Police. The issue of the liquor law was not going to disappear simply because there would be winter employment. J. F. Betts, M.L.A. of Prince Albert wrote to the Lieutenant Governor in Regina on October 25, 1892. In his letter, he outlined the lawless state that had overwhelmed Cumberland House prior to the

presence of the North West Mounted Police, and requested that they remain year round in the area:

> The moral effect of the Police being in the midst of such people as are in and about that section is even greater than it is in the more mixed populations in other parts of the Territories, apart from this advantage altogether they are doing good work in connection with the Liquor Ordinance, that part of the Territories as Your Honour will remember, does not form a part of any license district and it is most important that the illicit sale of intoxicants should be provided against and the winter is the season of the greatest danger.
>
> What are known as fur traders do most of their trading during the frozen seasons and I feel perfectly satisfied that if the Police are taken from Cumberland House, that part of the Country will be flooded with Liquor during the next six months.
>
> This ... can be avoided by retaining even the small force now maintained there ... under any circumstances I hope Your Honour will see that the Families of Indians and Halfbreed people in and about Cumberland House are protected.[20]

It is striking to note that the North West Mounted Police were viewed as protectors of the Cree, similar to their role among the Poundmaker Cree years earlier. Betts' letter also requested that detachments be considered for The Pas, Grand Rapids, and Cedar Lake, all of which experienced a great deal of travel because of their location along the waterways. Cumberland House, in particular, was ideally located as a focal point for many of the major trade routes in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Without the presence of law enforcement that could regulate the transport of goods through the region, the entire territory easily could fall prey to bootleggers.

The letter of protest proved effective. Corporal Connor was ordered to remain at the Cumberland detachment pending further notice. On November 15, Connor submitted a detachment report for Cumberland House. He noted that even if ordered, he and those at the detachment would not be able to return to Prince Albert until the first of December. The reason for this delay was that he

would no longer be able to leave Cumberland by dog train, ". . . as there are no dogs available, some of the best dogs having died the past summer."[21]. The men would instead be forced to travel on winter roads by horse to Fort a la Corne, and would have to await the lakes, rivers, and muskeg to freeze to make the trip. His report also gave a brief summary of the Cumberland House reserve and his patrols, and the opening of the new school.[22]

The North West Mounted Police were dealing with hardships that were unique to the north-east woodlands. Mounted Police officers were having to make use of a variety of methods of travel to cover greater distances in their patrols. In comparison to the Battleford region, police were having to deal with delays due to inclement weather or other natural occurrences. Officers on patrol in the territory of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation were also experiencing a greater sense of isolation. The nearest detachment was more than a day's journey away; often Cree guides were needed to assist on these patrols. On the prairies the relationship between the Mounted Police and Indians had lost its importance. Officers were well established and familiar with the area. In the woodlands, however, they found themselves once again reliant upon the Cree for guides, interpreters, and cooperation in enforcing the law.

The Commissioner sent a memorandum to the Officer Commanding at Prince Albert on December 12th, strongly suggesting that a dog team be purchased for the Cumberland House detachment as cheaply and as soon as possible. The letter added that the dog train was necessary, "to travel on the trails with which they are acquainted without a guide. They had better be supplied with snow shoes."[23]. There was no indication if this was to assist Corporal Connor in his return, or to aid the mid-winter patrol that was planned for Cumberland House. The next correspondence that related to the area from the Mounted Police records was not written until well into 1893.

In 1893, a letter requesting the establishment of a permanent North West Mounted Police post at Grand Rapids was sent to the Commissioner. The letter had been signed by R.R. MacFarlane of the Hudson's Bay Company at Cumberland House, Rev. J. Pritchard of Grand Rapids, Post Manager McLean, Chief Beardy, and Councillors Joe Atkinson and Joe Beardy Jr. The detachment was required to control the flow of liquor into the area, as Grand Rapids was perfectly situated along waterways that led into northern Saskatchewan, including Cumberland House and eventually the Sandy Bay and Pelican Narrows region. The Hudson's Bay Company in this instance was again proving itself influential in pressuring for the establishment of police posts.

The Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police responded to the letter, stating that the request would not receive attention unless orders to establish the post were given from the Indian Affairs Department to police officials. Due to the request having involved Chief Beardy and his councillors, the Commissioner noted that they had best write to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, since the control of liquor in a given district was a decision of the Indian Department.[24] The issue did not appear to receive any further attention from the Mounted Police, illustrating that the police continued to remain under strict control of the Indian Department when it came to the enforcement of law among predomininantly Indian populations.

Cumberland House detachment continued to experience its usual difficulties. The only correspondence pertaining to the region for 1894, was a report written on March 19th at the Cumberland detachment. It stated that there were once again problems with obtaining dog teams for the officers' patrols. Despite these difficulties, an additional duty was added to the roster of the detachment -- population census for the surrounding reserves. The populations recorded were, "Grand Rapids - 103, Chemawawin - 127, Moose Lake - 121, The

Pas - 380, Pas Mountain - 158."[25]. Although these numbers indicate that populations remained relatively sparse, they do bring to mind an interesting point. The distances between these communities spanned hundreds of kilometres. Essentially, the Mounted Police officer was having to traverse hundreds of kilometres to serve a population of just under 900 people. "La Grippe" was also reported to be prevalent in the regions in which the census was taken among the Cree. Disease often took its toll on Indian populations on a continual basis, which suggests that the census does not give an indication of the average Cree population for the region.

The North West Mounted Police records mentioned that an inspection of the Cumberland detachment was made in February of 1894,indicating that Cumberland was not yet the location of a permanent outpost.[26] Corporal Connor returned to Cumberland House that spring to continue his duties. The correspondence from that region provided insight as to some of the variety of duties and tasks encountered by the officers of that post. On May 27th, Corporal Connor was sent orders to arrest an insane woman at The Pas. On June 13th, he was informed by Prince Albert Division that a Mr. McDougall was expected to arrive at Cumberland House to replace Chief Factor MacFarlane of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the officers were expected to assist in smoothing the transition. This provided some consternation, as Corporal Connor and his fellow officer, Constable Carter, had arrangements to obtain rations and billeting from the Hudson's Bay Company, a situation that could change with the arrival of a new Chief Factor. With the replacement of MacFarlane, Moffatt, the Superintendent Commanding of the "F" Division, requested that he be kept informed as to any changes that might arrive with the replacement.[27] The officers were expected to fulfil the roll of diplomat and ensure that their room and board was secured. Within a short time frame, the two officers had attended to a

mad-woman, acted as community "welcome wagon", and diplomatically secured positive relations with the new Hudson's Bay Company representative, as well as performing their regular duties on a daily basis.

The Mounted Police Records included the pay that Connor and Carter received for each month's employment at Cumberland House. Corporal Connor averaged $ 25.74 per month, and Constable Carter averaged $ 22.79 per month, a difference which can probably be attributed to difference in rank.[28] It can be inferred from this register of pay, which included the dates of issue to Connor and Carter, that the two officers were posted at Cumberland House for the entire winter. The correspondence from the Cumberland Detachment carried through from the autumn - October 1894, to the spring - March of 1895. In addition, 1894 was one of the last documented patrols sent from Prince Albert to check on the Cumberland post during the winter. All this means that the Cumberland House detachment remained seasonal until the early 1900's, and although a permanent detachment had not yet been formally established, the necessity for the presence of the police year round was becoming evident.

On April 17th, 1895, Corporal Connor was issued orders to commence the task of enumeration at Cumberland, The Pas, and other communities in the region. This task was undertaken to provide the first census for the North West Territories which included the Cumberland district. Superintendent Moffatt added that the territory was to encompass, "any people there may be as far south as the line between Townships 24 and 25 Ranges I to VII both inclusion [sic]."[29]. This was a daunting task, as the census reports had to be in Regina on May 9th. Connor's territory covered over 150 square kilometres. Nevertheless, despite the odds against him, Connor was successful in carrying out the census as ordered within the allotted time frame, no small feat considering the modes of transportation available at the time were either boat, canoe, dog team, or by foot.

With the establishment of this permanent (although occasionally seasonal) outpost at Cumberland House by 1898, the two officers were able to expand the territory of their patrols. By June 16th, 1898, treaty payments of $ 4580.00 were recorded and issued for Montreal Lake, Lac la Ronge, and Pelican Narrows, indicating that the territory of the two officers had doubled.[30] Although this is the first formal mention of Pelican Narrows in the Mounted Police records, it can be concluded that Pelican had been visited or scouted by the Mounties on earlier patrols of the north.

The turn of the century witnessed continued expansion of the North West Mounted Police into the northern regions of Saskatchewan. In the year 1900, police records only referred once to the Cumberland House District. The notation was not positive, as it implied that the people in the area were suffering: the Mounted Police at the Cumberland detachment reported suppling relief to "destitute half-breeds". There was also mention of charges laid by the police against two men, J. Gordon and Mr. Harlers, for supplying liquor to Indians at "Le Pas".[31] Reports of small pox outbreaks in the region were also mentioned, and in the same year, a request was made for a detachment to be established. The Pas, it should be noted, is near the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation region. The Pas fell under the jurisdiction of the Cumberland House detachment in the first few years; however, a separate detachment was requested for The Pas from 1900 each year until 1906, when a seasonal detachment was established. Saskatchewan became a province in 1905, and it was uncertain as to whether The Pas fell into Manitoba or Saskatchewan jurisdiction.

The Pas became of greater importance to the region during the 1900's, as it fell along the main route of the Northern Branch of the Canadian National Railway. Supplies which were to be traded throughout the Cumberland House, Beaver Lake, Sandy Bay, Deschambault, and Pelican Narrows, came up through

The Pas -- including illegal liquor. In March, 1901, L.O. Davis, Member of Parliament for The Pas requested that a couple of officers be sent on a regular basis to The Pas, or at least a patrol to assess the need for a detachment in the area.[32] The Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police delayed the investigation until later that fall. Constable Woods was sent out by canoe to the district of Keewatin to report on the illicit sale of liquor to the Indians of The Pas, and after his report in November, it was determined that men would be stationed at The Pas, "whenever they can be spared. . ."[33]. This point emphasizes that the main concern of the Mounted Police at the beginning of the twentieth century was the control of liquor for the region. This issue remained a priority in Cree relations for the majority of this period.

Regardless, problems with alcohol in the region did not always provide sufficient reason to spend money and provide manpower to properly police the area. The woodlands were not expected to experience the same massive influx of Euro-Canadian population as the prairies. Typically, the Mounted Police were only called into the woodland region in response to serious crime or investigations, or repeated and continuous protest regarding the liquor trade. For example, Davis wrote again to the Mounted Police on two separate occasions with letters from Reverend O. Charlebois, and Reverend John Hines. Reverend Charlebois' correspondence outlined the problem of the illicit sale of liquor at The Pas to the Cree, and Reverend Hines' letter pertained also to similar complaints of a lack of police presence in the region. The Commissioner responded to Davis' inquiries in 1902, "stating that there is a J.P. [Justice of the Peace] at the Pas with power to appoint a constable at any time."[34]. From this correspondence it can be determined that the North West Mounted Police, although they were aware of demands for Mounted Police presence at The Pas, were extremely hesitant in sending officers to the region. The records from 1901 indicated that they were

more preoccupied with the financial setback of the purchase of a canoe for the patrol. This issue implies that money was the primary concern, particularly regarding an area which was rather isolated from the rest of the Territories, and did not have a substantial Euro-Canadian population.

Two major incidents were reported for the Pelican Narrows region in 1903 that finally attracted the attention of the North West Mounted Police. A man by the name of John Rednose, or Jones, was reported to be "at large" in the area. A Hudson's Bay official, Mr. McCrum, sent a letter containing this information to the Commissioner at Prince Albert. The letter also reported that a boy of the Linklater family was found frozen to death at Pelican Narrows in January. These occurrences were significant enough for the North West Mounted Police to arrange to send Inspector Cartwright and one constable. Even though a patrol was requested immediately, the officials at the Division debated among themselves as to whether to patrol by dog team, or by boat in the spring. Finally, by March 12, a patrol set out for Pelican Narrows from Prince Albert, under Inspector Parker, Justice of the Peace, to investigate and report the death of the Linklater boy. Inspector Hefferman was also sent on patrol, "to bring out lunatic, John Jones"[35], escorted by Mr. Hall, a Hudson's Bay Inspector. This last piece of information was recorded in correspondence from the 1904 register, and was dated March 8th through 14th. As a result, it is difficult to determine if the case was taken care of in 1903 when first reported, or not until 1904.

These two events are important as they reveal that the Hudson's Bay Company remained an important influence in the Pelican Narrows region. The reports also indicate that Pelican Narrows was soon to be added to the growing list of woodland communities which required police patrols on a regular basis. An even stronger issue becomes evident from these entries. Delays in investigations because of either natural deterrents, or the small number of men

assigned to the region were inevitable. In these particular cases, Pelican Narrows had to wait three to four months before any police officer arrived, a delay which must have had a detrimental impact on any revelations from the investigation, leaving unanswered questions because of the passage of time since the event occurred. To illustrate, in the issue of the Linklater boy, was his death accidental or suspicious? The police records do not reveal the answer to this query.

Dramatic changes in government policy had an impact on the actions of Mounted Police in Northern Saskatchewan over the next few years. In 1905, when Saskatchewan became a province, the annual cost to police the region was $ 600,000.00. The provincial government decided to keep the Mounted Police by contributing $ 75,000.00 per year to the Dominion Government, leaving the Dominion to pick up the rest of the tab.[36] By 1906, Indian Agents were given the power of truant officers for Indian children at industrial or boarding schools, and the Mounted Police were given jurisdiction where there was an absence of Indian Agents. Whether this legislation was enforced at Cumberland House is difficult to discern. Cumberland had its own school, but for other areas of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, the nearest schools would have been at Sturgeon Landing, or Stanley Mission in later years. This would have made the task of enforcing school attendance extremely difficult for the one or two officers in charge of the region. Of greater significance in 1906, problems with the availability and supply of illegal liquor at Cumberland House had reached dramatic proportions.

On August 27, 1906, an article appeared in the Prince Albert Advocate with the headline "Monthly Mail Half Whiskey". The article was written to report the sad state of affairs at Cumberland House and area. In the newspaper report, Bishop Newnham "condemns conditions at Cumberland". Newnham, the Bishop of Saskatchewan, had completed a seven-week tour, visiting Indian missions in

the north and north-east sections of the province. Pelican Narrows was included in the trip after a stay at La Ronge, and before his party travelled to Cumberland. He reported: "At Cumberland a very bad state of affairs exists. The greater part of the community appears to be in an almost continuous state of debauchery, and there is evidently great need of a detachment of Mounted Police at the point."[37] The article continued quoting Bishop Newnham:

> I was greatly shocked to hear, and indeed to see, that the Indians and half-breeds at Cumberland are practically always drunk. Half-breeds frequently come from Cumberland to Prince Albert, and almost invariably they take back liquor for their friends, the Indians always getting a share. The monthly mail is generally half whiskey. A government surveyor who is working there told me he could very seldom get anyone to work for more than one day at a time, and Revillon Bros. - agent who is building a store, makes the same complaint. The Rev. J. R. Settee, who is a Native of the country and a missionary of long experience, is doing excellent work at Cumberland, but naturally the whiskey drinking of the people is a great hindrance to his good influence.[38]

Essentially, Newnham emphasized that the destructive impact that alcohol had on the Indians demanded a strong and permanent police outpost at Cumberland. Bishop Newnham continued that he was met in Cumberland by Reverend J. Hines, who had made a formal complaint a few years prior to the Mounted Police. From this location, the Bishop was escorted to The Pas, where he observed that the approach of the Hudson Bay Railway was well under way. He noted that there were a number of timber prospectors surveying the area, and that the region held rich mineral deposits similar to those of northern Ontario. The article concluded that much work had to be done in the north-east sectors, and the Church of England Missionary Society had plans to open new posts in the region.[39]

This newspaper report created a great deal of embarrassment for the Mounted Police. It was one matter to receive complaints from the region and

ignore them without much fear of the general public gaining access to the issue, but to be humiliated in a newspaper article was another matter altogether. On September 6th of that year, very shortly after the publication of Bishop Newnham's article, Inspector J.H. Genereaux wrote to the North West Mounted Police in Prince Albert, confirming Newnham's report. Genereaux explained that the conditions were frightful, according to both Bishop Newnham and Reverend Hines.[40] It was at this point that the North West Mounted Police authorities decided that a permanent detachment would be established at Cumberland House.

On September 11th, Corporal Walter Munday formerly of the "K" Division, was transferred to the "F" Division to be stationed at Cumberland House, bringing his wife too. Munday's official orders from Commissioner A. B. Perry of the North West Mounted Police were to, ". . . suppress [the] illicit sale of liquor . . . [because] that district had become demoralized by the infurious [sic] trade."[41]. The Cumberland House Detachment was officially recorded in police records on September 24th, 1906.[42]

The perspective of Luta Munday, Corporal Walter Munday's wife was available regarding Corporal Munday's transfer to Cumberland. A Mounties Wife written by Luta Munday, supplied the story of their arrival and provided a look into the naivety of Mrs. Munday regarding the Cree of the area. Mrs. Munday wrote that the Commissioner had sent a telegraph to Walter and herself to determine if her husband would be willing to venture into unsurveyed terrain to set up the Cumberland House detachment, "among the Indians where there were no other white people."[43].

Mrs. Munday outlined her trip to the region by canoe, emphasizing the feeling of total freedom that she experienced. She also revelled in sleeping out under the stars. However, she also revealed her fear of Indians. She explained that, unknown to Corporal Munday, for her first month in Cumberland she always

carried a revolver, "as I expected to be set upon and scalped at any moment."[44] This confession revealed the prejudice and fears that Luta held, which may possibly have had an indirect influence on her husband. She also explained the scene at Cumberland. Mrs. Munday noted that at the time of her arrival, there were only two Euro-Canadian families at Cumberland House. This observation is important as it may give a clue as to why the Mounted Police officials demonstrated a lack of enthusiasm in sending officers into the region. They were primarily concerned with areas of Euro-Canadian settlement in Saskatchewan, and as a consequence, the police presence in the Cumberland House region was largely symbolic.

Furthermore, she recalled information regarding Reverend James Settee at the Anglican Mission. This same cleric had made complaints along with the Bishop Newnham. Luta Munday described him as "an old Indian" who was living on the Cumberland reserve with his wife at the time of their stay. She noted that "He was delighted to see us, it being most necessary for someone to be there to look after the Indians, as they were learning very bad habits . . . but he was the first one to be arrested for being drunk."[45]. If Mrs. Munday's description of character is accurate, it is an interesting observation considering that Reverend Settee was supposed to be spreading his "good influence" among the people. This observation illustrates that he was hardly a strong, positive role model for his followers. Even more importantly, it reveals that the negative influences of the liquor trade had saturated all levels of Cumberland House society.

Luta Munday's recollections of Cumberland were limited. She mentioned that the Cree tended to call her "Esquasis" meaning "little girl", and her husband was called "Semagenus" -- "soldier". This translation holds several possibilities. Perhaps the Cree viewed Corporal Munday as a soldier, or the Cree told Mrs. Munday that this term meant "soldier". Perhaps "Semagenus" was the closest

Cree word for "policeman".[46] It is an important observation which once again highlights the difficulty of translating Cree into English terminology. The variety of definitions of "Semagenus" in the woodland region is similar to the variety of definitions of "Semaganis" in the prairie region.

Mrs. Munday also provided information regarding Pelican Narrows, mentioning a man by the name of Captain Haight who was chief of transport for the Hudson's Bay Company out of Cumberland. Mrs. Simpson, who was Cree, and Mr. Simpson, who was Scottish, were in charge of the Pelican Narrows Hudson's Bay Company in 1906.[47] This brief piece of information is important because it re-emphasizes the continued importance of Hudson's Bay Company officials in providing information to the Mounted Police from the Pelican Narrows region. The Hudson's Bay Company remained the main Euro-Canadian influence at Pelican Narrows in 1906, just as it had been for decades prior to this date. The Mounted Police would again rely on the Company for information regarding the people and history of Pelican Narrows, just as it had relied on the Company for information about Cumberland House.

One final note regarding her husband while at Cumberland was provided by Luta. She glorified his development as a woodcutter during their stay, saying that he could, "cut as much fuel wood in an hour as an ordinary Indian would cut in a day. Time is no object to the Indian.". Difficulties arise in determining if Luta Munday was illustrating a preconceived judgment that she held regarding all Indians, or whether this was possibly a conclusion drawn after observation of the Cree at Cumberland. If the latter is held to be true, it would be important to recall that Bishop Newnham and officials of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Cumberland had been complaining how alcohol was affecting the ability of the Cree to work efficiently.

On October 16, 1906, a report from Cumberland House was received at the Division Headquarters in Prince Albert. Corporal Munday had issued his first official report, indicating that there was a necessity to patrol the outlying districts due to the constant influx of liquor from Prince Albert. He further reported:

> Trapping is the only source of employment followed by the Indians and half-breeds. Liquor is constantly brought here from Prince Albert for certain half-breeds who seem to think nothing else other than earning sufficient money to enable them to purchase it. I expect considerable trouble with them for a time on account of them being so very quarrelsome, and they seem to have no idea of law and order.[48]

Munday's observations confirm that the illicit sale of liquor was indeed a huge problem in the area. The main source of the dilemma, as indicated in the report, was not the Cree breaking the law, but rather the "half-breed" residents of the area who had easy access to alcohol. Jurisdiction over those who were of mixed ancestry presented a difficulty for the Mounted Police. As was mentioned in a previous chapter, the police often had to establish a clear definition of who was treaty Indian, and who was Metis, as the liquor ordinance could be enforced only among those of treaty status.

The policing of construction gangs of the Hudson's Bay Railroad from Erwood to Pas Mission became an imperative in 1906. Police patrols of the region had been expanded, and by November 16th patrols included Cumberland House, The Pas, Barrier, Budd's Point, and Tearing River. On one particular patrol that included all of these locations, a man by the name of Francis Budd was sought by the police at Cumberland. Budd was rumoured to be in Pelican Narrows, and so Corporal Munday went on patrol. Budd was arrested at Budd's Point and was fined fifty dollars by Munday.[49] It was uncertain from the report what the charge was, but, it can be reasonably assumed to have been liquor related, as this amount was typical of the majority of liquor related charges.

Another contentious issue for Corporal Munday regarded the patrol of the "Pas". In a letter that was issued from the Corporal to the Prince Albert Division, Munday stated his confusion as to whether The Pas fell under another jurisdiction, as it had officially become a part of Manitoba's territory.

The Indian Commissioner D. Laird also drew attention to the issue of a detachment at The Pas. He asked the Manitoba Government to grant permission for the "F" Division to establish a detachment, or at least station an officer in the area, because of the presence of the Canadian National Railway Company. With the continuous construction in the area, the need to protect the Cree from intoxicants had dramatically increased following the influx of railway workers into the region.[50]

Corporal Munday already had his hands full, as he was responsible for the 170 treaty Indians at Cumberland House, in addition to juggling regular patrols of the vast surrounding area.[51] A typical patrol was reported to the "F" Division on March 15, 1907:

Sunday	Feb.	17	Routine
Monday		18	Patrolled Reserve and Settlement
Tuesday		19	Left this A.M. for Beaver Lk., arrived this P.M.
Wednesday		20	Left Beaver Lake for Seawops and returned to Beaver Lake this P.M.
Thursday		21	Left Beaver Lake this A.M. arrived at Cumberland this P.M.
Friday		22	Patrolled Reserve and Settlement
Saturday		23	Fatigue around Barracks
Sunday		24	Routine
Monday		25	Patrolled Reserve and Settlement
Tuesday		26	Patrolled Budd's Point and returned this P.M.
Wednesday		27	Patrolled to Goose Lake and returned this P.M.
Thursday		28	Fatigue around Barracks
Friday	March	1	Left this A.M. for Shoal Lake.[52]

Munday's diary provided a rough outline of this patrol, which went as far north as Beaver Lake on this particular occasion the half-way point between Cumberland and Sandy Bay. Patrols were also made during the month of February and included Beaver Lake, Goose Lake, Budd's Point, Birch River, The Pas, Shoal Lake, and the Red Earth Reserve. This particular patrol provided conclusive evidence that the Mounted Police had indeed performed patrols in the region of Beaver Lake on a regular basis, as well as other areas of Peter Ballantyne Cree settlement. This particular patrol not only covered an extensive area of the Peter Ballantyne Cree, but also set the pattern for future patrols of the region. The vast area involved lowered the impact of these patrols on the general population of the Peter Ballantyne Cree. As oral interviews reveal, the Mounted Police were barely noticed, perhaps because of the infrequency of regular patrols of this territory in conjunction with its size. Efficient patrols of the region would not be achieved until much later with the establishment of posts at Pelican Narrows and Beaver City.

The police records indicated that Superintendent Begin of the North West Mounted Police made an investigation into the establishment of a new detachment by travelling from Cumberland House to The Pas in July, 1907. On the recommendations of Begin's report, the Commissioner permitted the establishment of a detachment at High Portage during the summer months, with Corporal Dann in charge.[53] Corporal Munday was transferred from the Cumberland House Detachment to The Pas on June 4, 1907, although complaints of liquor trafficking were still prevalent at Cumberland.[54] Later that year, on November 21st, Constable Sanders was sent to The Pas, where it was reported that a fishing outfit called the North West Fishing Company and a saw mill had been established.[55]

At this point, Mounted Police records for the Peter Ballantyne Cree territory begin to dwindle, and do not contain sufficient information to make strong conclusions. In 1908, for example, the documents recorded a case of the suspicious death of a Cree man named Thomas Ballantyne at Pelican Narrows, but there is no indication of any follow up investigations or patrols sent to the area.[56] Also briefly mentioned in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Register for 1909 was the suspected murder of "Kinikmanasin", a Cree man at Beaver Lake. Again, the document is sketchy and does not go into detail, but merely mentions that the case was forwarded by the Assistant Commissioner.[57] Also in these two years, it was mentioned that in effect, the Cumberland House Detachment was moved to The Pas. Repeated requests for the detachment to be re-established at Cumberland were sent into the Divisional Headquarters in 1910. In response, the detachment was maintained as a summer post, until further orders were received to re-open it permanently.[58]

In 1914, the Register referred to the establishment of a seasonal detachment at the Beaver Lake Gold Fields. The Register for this year noted that the Commissioner forwarded a copy of a report made by Constable J.S. Wood of The Pas detachment strongly suggesting the detachment's establishment, a request that was backed by Inspector F.H. French who had made a patrol to Beaver Lake in April of that year.[59] The detachment was required to control the large influx of prospectors and miners who flooded into the region during this brief gold rush. A settlement named Beaver City quickly rose in response to this sudden Euro-Canadian population boom. The township, which has long since been abandoned, was located on the south end of Beaver (Amisk) Lake near the mouth of the Sturgeon Weir River. The miners had all vacated the area rather quickly at the outbreak of World War One, perhaps to seek adventure elsewhere. Photographic evidence of this first, however, short-lived, Beaver Lake detachment

and Beaver City exists in archive files located at the Flin Flon Library. (See attached photocopies.) The photographs illustrated that Royal North West Mounted Police Constable W.O. Douglas, Jack Hammell, and Justice of the Peace "Robertson" were present at Beaver City in 1910. Douglas and Hammell both had small lakes named in their honour, each located within ten kilometres of Creighton, Saskatchewan.

In 1915, another radical change occurred among the Mounted Police. The province created its own police force, leaving only the enforcement of federal laws under the jurisdiction of the Royal North West Mounted Police, and therefore temporarily restricting their duties in the north.[60] As a result, the Mounted Police records reflected these changes with substantially reduced reports regarding north-east Saskatchewan. Other adjustments were made. The force was renamed the Royal North West Mounted Police (1904) to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (1920), and their territory included the entire Dominion of Canada.[61]

In summary, as a consequence of the illegal liquor trade, Cumberland House and the territory of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation gained the attention of the North West Mounted Police by the 1890s. The presence of the police was limited to seasonal detachments and occasional patrols, providing a predominantly symbolic presence of the government in the region until regular detachments were established. This factor, in combination with the limited Euro-Canadian presence in the area, allowed the Woodland Cree to pursue traditional hunting and trapping for years after the first stages of Mounted Police relations. It also allowed the Peter Ballantyne Cree to remain largely independent on social, economic, and political levels, an experience which the Poundmaker Cree Nation did not have the opportunity to fully enjoy.

The Peter Ballantyne Cree were not included in treaty until 1906, and by this time, they had already had centuries of contact with fur traders of the Hudson's Bay Company. This knowledge gave them a greater amount of familiarity with Euro-Canadian culture. As a result of this close tie between the Woodland Cree and the Hudson's Bay Company, Mounted Police who were new to the area relied on information and assistance from the Company on a regular basis.

The distances which had to be covered by many of the officers on patrol were great. Methods of travel included canoe, dog team, or steamboat, and the territory that had to be patrolled stretched hundreds of kilometres. Patrols were made irregularly, and were subject to weather conditions.

The first seasonal detachment established at Cumberland House was in 1892, mainly in response to repeated complaints about the liquor trade in the region. From here the Mounted Police hoped to control bootlegging in the region, deliver treaty payments to various reserves, patrol the territory, and perform population censuses with greater efficiency. By the 1900's, requests for the year round presence of the police at Cumberland gained prominence, as the detachment was still seasonal in 1898. So in 1906, when The Pas had attained a seasonal detachment, Cumberland achieved its first permanent detachment, headed by Corporal Walter Munday.

From the memoirs of Munday's wife, it is learned that there were only two Euro-Canadian families at Cumberland House, a situation which may have contributed to the Mounted Police's lack of enthusiasm regarding the establishment of a year round detachment. In addition, Luta Munday gave personal information regarding her biases against the Cree, which potentially may have reflected her husband's attitudes. She also provided a definition of "Semagenus" which she was told meant policeman or soldier. This definition

differed from the ones provided by elders Wallace Semaganis and Art Kasokeo of the Poundmaker Cree Nation.

Inevitably, as the northern branch of the Canadian National Railway extended to The Pas, Euro-Canadian settlement flooded the area. The Cumberland detachment moved to The Pas in response to this settlement, particularly because the railway brought more liquor into the region, which was being sold to surrounding Cree populations. Mounted Police detachments followed Euro-Canadian settlement, whereas communities with predominantly Cree populations, such as Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay, merely remained on the patrol roster. This pattern differed from the experience of the Poundmaker Cree, for in the prairies the Mounted Police attempted to establish themselves prior to the arrival of Euro-Canadian settlement. The communities of the Peter Ballantyne Cree, for example, only saw the Mounted Police during treaty payments, or in extreme circumstances, such as the death of the Linklater boy at Pelican Narrows.

NOTES

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CHAPTER TEN

The Mountie who lost his cap.[1]

A Cree perspective of the arrival of the Mounted Police is revealed in the histories told by elders from the Peter Ballantyne reserve. In order to document a history of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and their interaction with the Mounted Police during and after the 1920s, oral history has to be relied upon. Documentation was minimal in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police files in reference to the Pelican Narrows detachment, nor was there any significant quantity of secondary sources that provided a history of the area. For the following interviews, the title Royal Canadian Mounted Police will be used, taking into consideration that the North West Mounted Police became known as the Royal North West Mounted Police in 1904, and later the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1920, when the police headquarters were moved from Regina to Ottawa. By 1928, the Mounted Police had again become responsible for all provincial police duties in Saskatchewan.

The late Roderick McDermott of Denare Beach, Saskatchewan, was interviewed along with his wife Marie. Darlene Watson, their daughter, provided interpretation of the stories recounted in Cree. Mr. McDermott and his wife, elders of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, live on a designated piece of the reserve in Denare known locally as "The Fish Plant". Mr. McDermott was

approximately eighty-five years old at the time of the interview. His wife, Marie McDermott is in her eighties, and they were married for just over sixty-five years. Mrs. McDermott is full-blooded Woodlands Cree. Mr. McDermott was half Cree, and half Scottish. His father was a white fur trader who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company out of Pelican Narrows. His mother was a full-blooded Cree also from the Peter Ballantyne Reserve area.

Mr. McDermott reminisced about a time when Barren Land Caribou frequented the area, sturgeon were plentiful in Beaver Lake, and an abundance of rabbit, fish and moose allowed the people to live off the land as they had done for centuries. Treaty payments were made at Pelican Narrows in September, and at Beaver Lake in June. The Cree from the Peter Ballantyne region would take day trips to the nearest center where, as Mr. McDermott could remember, six canoes would arrive with Department of Indian Affairs officials and Royal Canadian Mounted Police escorts. These officials would bring annuities, which consisted of five dollars per person, limited ammunition to be divided among the people, hooks and twine, blankets, and a cup of flour for each man, woman, and child. In later years, a small ration of salt pork was also provided.

Mr. McDermott recalled the story of the Mountie who lost his cap during one of the treaty payments. The incident occurred when Roderick McDermott was about twelve or thirteen years of age, and Peter Ballantyne was chief, a man who was, "very strict and was the best chief they had ever had."[2]. The Mountie was chasing after all the women during treaty days and had lost his cap when he was kicked out of one of the tents early the next morning. Chief Ballantyne found the cap and made the Mountie come beg for it, as the officer could not leave without it. This was an important demonstration of power on behalf of the Cree chief. Peter Ballantyne had proved that the Mounties had to earn the respect of the Cree to gain their cooperation. Peter Ballantyne was considered by both

Roderick and Marie McDermott to be one of the best and strongest hereditary chiefs of the Woodlands Cree (from about 1910-1940). As a result, the people chose his name for their nation.

Mr. McDermott had excellent name recollection, but he could not remember any Mounted Police officer names, as they were not of prominence in the Beaver Lake region. Not until well into the 1950s was a permanent or even a summer Mounted Police detachment established at Beaver Lake. The police were hardly noticeable in the region. The only non-native person most Cree encountered was the federal government Fisheries Inspector Maclean from The Pas during the 1940s to 1950s. Mr. McDermott reported: "The only time the Indians had a problem with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was when the whites called them in. Indians never called the R.C.M.P. because they always handled the situation on their own."[3] Up until the McDermott's generation, no one could recall the Mounted Police, except as their elders recalled, once a year at treaty time. The presence of the police was not noticeable. The only officer that Roderick McDermott could recall was Sergeant Malloy at the Pelican Narrows detachment: "a big fellow who just showed up. None of the people knew why. No one told them and no one had asked for the R.C.M.P. to come. This was strange because there were so few white people."[4] Mr. McDermott implied that the presence of the police outside of treaty payment time usually indicated that there was a problem with a Euro-Canadian trader in the area.

The interview also revealed that the police always came from either Cumberland House or The Pas. Not until around 1925 to 1930 were they stationed at Pelican Narrows. Trouble with illegal liquor was not a major problem, according to Mr. McDermott. He related the story of a Euro-Canadian storekeeper named Abraham at Deschambault who was making home brew. The Mounted Police discovered his activities from the Cree, and ordered Abraham to

dump all the liquor, sentencing him to six months in jail. Mr. McDermott was a freighter for a storekeeper named Olsen at Pelican Narrows and spent a large portion of his years canoeing goods each summer. He recalled that there were police detachments only at Cumberland House and Pelican Narrows that the Cree were aware of by the 1930's. Roderick McDermott admitted that if there was alcohol in any of the freighted goods, it was so well hidden that they did not detect its presence until the store owners were drunk shortly after their arrival.

Roderick McDermott recalled that the only time he came in conflict with Euro-Canadian settlers was in regard to wages and trap lines. Trapping and fishing were critical elements of the Peter Ballantyne Cree lifestyle. Mr. McDermott made thirty-five cents per muskrat during the "early years" prior to World War Two, which was the main fur in demand at the time. He also recollected applying for a job at the Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company mine in Flin Flon, Manitoba, when it first opened, along with some other "fellas". He was approximately eighteen at the time, but was refused employment because he was not considered old enough, nor could he speak English.[5]

Mr. McDermott described the first time he remembered encountering an officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He was a child of six or seven when a meeting was held between his parents and the officer, who made a small windmill toy for him. He also told of a woman named Nancy in their band at Pelican Narrows, who had become mentally ill. She had recently had a baby, but since she had "gone crazy", was unfit to care for the child. Mr. McDermott could not be absolutely certain how the Mounties had become aware of the problem. He explained that an interpreter of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who was visiting the area had heard of their dilemma through word of mouth. The interpreter returned to Mirond Lake, at Screw Rapids where the band was camped, with an officer who came to pick up Nancy and to take her to Prince

Albert or Dauphin. Mr. McDermott explained that no one knew where they had taken her for certain because the Mounted Police did not explain anything to the people.

Roderick McDermott recalled that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were never asked any questions when they took action. He said that the police were to be respected and feared. This reaction of the Cree was not learned from first hand experience, but was taught by the elders to the people of the Peter Ballantyne Reserve. The elders said if Mounted Police officers were in the area, they were told to: "Obey, watch out, and respect. The children would make no noise. No one would say anything. The children weren't even allowed to play. No noise."[6]. The Mounted Police had not really demonstrated why it was that they were given this respect, but everyone knew to obey the elders, "You had to watch yourself. That was all."[7].

Roderick McDermott explained that before the arrival of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, law and order was the responsibility of the chief and elders. A strong chief made for good law enforcement. As a general rule, everyone communicated and got along. This was a basic law of survival. However, if punishment was needed, it would be carried out as the chief and elders decided. Roderick McDermott would not say what sort of punishment would be meted out, only that one would have to "ask the Ballantynes, they know all about it."[8]. The respect for this family as enforcers of band law was strong among the Woodland Cree of this region.

Interestingly, there was one definitive, yet positive change that came with the arrival of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police mentioned by Marie McDermott. Mrs. McDermott recalled that there were times when a woman was beaten by her husband or another band member. This was something that was not discussed among the people, yet occurred from time to time: "Sometimes it just

happened and was accepted. Ways were different. Laws different."[9]. Once the police arrived, they made it clear that this behavior would no longer be tolerated. Marie McDermott added that this was one important aspect of the arrival of the Mounties that her husband had neglected to mention.

One story relating to the difficulties of Cree adjustment to Euro-Canadian settlers and the Mounted Police was told to Mr. McDermott by the elders. A garden owned by Bill Hayes, a storekeeper at Beaver City was plundered. Thomas Sewap, Thomas Sewap Jr. and Jim Sewap dug up potatoes and vegetables from the garden, and part of the garden caught on fire. Hayes promptly reported the incident to the Mounted Police. A summer detachment was in existence at Beaver City during this time, and the perpetrators were quickly apprehended. Roderick McDermott explained that the people did not understand why they were jailed. Because in Cree society everyone shared, people did not know that sharing food from the storekeeper's garden was considered theft. Thomas Sewap, Mr. McDermott continued, was able to escape because he was a shaman. The Mountie had locked him up that night, but came back the next morning to find Sewap sitting calmly outside the building. Each time the officer imprisoned him, Sewap would be found sitting outside the next morning. Roderick McDermott added that this was how the police learned that, "they could never really lock up an Indian."[10].

In later years, during his twenties, Mr. McDermott helped haul supplies for the various stores at Sturgeon Landing, Pelican Narrows, Sandy Bay, and other areas of Cree settlement. Supplies were brought by canoe to the Revillon Brothers Company posts. Mr. McDermott was paid about $175.00 per summer, and recalled that he and his co-workers would often "raise hell" at Sturgeon Landing or Pelican Narrows after payment. This information may explain why

the Royal Canadian Mounted Police began to organize patrols in the area at key times during the year.

Shortly after his employment as a freighter of goods, Roderick McDermott worked at the sawmills in the area for three dollars per day. He was one of the more fortunate to earn a raise to three dollars and fifty cents per day. Mr. McDermott recalled that one of the radical adjustments to his lifestyle was the necessity to move from the "main island" in Beaver Lake to the shore village of Denare Beach during the 1940's. Originally a station for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and hence the name -- De-n-are, Cree families had to relocate to the beach for their children to attend school. If the youngsters did not attend, no family allowance would be granted. This small portion of government allowance was a critical addition to the McDermott's income, allowing them to buy sugar, tea, coal oil, and occasionally bacon. Marie and Roderick McDermott recalled that there were no police officers to force them to attend school. There was a school at Sturgeon Landing which Mrs. McDermott attended in her youth. However, Mr. McDermott was not allowed to attend because his father was Euro-Canadian. Both of the McDermotts insisted they attended because of the elders, who told them school was important because their culture would be changing, and they had to adjust. Again, the Mounted Police were not an obvious presence at Denare Beach until the 1970s. The Department of Natural Resources was the closest representative of the government's law in the region, or at best were enforcers of specific government regulations from the 1950s to 1960s.

In reference to whether the band should organize its own law enforcement officers for the reserve, Mr. McDermott felt that there was still a great deal of indecisiveness among the people and the band after such radical cultural adjustments. He suggested that Euro-Canadians are just as susceptible as Indians to corruption. Basically, he felt that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was

providing a satisfactory service, and that the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation was too disjointed to successfully organize its own force.

Ely Highway of Pelican Narrows was also interviewed with assistance from Mervin Ballantyne as interpreter. In his eighties, Mr. Highway is also an elder of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. He spoke some English during the interview, switching occasionally to Cree to better describe his recollections. He began by explaining that the Mounted Police arrived at Pelican Narrows, from his earliest memories, around 1924, just before he left the reserve to attend school at Stanley Mission. Mr. Highway added that the reserve was surveyed shortly after World War One, and there was no strong police presence in the region for this period. Ely Highway confirmed that everyone on the reserve was self-sufficient prior to the arrival of the Mounted Police, relying mainly on hunting, fishing, and trapping. He recalled that as a school boy, there was a minimal amount of farming out at Stanley Mission, where a clearing of trees was cut for firewood. This clearing served as a garden patch for vegetables and a small pasture for cattle.

Mr. Highway was uncertain as to why the Mounted Police eventually came to Pelican Narrows; "no one knew why the police showed up,"[11] he said. Perhaps they had come to protect the Cree and the reserve from outsiders as suggested in the treaty. However, he remembered clearly that the Mounted Police were once in the region to pick up a man who was stealing from the store and trap-lines in the area. The man involved, "carried a gun and was half Chippewayan."[12]. Mervin Ballantyne intervened to add that the reason Ely Highway noted that the man involved was half Dene was long-standing rivalry between the Peter Ballantyne Cree and the Dene, whose trading routes had often conflicted with one another during the fur trade. Anyone who was of Dene ancestry was viewed with suspicion by the Woodland Cree of this area.

The police usually traversed the terrain by sled or canoe whenever out on patrol, and to the best of Mr. Highway's recollection, usually they covered the territory from Pelican Narrows to as far away as La Ronge and Stanley Mission. When it came to law enforcement on the reserve, the band, chief, and council were responsible. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police played an active role in the punishment of criminals on the reserve only if called in by the chief. Treaty payments were the only events during which the Mounted Police were present in the community until the establishment of the Pelican Narrows Detachment. During treaty time, according to Mr. Highway, charges would be laid against the person or persons involved in criminal activities throughout the year. The punishment would then be determined by the acting officer. Ely Highway's recollections were similar to Roderick McDermott's in that problems with crime were minimal before the arrival of the Mounted Police; "there wasn't much wrong doing before they showed up."[13]. When the treaties were signed, it was made clear to the people that it was against the law for a treaty Indian to consume alcohol. As a result, bootlegging began -- a problem that the police had to take care of: "when liquor came then there were trouble-makers,"[14] he observed.

Sergeant Malloy was the earliest Mounted Police officer that Ely Highway could remember, the same officer that Mr. McDermott could recall when he was interviewed. Once the detachment was established, Mr. Highway noted, the police became accepted as part of the community. The original detachment was near the modern-day Northern Store in Pelican Narrows. Ely Highway stated that the police often hired some of the local Cree as guides for dog sled or canoe teams. One man by the name of Simmian Bloomfield was well known among the Peter Ballantyne Cree for his work with the police out of Cumberland House and Pelican Narrows. Simmian was a special constable hired by the Mounted Police

for his knowledge of people and area. Mr. Highway noted that his brother Joe was hired as a guide for the Mounties and Simmian in the early 1920's.

Mr. Highway's opinion of the police remained neutral, yet he indicated that although they were respected by the Cree, they also created a certain amount of anxiety among the people. He mentioned that the only school for the Peter Ballantyne Cree was at Sturgeon Landing, and that children could be forcibly taken by the police from their families to attend school. He also noted that: "The people didn't like the police because someone could be charged and taken to jail a few nights here and then taken to P.A. [Prince Albert]."[15]. This fact often caused distress to the members of the family of those who were charged, as it often meant that the family member would not be seen again until they returned. Prince Albert seemed a world away.

As mentioned, court used to be held only once a year at treaty time with a Mounted Police officer and an Indian Agent present to act as judge and to set the fine. Once the Police maintained a stronger presence in the community, court was held every two weeks. To the best of Mr. Highway's recollection, the longest period that a Cree person from Peter Ballantyne Reserve had to remain imprisoned was about six months. Crimes of greater severity, he noted, had not begun to occur until later years, such as charges pertaining to rape, which was a crime which had taken place more recently. Mr. Highway suggested that not only was Prince Albert too far away for the nearest jail facility, but in his opinion it was often over crowded. Ely Highway added that in his view the current Prince Albert facility was ineffective in rehabilitating Cree criminals, who he felt often returned to the community unhealed.

In the early stages of Mounted Police presence, the most severe crime for which someone could be charged was the making of moonshine. Ely Highway said that the sentence was about six months' imprisonment, and that bootlegging

was of serious concern to the police in the "old days". Any major disturbance was reported promptly to the police once they were permanently present in the area. Prior to the creation of the Pelican Narrows detachment, a trip would have to be made to Creighton or Flin Flon by canoe or dog team in order to seek police assistance. A round trip took approximately four days. Other than illegal liquor, Mr. Highway remembered that the Mounted Police were involved to a smaller extent in enforcing some of the fishery laws. Initially, all fishing was free; then a charge of two dollars for a fishing license was introduced. Ely Highway noted that even this initial charge of two dollars was small compared to the forty-one dollar cost of a fishing license on the reserve today.

Mr. Highway's final note was in response to the question whether the Peter Ballantyne band should organize its own law enforcement officers. He suggested he was of the opinion that it might be a positive move. He felt that Cree officers might be easier to approach because they would know the history of the people and problems in the area, and would perhaps be more willing to listen to complaints. He noted that an officer who was previously working at the Pelican Narrows detachment had recently forced Mr. Highway to re-evaluate his faith in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Jack Ramsay was considered "a good guy in the community, and it was a surprise to hear about any of his actions."[16]. Ramsay was charged with sexually assaulting two young girls from the Pelican Narrows reserve. Mr. Highway implied that this knowledge made it difficult to trust the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He did note that the current detachment of Mounties were a lot better.

Ely Custer of Pelican Narrows provided a great deal of information regarding the history of the arrival of the Mounted Police in the region. Mervin Ballantyne offered Cree interpretation. Ely Custer, an elder of approximately seventy-two, speaks only Cree. He spent his entire life in the Pelican Narrows

region, and worked during the majority of his younger years as a guide for the Roman Catholic priest who was stationed at Pelican. He said he was in the church's employ every summer of his youth until approximately 1961, when the development of a road through to Pelican Narrows in 1964 eliminated the necessity of travel by boat or canoe. Although he was too young to remember exactly when the police first came to the region, he recalled one strong memory which was his first impression of the Mounted Police. His mother took him when he was a child to see the new Mounted Police detachment building. The old police detachment, he explained, was where the Department of Northern Saskatchewan building was recently located, on the same lot as the Northern Store. The building was made of logs, measuring approximately twenty by twenty feet square, with a separate building for a jail. Ely Custer continued, explaining that his mother was on her way to the Hudson's Bay store beside the Revillon Brothers store, and pointed the detachment out to him. Ely Custer recalled that he remembered he was asking her so many questions about who they were and why the Mounties had come to Pelican.[17]

Mr. Custer said that at the time of treaty, the police arrived escorting the Indian Department people. The Mounted Police would remind everyone that when they signed treaty, it became the duty of the police to protect the Cree. Mr. Custer explained that the people shook the hands of the Mounted Police because they were here to protect the Cree when they arrived in 1924. "Waddy" was the first Indian Agent for the area, as Ely Custer recalled, and would make the annual trip to Pelican Narrows from the agency located at The Pas. At the same time, Sam Lovel was the Indian Agent responsible for Beaver Lake out of The Pas. Agent Waddy remained in charge of Pelican Narrows treaty payments until 1947, when the Indian Agency switched jurisdictions and arrived from Prince Albert. Ely Custer could only recall this man as Mr. Jones. The Royal Canadian

Mounted Police would always accompany the Indian agent, especially at treaty time to remind the people that the police were fulfilling their treaty obligation.[18]

Mr. Custer expanded upon the story of the first arrival of the Mounted Police during treaty making. He recalled a story told to him by his elders. He said that the police arrived with the Indian Agent to sign the treaty, and for the next half day the chief and Indian Agent had to sit down and have a meeting with all the headmen of the band. He recalled that the Agent sat at a table. To the Agent's left sat the Mounted Police officer, and to the Agent's right was the interpreter. Ely Custer said that the interpreter was the only man standing up. The Indian Agent then opened a book and read to the people. He told them about breaking the law that was written in this book. Mr. Custer summarized that this was how the Cree knew about the law: that whole half day they listened to the interpreter tell to the people what the law was. The interpreter said how much time you would get in jail for each type of crime. These laws, Mr. Custer mentioned, were not much different from those of the Cree. The laws in the book were the same, he said, as what the people already had, it was just that different people handled the law enforcement. Ely Custer could remember as a child that every treaty day from that first time onward, the children were also taught the laws. They too had to sit for half a day while the interpreter told them the laws. This recitation happened every year, and was sometimes boring because, as Mr. Custer mentioned, they all had a good memory and could remember exactly what they were told the year before.[19]

Initially, the situation was awkward between the police and the Peter Ballantyne Cree. The Cree people were afraid of the police at first. They were afraid to break the law and feared the punishment of the police. Ely Custer said that the police did not help the people at first even though they were supposed to because the Mounted Police used to be afraid of the chief and council. The chief

used to be boss when the treaty was signed, and the police knew not to interfere because the chief was the link to King George or the Queen. At this point in the story, Mr. Custer linked his hands together, then continued -- and so the Mounted Police had to respect the chief. The chief, Peter Ballantyne, was strong.[20]

Ely Custer remembered one incident that happened when he was very young that involved Cornelius Bear, who was the second chief of the Peter Ballantyne Reserve. Mr. Custer noted that Cornelius had also been a strong chief, and one day the chief had taken the coat off of one of the Mounted Police officers. Mr. Custer continued to explain that the officer, Constable Powers, was sleeping with a woman on the other side of town. The chief told the officer that he and any other Mounted Policeman would no longer be allowed on the reserve. The chief stripped the officer of his coat and told him to leave and never come back. Ely Custer noted that it was autumn, and although Powers was supposed to be put in jail, he was disgraced and banished from the reserve. Cornelius had so much power and was such a strong chief that as a result of this incident, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police detachment was relocated just outside of the reserve boundaries, and has remained just off the reserve to this day.[21]

This story is similar to the recollection of Rod McDermott of the Mountie who lost his cap. Taking off the coat of an officer may have been a symbolic stripping of authority. Historian Arthur J. Ray provided some insight into the importance of this action in his book Indians in the Fur Trade. Here he suggested that the Hudson's Bay Company provided a "Captain's Outfit"[22] to certain members of a Cree band whom they wished to deal with on a regular basis. In addition, by providing a coat which was of "coarse cloth coat, either red or blue"[23], the Company hoped to distinguish a "difference in status between the band leaders and their more important followers"[24]. The militaristic coat was a symbol of leadership and was respected by the Cree through their past association

with the Hudson's Bay Company. When the Mounted Police officer was stripped of his coat, he was deprived of his authority. This interesting anecdote also emphasized that the chief continued to hold a great deal of influence on the reserve as a law enforcer. Mr. Custer clarified that there was no need for the police in Pelican Narrows because everyone was peaceful. As a result, the police moved back to Cumberland House for a period, where their services were most needed. The detachment remained, and would be frequented by officers on patrol, who would sometimes stay for up to a month.[25]

Mr. Custer explained that the chief and band councilors were responsible for enforcing the laws among the people. The chief used to be the judge; if a person stole something or committed a minor offense, the chief would punish the offender. If the crime was serious, the chief signed a paper for the Mounted Police to deal out the punishment. One element that the chief had in common with the Mounted Police, Ely Custer added, was that they both had to follow what Indian Affairs ordered during treaty time. During treaty time, the Indian Affairs agent took over as judge. If someone had committed a crime, they would be taken away by the police at this time of the year, but only with the chief's authority.[26]

Mr. Custer gave an example of one time when hunters killed a beaver, thereby breaking treaty. The Mounted Police officer for the area came in, charged the trapper for killing the beaver, and took him away to jail without Chief Cornelius Bear's permission. As Mr. Custer related the story, he added that the chief took off the coat of the Mountie. This incident indicated that this particular officer too would no longer be allowed to interfere on the reserve, nor would his authority be recognized by any of the Peter Ballantyne Cree.[27]

The earliest Mounted Police officer that Ely Custer could recollect was Constable Chappy, who was posted at Pelican Narrows just before World War

Two, when Mr. Custer was almost eighteen. Constable Chappy was one of the Mounted Police officers who remained for the longest period at Pelican Narrows. However, according to Ely Custer, it was well known in the community that Chappy had a habit of chasing the women. Mr. Custer said that an officer by the name of Kurby was also stationed at Pelican for quite some time. He also strongly recalled Simmian Bloomfield, who, he explained, was a guide for the police for many years. Mr. Custer said that Bloomfield always traveled with Constable Chappy, and they usually took two dog team sleighs with them on winter trips. Mr. Custer said that the trip from the detachment at Cumberland House to Pelican Narrows took three days of travel. Chappy and Bloomfield would come up around Christmas time and then after staying for three or four days, they would leave around New Year's Day. Ely Custer also recalled that Ely Highway's brother, Joe, worked as a guide for the Mounted Police. He also added that Joe became chief of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation after Cornelius Bear.[28]

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police hired some of the Cree from the area. According to Ely Custer, the police always had one local man and one local woman working for them. The woman was usually hired as a housekeeper, and for mending clothes or making blankets. The hired man was responsible for feeding the sled dogs by setting nets for fish. This man often acted as interpreter for the Mounted Police, and was responsible for cutting and supplying fire wood for the detachment. The police officer would also give jobs such as contracts for cutting wood to some of the others on the reserve, said Mr. Custer.[29]

Towards the close of the interview Ely Custer mentioned Jack Ramsay, whom he described as an officer who had recently been hurting the people and was abusing them before they were jailed. He was glad that Ramsay was caught, and said that in his view, the Mounted Police officers at Pelican Narrows were better now. Ely Custer concluded by relating an interesting personal perspective

regarding potential for Cree law enforcement officers established by the Peter Ballantyne Band. Mr. Custer took a long pause to consider the possibility and came up with the following response. He said that he could not say for sure if it would be a good idea or not, because everything was different these days than before. Times had changed so much that he could not really say whether or not officers from the reserve would be better than the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He said that in his time his people have gone from traveling by canoe to outboard boat motors and planes. Times are always changing, so it is difficult to judge what would be best.

In reflection, oral accounts from the McDermotts, Ely Highway and Ely Custer provide a great deal of information that was not available in the Mounted Police records. Roderick McDermott had mentioned that treaty payments were made each year for the region, and recalled that the Indian Agents always came with Mounted Police escorts. These rare occasions tended to be the only time that Mounted Police were of any significant presence in the region until a detachment at Pelican Narrows was established in 1924. Ely Highway noted that the Mounted Police arrived in the region as part of treaty obligations, and were in the region to protect the Cree. Once the detachment at Pelican was established, the Mounted Police became a part of the community. As a general rule, the Mounted Police were not called into the area unless problems with Euro-Canadians arose, as Roderick McDermott remembered. Even then the disputes tended to involve either wages or trap lines. Ely Custer confirmed this opinion, stating that the police had told the Cree that it was their duty to protect the people.

During treaty time the laws were read aloud to the Cree, according to Ely Custer. These laws were not much different from the laws that the Peter Ballantyne Cree already had in place. At first the Cree were afraid of the

Mounted Police, or were afraid that they would be taken away to Prince Albert to jail. Interestingly, the Mounted Police were simultaneously viewed with respect. These were two points on which all three elders' interviews corresponded.

Interestingly, all three elders also mentioned that the Peter Ballantyne Cree were self-sufficient prior to the arrival of the Mounted Police. They had their own system of laws and punishment in place, and the chief held a position which was similar to that of a judge. The band, councilors, and elders were all involved in law enforcement. Even after the arrival of the Mounted Police, the chief often had final say over the punishment of the criminal. However, both the Mounted Police and the chief had to follow the rules of the Department of Indian Affairs at treaty time, when court was held. The Mounted Police had to gain the respect and cooperation of the chief and the people in order to properly function as a law enforcer.

According to Mr. McDermott, a Mounted Police officer who had been chasing after the women lost his cap during one of the treaty payments. The chief, Peter Ballantyne, refused to return the cap as a symbol of his jurisdiction, and to show his disapproval of the officer's actions. This story was very similar to the episode of the Mountie who had his coat taken away as told in Ely Custer's interview. In Ely's story, the Mounted Police officer in this scenario had also been after one of the Cree women at Pelican Narrows. Similarly, to demonstrate his disapproval, Cornelius Bear, second chief of the Peter Ballantyne Cree stripped the Mountie of his red tunic. This again was a symbol of the chief's power, as the Mounted Police detachment was no longer allowed to be located on reserve land, and was relocated just outside reserve limits.

The first officer that Mr. McDermott could recall was an officer who was called into the region when he was about six or seven years old to take away an insane woman named Nancy. The first officer he recalled by name in the area

was Sergeant Malloy out of Pelican Narrows. Malloy was also the first officer that Ely Highway could recall. He mentioned that Simmian Bloomfield was a Cree man hired as a special constable, and his brother, Joe Highway, was hired as a guide. Mr. Highway also noted that the first time he could recall the Mounted Police being called into the area was in regard to a complaint of a Dene man who was stealing from the trap-lines. Ely Custer stated that the first time he remembered the Mounted Police was when he was a child. His mother took him to see the new police detachment in Pelican Narrows. The first officer he could remember was a man by the name of Constable Chappy, and later an officer named Kurby. He too added that Simmian Bloomfield, and Joe Highway (who became chief after Cornelius Bear) were hired as police guides. Mr. Custer noted that other Cree were employed by the Mounted Police to perform various duties around the detachment.

The police eventually fulfilled a variety of duties. In addition to treaty escorts, they made regular patrols of the area, enforced liquor laws, mandatory school attendance, and partook in enforcing fishery laws. Marie McDermott added that the police also insured that women would not be beaten by their husbands.

The main method of travel for the Mounted Police was either sled or canoe, and the nearest detachments were located at Flin Flon or at Cumberland House prior to the Pelican Narrows detachment. Patrols out of Pelican Narrows went as far away as La Ronge or Stanley Mission. These rounds meant that the Mounted Police had to travel long distances: for example, a trip from Cumberland or Flin Flon to Pelican Narrows could take approximately three days.

In respect to whether or not the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation should create its own police force, the elders expressed mixed opinions. Mr. McDermott felt that Euro-Canadians were just as susceptible as Indians to corruption in

respect to law enforcement. Mr. Highway suggested that Cree officers might be easier to approach, as they would be familiar with the history of the people and the region. Mr. Custer stated that he could not say if Cree police would be better than the Mounted Police because times had changed so dramatically for the Cree in the last century.

NOTES

1 Interviews with Roderick McDermott and Marie McDermott, Darlene Watson Cree interpretor. March 6 and March 11, 1997.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Interview with Ely Highway, Mervin Ballantyne Cree interpreter. December 28, 1998.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Interview with Ely Custer, Mervin Ballantyne Cree interpreter. December 28, 1998.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Arthur J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1974) p.139.

23 As quoted in Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Interview with Ely Custer.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

CONCLUSION

> After the mid 1920's . . . Technological change manifested itself in the arrival in the north of the aeroplane and the radio, two innovations which did much to alter the pattern of police response to the challenges of the frontier.[1]

In conclusion, Mounted Police policies were generally the same in both regions of northern and southern Saskatchewan. However, certain aspects of Cree and police relations varied in response to environmental, cultural, social, and governmental factors, as well as patterns of Euro-Canadian settlement.

It must be emphasized that Euro-Canadian settlement did not reach the proportions in the north that it had in the south. Instead, in the initial years the Peter Ballantyne Cree, with the exception of contact with missionaries, Revillon Brothers and Hudson's Bay Company traders, experienced little impact from government acquisition of the Territories. In addition, the Mounted Police officer, and later the Department of Natural Resource and Fisheries officer, were the only representatives of the Government in the region.

The Cree continued to pursue traditional hunting, trapping, and fishing even after signing treaty because what had now become "Crown Land" was open for use if the appropriate licenses were paid. This issue created a minimal impact for northern Cree, as compared to the trespassing charges that were laid against southern Cree for hunting on privately owned farm land. Indeed, prior to full exploitation of natural resources in the northeast, much of the game that was

sought by the Peter Ballantyne Cree was still available. This could hardly compare to the massive extinction of the buffalo that occurred in the south about the time of Treaty Six, resulting in the depletion of the key food source for Poundmaker Cree. The Poundmaker Cree also had to adjust to the pursuit of an agrarian lifestyle which was unimaginably dissimilar from a hunting and gathering subsistence. Their entire culture had focused on the hunt. It is true, though, that in later years, as commercial mining, fishing, and land-intensive logging increased in the northeast, the animal populations began to dwindle. The caribou and the sturgeon, for example, which were once prominent in the area, were now extremely rare. Even elk and moose have been reduced in numbers.

Another serious consequence that the Peter Ballantyne Cree had to face was the gradual withdrawal of fur companies from the region during the first decade of the 20th century. Fur prices plummeted, as fur became unfashionable. As a result, the only income-producing livelihood for most of the Woodland Cree disappeared, with the exception of government assistance programs such as Family Allowance in 1945 and welfare in the 1960's. Poverty resulted. Today, for example, Pelican Narrows holds a population of over 3,000 Cree, with no major industry present to provide employment. The Denare Beach area includes around 500 Peter Ballantyne Cree, who rely upon the industries in Flin Flon, Manitoba or Creighton, Saskatchewan for employment.

Concentration onto reserves also proved a terrible pitfall for both southern and northern Cree. Neither group had expressed any direct animosity towards the Mounted Police for the enforcement of this policy; instead, there was a general realization that the police were only carrying out the orders of the Canadian Government. For obvious reasons, reserve life hindered the ability to pursue game with the previous amount of efficiency. Although this was the idea which would most effectively secure agricultural settlement of the land, it provided a

source of consternation for Peter Ballantyne Cree. Reserves encouraged the concentration of more Cree into one area than the surrounding woodland could support over successive generations.

Another major theme which emerged was the willingness of the Mounted Police to involve themselves in sexual relations with Cree women, a practice which proved detrimental to their image among the Cree. In addition, this loss of respect created emotions of fear, mistrust, and anger for the Cree, emotions which did not create a positive environment for law enforcement.

Also noted in this thesis were several other commonalties. The Mounted Police gained a reputation of "protector of the Cree" in both northern and southern regions, in part because of their fulfillment of treaty obligations. In both regions, the Mounted Police had universal roles as the right hand man of the government, and the ability to act on behalf of Indian Affairs. In the absence of appropriate agents, the police were often relied upon to implement governmental and Indian Affairs policies.

Language presented a barrier which often created misunderstandings. For example, Luta Munday was convinced that "Semaganis" meant policeman or soldier in Cree. Art Kasokeo described "Semaganis" as something used to find a lost object, to mark its location like an arrow with something tied to it so it would not be lost when shot into thick undergrowth. Wallace Semaganis defined "Semaganis" not as policeman, but a lance or lancer. Undoubtedly, such a variety of meanings for one word can present difficulties. More challenging would be the translation of an entire statement given in Cree to a Mounted Police officer during an investigation.

Another common thread was the initial presence of the police. Their appearances were few, limited to monthly or irregular patrols, or treaty payments in either region. Police numbers were small and remained insignificant unless a

specific problem such as increased Euro-Canadian settlement, or trafficking in liquor drew their attention to the area. The ability to obtain police assistance presented an interesting comparison. A round trip from Pelican Narrows to the nearest detachment at Creighton took four days. A round trip from Poundmaker to Battleford required at least a day and a half. In addition, in many instances a single officer was responsible for an area with a radius of hundreds of kilometers, more so in the north.

A historical examination such as this increases awareness of the existing system of Cree laws that were in effect prior to the arrival of the Mounted Police, opening the potential for analysis of different approaches to law enforcement. To ensure that a legal system remains effective, one must consider restructuring the existing institutions to serve the Cree public better. An improved comprehension of the radical adjustments made by Cree society with the imposition of a new legal system emerges from this study, and, although the Cree proved their adaptability, changes for the better yet remain to be achieved.

Consideration of the nature of the relationship between the Cree and the Mounted Police also increases common knowledge of the history of the extraordinary challenges involved in being an officer of the Mounted Police. For example, the overwhelming variety of duties performed by officers, as well as rigorous patrols, covering hundreds of square kilometers, provided a mark of distinction on the history of the Mounted Police.

A review of historical literature as well as histories from elders of each reserve revealed that there was a certain amount of loyalty and understanding which existed between the police and the Cree. Utilizing these various sources, a visualization of what life was like for the Cree from Poundmaker or Peter Ballantyne emerges, combined with a sense of "a day in the life of a Mountie". Studying the history of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and Poundmaker Cree

Nation in interaction with the Mounted Police creates a better understanding of why conflict arose in particular circumstances. For example, attitudes and perspectives of the Mounted Police reflected the culture from which they came, and appropriate adjustments had to be made in order to function properly in each region. If these alterations were not made, the two cultures came head to head on issues which could have been negotiated if both parties remained open and flexible.

In the case of the Poundmaker region, the mutual co-operation which existed seemed to have disappeared during the conflict that erupted at approximately the same time as the Metis Rebellion of 1885. For the Peter Ballantyne region, there was no single incident which marked such a drastic change in the relationship between the Cree and the Mounted Police; rather, a gradual decline in collaboration occurred with technological advancements. Thanks to technology, the Mounted Police were eventually able to travel, communicate, and enforce the law of the government without Cree guidance.

The use of a combination of both oral and documentary sources strengthens and enhances historical research. To illustrate, contemporary documentary sources help in providing information on Poundmaker Cree and Mounted Police interaction. Because the stories of the Poundmaker elders are stronger for more recent periods, the documents assisted in bridging some of the gaps that occurred in oral accounts pertaining to earlier periods. On the other hand, oral sources were invaluable for the Peter Ballantyne Cree, because this information dealt with more recent periods, such as from the 1920s to 1940s. Documentary sources for this period are weak, so here the stories of the Peter Ballantyne elders answer many key questions. In addition, as a general rule where oral interviews are contradictory, documentary sources are able to provide assistance. Conversely, where documentary sources differ, oral sources provided

reliable guidance. More importantly, the use of oral sources in this thesis helped to provide a Cree perspective of the arrival of the Mounted Police in the Peter Ballantyne and Poundmaker areas.

Inevitably, there remain unanswered questions in any historical analysis. Although a thesis is prepared with the goal of uncovering the truth behind a particular subject, it is impossible to achieve an answer to every imaginable query. By producing a forum for the consideration of why certain similarities and differences in law enforcement occurred between the Mounted Police and the Cree, from one region of Saskatchewan to another, a better understanding of the flexible nature of two interactive cultures results. By opening a subject to discussion, one can only hope to increase one's personal understanding of the topic, and strive to communicate that knowledge in a manner which increases the awareness of others.

NOTES

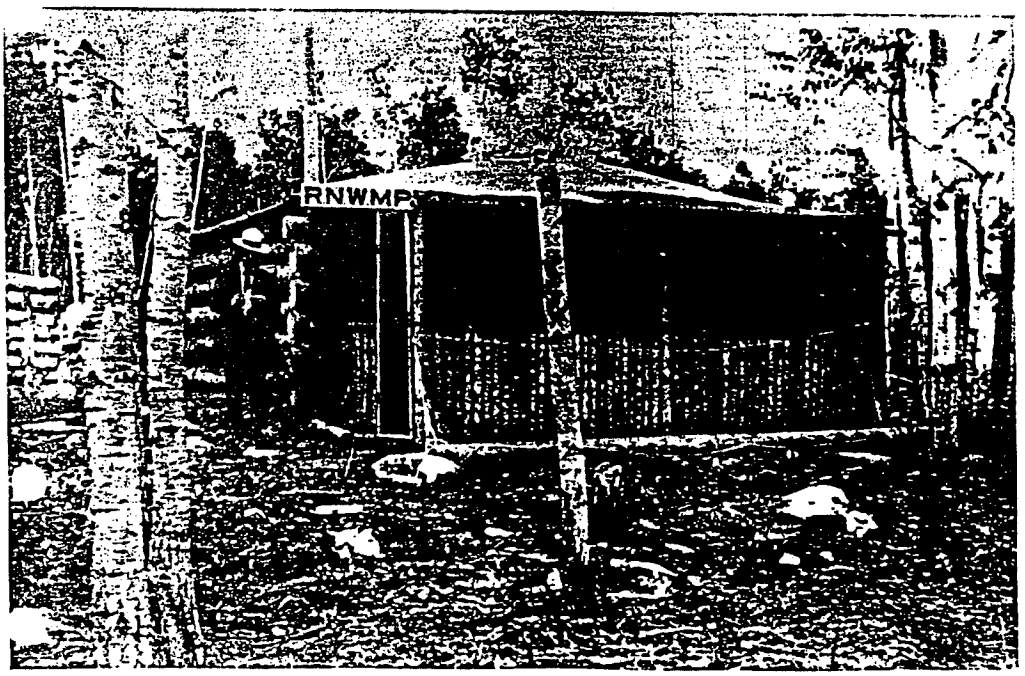
1 William R. Morrison, Showing the Flag. The Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North 1894-1925. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1985) p. 174.

BEAVER LAKE - RNWMP Constable W.O.
Douglas, Jack Hammell, Robertson(JP)

1914 7C 1

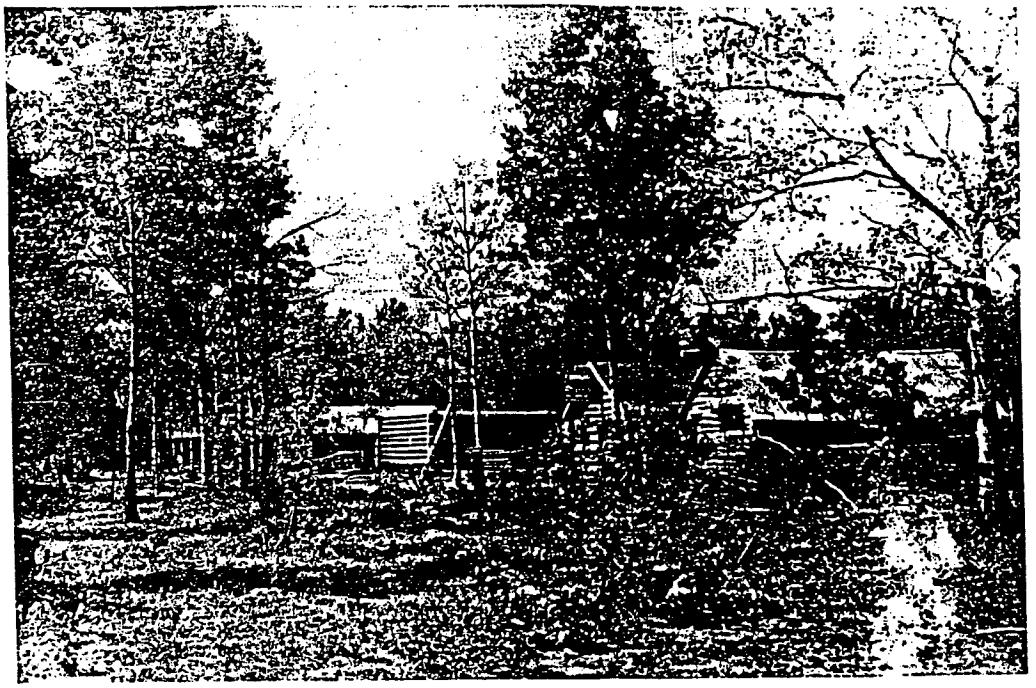
BEAVER LAKE Police Detachment

1914 7C 2



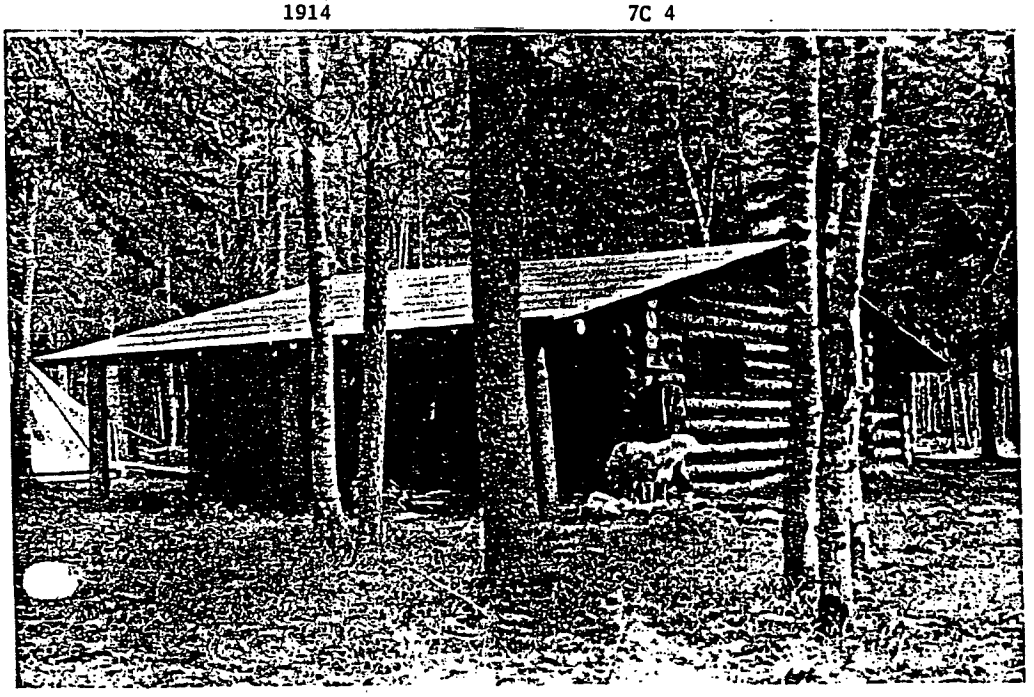
BEAVER LAKE settlement. Note Hayes stopping place not seen in this picture

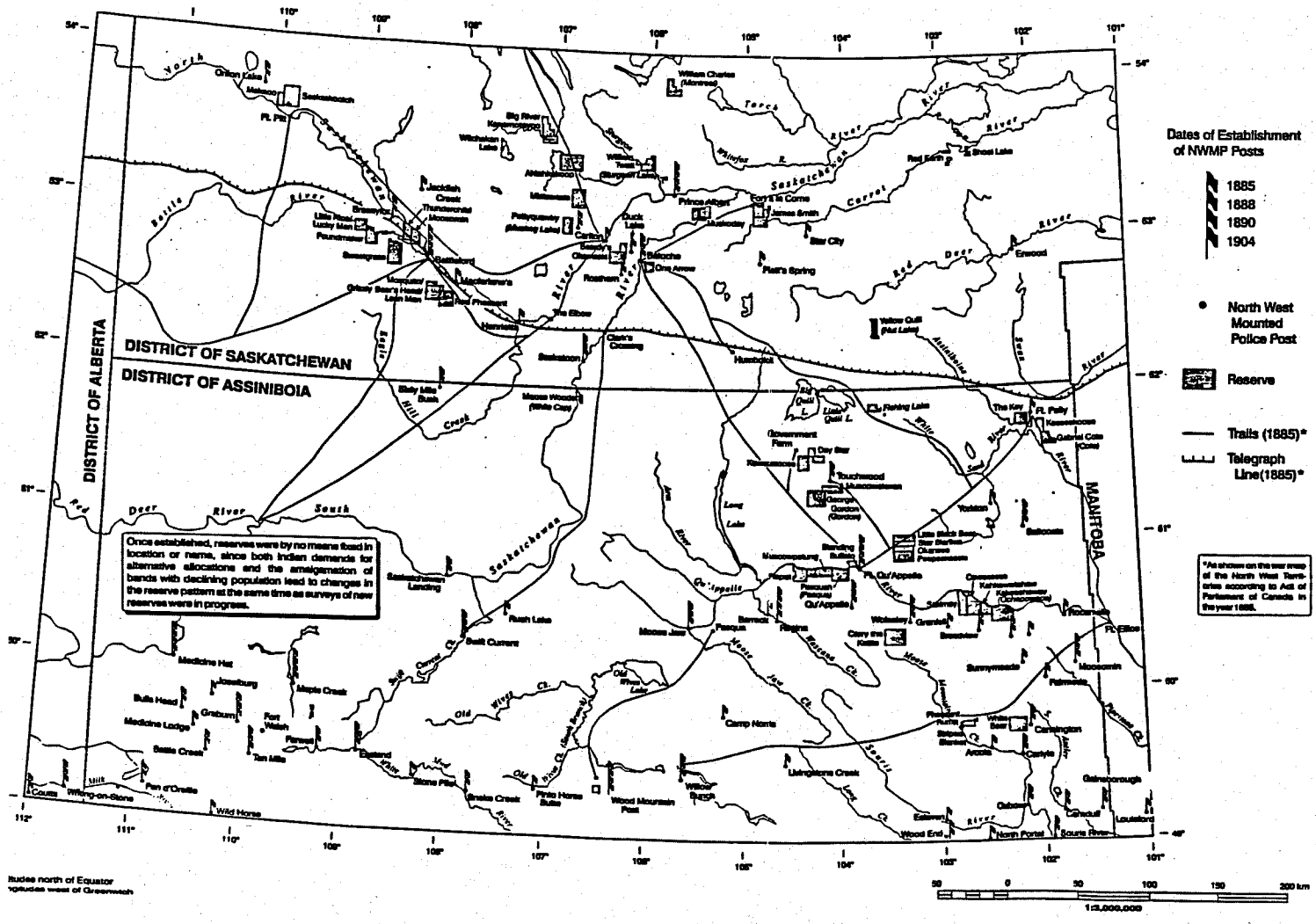
1914 7C 3



BEAVER LAKE Robertson's bungalow. Later destroyed by a dynamite explosion.

1914 7C 4





Source: Atlas of Saskatchewan. (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 1999 p. 46)

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A variety of primary sources were consulted in the gathering of information on this thesis. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Records, R.G. 18, located in the National Archives of Canada provided the backbone of most of the research. Several of the volumes consulted were available on Microfilm. It is important to emphasize that records for the period 1873-1885 were destroyed in a fire in 1897, resulting in some gaps in the research. In addition, certain key records had been misplaced over time. For example, the daily journals for the Prince Albert Division in 1897 were actually the daily journals of Fort Saskatchewan. The daily journals from Battleford for 1891 to 1895 were also the journals of Fort Saskatchewan, and have yet to be located.

Oral interviews provided the remaining skeleton of the work. These interviews were invaluable to the research:

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Highway, Ely. Ibid.

Kasokeo, Art. Elder of the Poundmaker Cree Nation. Interviewed March 25, 1999.

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