



Paquin / Pocha

The origins of a family in the Canadian Fur Trade

1634 - 1896

Pat Redhead

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Dedication

*To my great-grandmother, Florence May Pocha (1885-1964)
and my Cree grandmothers, who are invisible in this story*

There are many Cree women in my ancestry, but no record of their names or tribal origins. I did not attempt to portray their cultures which have been lost to our family. These women live on in my DNA, however, and I take pride in being part-Cree. Hopefully, readers will get a glimpse of them in the life stories of their descendants.

Acknowledgments

Profound thanks to the men and women who took note of my Paquin ancestors in journals and memoirs. Finding evidence of the lives of everyday people in written records is a rare gift. I acknowledge James Bird, Marie Anne Gaboury, Alexander Henry the Younger, and George Sanderson.

Special thanks to those who supported me along the way.

- My mother, Verna Redhead, for making me curious about my ancestors and listening to the stories I was writing.
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- The keepers of the Paquin family database for maintaining records over many generations.
- Paul Paquin for sending a sample of his DNA to Ancestry.com so that it was matched with mine and the identity of Joseph Paquin was confirmed.
- The organizations and institutions that digitize primary and secondary sources that would otherwise have been inaccessible.

Introduction

The Pocha families of the Canadian prairies are descended from the sole surviving son of a young French-Canadian voyageur and a Cree woman who lived in the early 19th century. Even now we say we are 'Pocha formerly Paquin', which is as much as many of us know about our distant ancestors, Joseph Paquin and Margaret (Cree). When I set out to discover their story, I was surprised to learn that my people had traveled with David Thompson and Louis Riel's grandparents. They had done business with fur trade masters James Bird and Alexander Henry the Younger. Their ancestors were the original people of the Americas and the founding families of Quebec. Theirs was a story filled with adventure and achievement but rarely mentioned in popular history, a story to be proud of.

There are three parts to the story – before, during, and after voyageur Joseph Paquin's time in the Northwest. Thanks to the keepers of the Paquin family database and the records of the Catholic Church upon which it was based, the parents and siblings of Joseph and two brothers who were voyageurs at the same time can be identified. From there, the direct line across five generations can be plotted back to Nicolas Paquin who was the first to arrive in North America. He married Marie Françoise Plante whose family had settled there even earlier. Part one, then, is about those early founding families living in the St. Lawrence River Valley, also called at the time 'Canada'.

The second part is about Joseph Paquin's time in the Northwest, where he travelled through areas that had yet to be colonized, from present-day Winnipeg to Edmonton and across the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific coast. When he returned to the St. Lawrence Valley after fifteen years in the West, leaving behind a Cree-Canadien son, he married and had seven more children.

The third part of the story is the life of his son, also named Joseph, who lived in the Red River Settlement (Winnipeg) and raised a large family with his wife, Marie Lapointe. Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha lived a long time, spanning both conflicts involving Louis Riel – the 1870 uprising from which Manitoba was created and the 1885 rebellion at Batoche (Saskatchewan). His experience is not one typically told in historical works.

I hope that this story fills a gap for the reader as it has for me. The origins of my fourth great-grandfather, Joseph Paquin, were a mystery and I knew nothing of his time in the Northwest except that he had a child with my Cree ancestor. Now, I understand the depth of my French-Canadian roots and the heritage of being descended from the founding families of Canada – indigenous, French and English. Now, I am connected to other Paquin descendants who, like many whose voyageur ancestors had children with indigenous women, didn't know until recently that a robust branch of the family tree exists on the Canadian prairies and beyond.

An example of tracing lineage on the PAQUIN line

The direct line from the earliest French family to arrive in North America to my mother is twelve generations. The first person named in each generational couple below is the direct descendant of the previous generations. The first eight generations are common to all POCHA families in Canada, so it is with the eighth generation that the story in this booklet ends.

1. Marin BOUCHER & Perrine MALLET
2. Marie-Françoise BOUCHER & Jean PLANTE
3. Marie-Françoise PLANTE & Nicolas PAQUIN
4. Nicolas PAQUIN II & Marie-Anne Perrault LAGORCE
5. Louis Joseph PAQUIN & Marie Joseph LESIEUR
6. Louis PAQUIN & Genevieve Marie LESIEGE
7. Joseph PAQUIN & Marguerite (Cree)
8. Joseph PAQUIN-dit-POCHA & Marie LAPOINTE
9. George POCHA & Eliza Ann WORK
10. Florence May POCHA & Thomas Henry ADAMS
11. Chestley Charles ADAMS & Cora Viola LORENSEN
12. Verna Ilene ADAMS & Robert Fredrick REDHEAD

Terminology

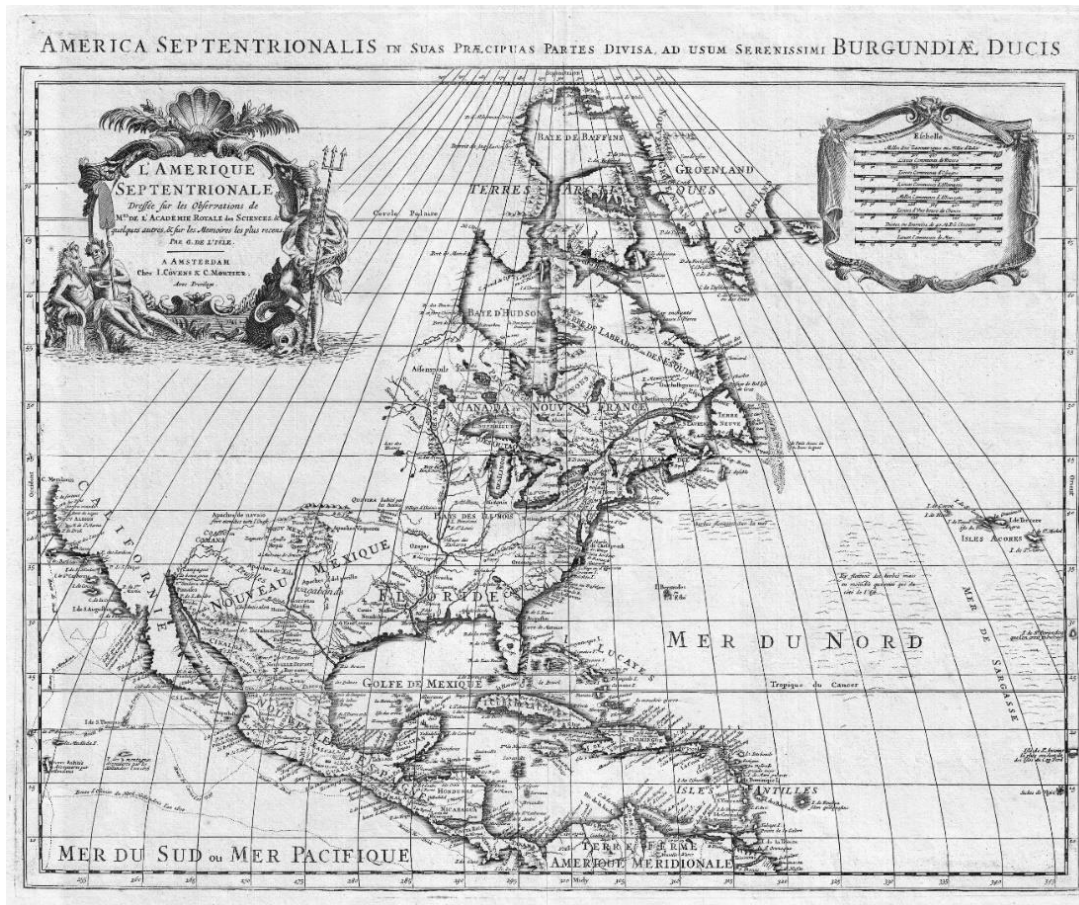
-dit- : It was common in early French Canada to have surnames such as Paquin-dit-Pocha, which roughly translated was 'Paquin, called Pocha'. The practice was used to differentiate among branches of a family in a society that had evolved from a few founding families.

Half-breed, Métis: Métis means 'mixed' and was initially used in Canada for people of mixed French and Indigenous ancestry. Half-breed was applied to people of Indigenous and English, Scottish, or Orcadian origins, especially by the Canadian government from 1870-1900. In 1982, Métis were included in the Canadian constitution and nowadays it is used for both groups. Where I have used 'half-breed', it is quoted from a historical source.

Indian, First Nations: The misnomer, Indian, is used only in direct quotations from historical records. 'First Nations' is never used because it is a 20th century term.

Indigenous: Three types of people are recognized in the Canadian Constitution as being indigenous to North America – First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

Part One – Founding Families



The French Regime 1500-1760

Indigenous people inhabited the Americas ‘since the world began’, or at least 14,000 years before Europeans ‘discovered the New World’. France competed with England, Spain, Portugal, and Holland for territory and access to resources, so the extent of New France fluctuated over time. From the early 1500s, fishing vessels plied the waters off Newfoundland, returning each season to their home ports in France. In 1608, the first permanent settlement was built at the site of present-day Quebec City and by the turn of the century farms lined the banks of the St. Lawrence River from above Quebec to Trois Rivières and Montreal. Wars in Europe brought a halt to emigration from France, so population growth thereafter was limited to the offspring of the early founding families. In 1760 at the end of the seven Years War, France lost all of its colonies in North America and the ‘Canadiens’ of the St. Lawrence Valley became British citizens. (map – L’Amérique Septentrionale, 1742, David Rumsey Map Collection)

Generation 1 – Marin Boucher & Perrin Mallet

The story of the Paquin family in North America began almost forty years before Nicolas Paquin ever stepped ashore at the port of Quebec. The woman he would eventually marry was second-generation Canadienne, the granddaughter of Marin Boucher and Perrine Mallet¹ who arrived in 1634 with three children. The Boucher family would have resembled many others disembarking from the sailing frigate that day. There was Marin (47), perhaps graying at the temples; his seventeen-year-old son by his first wife; Perrine (30), likely plump from her first two pregnancies; and the couple's two young sons, an infant and a four-year-old.²

The Boucher's arrived at the beginning of a new era of immigration to New France. Several early attempts to establish trading posts had failed, but a permanent outpost built at the present-day site of Quebec City in 1608 had survived. By 1628, there were 60-80 people living in a small cluster of buildings, most engaged in trading furs with Algonquians and dependent on France for annual shipments of food. The French Crown, preoccupied with rebellious nobility within its borders and religious wars beyond them, decided to grant a monopoly to the Company of New France to exploit the resources of Canada and maintain their claim of sovereignty in the region. The Company was obliged to bring colonists each year, but it was costly so they granted tracts of land to minor nobles who would bring workmen and farmers to settle their lands. The first seigneurie to be granted was in 1634 to Lord Robert Gifford.

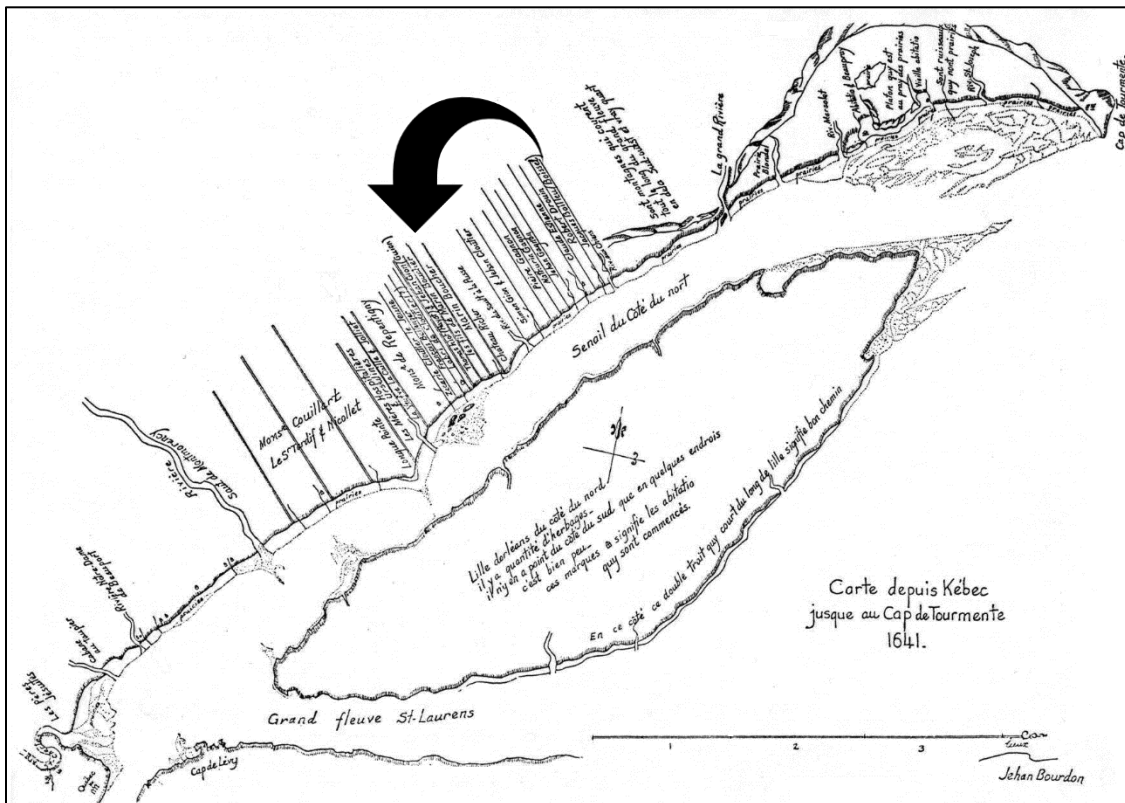
The Boucher's were among several families recruited from France's Perche province by Gifford, whose seigneurie fronted onto the St. Lawrence River and extended inland for a kilometer or so.³ The seigneur brought immigrants from France, provided each with a 'concession' to be farmed, and built a gristmill for common use. The new *habitant* (farmer), in this case Marin Boucher, cleared the land, built a house, planted crops and raised animals. Boucher was not a tenant; he could keep the land as long as he paid the annual fee to the seigneur. He could sell, subdivide, and bequeath the land to others. His farm in Chateau Richer was a few miles east of the port of Quebec. The long narrow lot had rich soil near the river and a wooded area that he would partially clear for fields and gardens. There was no central village but his neighbours were nearby, also fronting on the river, and the church was a gathering place.

The St. Lawrence River flows north-east from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean, providing a water corridor to the heart of the continent. The Boucher farm looked across the river to Ile d'Orléans, a large island about 1500 km from the open Atlantic. Upstream at Trois Rivières the river reverses with the tides, but downstream past Ile d'Orléans the water becomes brackish and tides are high. The river was lined with spruce, fir and maple trees in a cool temperate climate zone with hot summers (+25°C) and cold winters (-20°C).

¹ Paquin family database - Perrine Mallet was the daughter of Pierre Mallet and Jacqueline Leger of France.

² Paquin family database

³ Canadian Encyclopedia/Early French Measurement. A typical concession was 3 by 30 arpents, or 175 meters wide and 1750 meters long.



Marin Boucher's land was in Chateau Richer, across from Ile d'Orleans.

The St. Lawrence River valley was not empty of indigenous people as the French thought at first. It was a 'hotly contested no man's land' with frequent raids and skirmishes between the Hurons and Algonquians on one hand and the Iroquois on the other.⁴ The Iroquois who had inhabited the valley in previous centuries now lived to the southwest, but they and their allies still came seasonally to hunt and fish. (The Iroquois Confederacy included Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca.) The French had become their enemies in 1609 soon after Samuel de Champlain built a fort at Quebec. Champlain had cemented a new trading alliance with the Hurons by joining them in a raid on their enemies, the Iroquois. When Marin Boucher and his family arrived twenty-five years later, the Iroquois were allies of the Dutch at Albany (250 km south of Montreal) and had a ready supply of guns from their merchants. Every man in the seigneurie learned to fire a gun and was required to join the militia because raids were commonplace. Not only was the fort at Quebec in danger, but the habitants working in their fields were also targeted.

Decades before the Boucher family arrived in New France, the Crown had adopted a policy of assimilation to teach indigenous people French ways and to convert them to Christianity. Those who became practicing Roman Catholics would be accepted as French subjects and

⁴ Historical Atlas of Canada – From the Beginning to 1800, plate 46

have the right to settle in France.⁵ A few missionaries had lived among the Hurons and Algonquians in the early 1600s, but with little success. Eventually, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) monopolized this missionary work, backed by rich donors in France. They built a Jesuit College for sons of the upper class in 1635 and, four years later, a school for native girls and a hospital. When the indigenous people ignored the opportunity to become French, the Jesuits opened the school and hospital to the colonists, soldiers, and workmen.⁶ The Jesuits were granted seigneuries ranging in size from large rural lands to small plots in the settled areas, and eventually one-quarter of the valley was controlled by the church. They also built a mission in Huronia, the homeland of the Hurons on the north shores of the Great Lakes, and another at Quebec.

For Perrine Mallet, life in New France was much the same as in Perche province. She tended the garden, fed the chickens, kept a tidy household, and raised the children.⁷ Her husband was the master of the household, as her father had been when she was a young girl in France. When she gave birth to Marie-Françoise two years after they arrived, a female neighbor or a midwife would have assisted.⁸ She had a child about every three years thereafter until 1647 when her seventh was born. (See the Boucher family tree, Appendix A)

A few families arrived in the following years, brought in by seigneurs to work the land or to be craftsmen. About two-thirds returned to France within a year or two; others died of the harsh conditions. The population grew naturally from the initial founding families, but even so by 1640 there were only 356 people in 64 families.⁹ Perhaps it crossed Marin Boucher's mind that they, too, would have to abandon New France.



Marin Boucher & Perrine Mallet

A commemorative plaque on the outside wall of Église Notre Dame de la Visitation, Chateau Richer (photo – P. Redhead)

⁵ Eccles, *The French in North America*, p. 43. Clause XVII of the charter of the Company of New France

⁶ Eccles, p. 44

⁷ Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 29

⁸ Greer, p. 65

⁹ Eccles, p. 37



Founding Families

The PAQUIN families of North America are descended from Nicolas Paquin (1648-1708) and Marie-Françoise Plante (1655-1726), whose ancestors lived in Normandy, France. Nicolas was born in La Potherie-Cap-d'Antifer, on the coast of the English Channel. Marie-Françoise's father and maternal grandparents were born in the same general area of Orne, Normandy (formerly Perche) – Courgeon, Laleu, and Saint-Langis-lès-Mortagne.

Generation 2 – Jean Plante & Marie-Françoise Boucher

Marie-Françoise Boucher was fourteen when she married Jean Plante, fifteen years her senior. Plante had arrived three years earlier from Perche province, perhaps as an indentured laborer. Now free of his work contract, he could marry. Marie-Françoise's father, Marin Boucher, acquired additional land that year and six years later gave some to her husband and some to her brother, Jean-Galleran. It's likely that the couple lived with *père* Boucher in the early years of their marriage and farmed this piece of land.¹⁰

The Iroquois raids on the settlement continued during those years, especially against the three trading posts on the St. Lawrence – Quebec, Trois Rivières, and Montreal. The year before they married, three hundred Huron refugees had arrived at the mission in Quebec because their homeland of twenty-five villages between Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay had been destroyed. Huronia had been a hub in the vast trading network of indigenous peoples across North America, but the population had been weakened by epidemics and social upset caused by the missionaries' efforts to Christianize them.¹¹ The Iroquois pounced. Only a few thousand of the thirty thousand Hurons survived, and Huronia was destroyed.¹²

There was a brief lull in hostilities between 1654-1658 when the Iroquois abided by a peace treaty with the French. The fur trade recovered briefly and every summer, hundreds of Ojibway, Illinois, Ottawa, and other indigenous groups came to Montreal with furs to exchange for French imports such as kettles, beads, blankets, and fabric. As beaver disappeared in the over-trapped area immediately west of Montreal, independent traders from the St. Lawrence Valley went further and further west to find new sources and new trading partners. Called *coureur de bois* (runners of the woods), these young French-Canadian men were often away from their farm families for a year or more at a time. Recently, two of these men had defied the authorities who were trying to control the fur trade by licensing traders. In 1659, Pierre-Esprit Radisson and his brother-in-law, Medard Chouart, Sieur des Grosseilliers, had gone further west than anyone before (except the indigenous people) into the upper Great Lakes basin. They returned to Quebec with many prime furs and news of a bay that could provide access to this distant region. When the governor took their furs, fined them, and jailed des Grosseilliers, the two took their idea to the British. In 1670, the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) was formed and the first English trading posts were built on the Bay.¹³ The subsequent rivalry between French and English fur traders would last for 150 years.

By 1661, Iroquois attacks on the colonists and their indigenous allies resumed. That year, sixty-eight of the 2500 people living in the St. Lawrence Valley were killed in what some called 'the year of terror'.¹⁴

¹⁰ Plante Family Association Inc. June 14, 1650 – Marin Boucher acquired 8 arpents, 8 perches of frontage at Château Richer from Olivier Tardif, between Claude Auber and Tardif. April 25, 1656 – Boucher gave 2 arpents of this concession to his son-in-law, Jean Plante, and 2 arpents to his son, Jean-Galleran.

¹¹ Arthur Ray, *An Illustrated History of Canada's Native People*, p. 64

¹² Eccles, *The French in North America*, p. 46-51

¹³ The first HBC posts were Rupert House (1668), Moose Factory (1673), and Fort Albany (1679) in James Bay, and Fort James (1689) on the Severn River.

¹⁴ Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier*, p. 56

Fearing that the colony would collapse, the governor of Trois Rivières went to France in 1664 to explain the situation.¹⁵ A young Louis XIV decided to take control and established New France as a royal province with Jean-Baptiste Colbert in charge. Their goal was to improve the economy of France, and thereby the nation's power on the world stage, by creating a colony that would be a source of raw materials and a market for French products. The first step was to stop the Iroquois attacks on the settlements. A regiment of over one thousand soldiers arrived at the port of Quebec the following year.¹⁶ The Iroquois were impressed with this show of strength even though two campaigns by the regiment, one in mid-winter, inflicted little damage. By the autumn of 1667, they had agreed to a peace treaty that would endure for twenty years. The regiment was recalled soon after, but about four hundred soldiers chose to remain in New France.

Marie-Françoise had been married for seventeen years and had seven children when peace descended on the colony. The Crown began subsidizing immigration once colonists' safety could be ensured; about 250 people arrived each year in the 1660s and 1670s. The typical immigrant was poor, male, and unattached. Soon men outnumbered women, six to one. Between 1663-1673, almost eight hundred young women were brought from France. The *filles du roi* (King's daughters), as they were called, were generally under twenty-five years old, poor, and from cities.¹⁷ Most married within weeks of arriving.

A military bureaucracy governed on behalf of the King, with a governor-general responsible for the army and Indian relations, and an intendant looking out for the smooth functioning of the colony. This was not representative democracy, but the leaders were efficient, benevolent, and listened to people's concerns. Each rural area was assigned a *capitain de milice* (militia captain) who enforced the *ordonnances* (policies, bylaws). Public assemblies were held frequently to gather input to issues, but unsanctioned meetings were prohibited. A system of courts dispensed justice, from lower courts at the local level to the Sovereign Council or court of appeal.¹⁸ Government, the colonists believed, was there to maintain law and order, and to protect the interests of all segments of society. Unlike the English settlements developing further south in which individuals were considered free and equal, the people of New France understood that each must relinquish some freedom for the common good.¹⁹

Colbert's plan was to diversify the economy so the intendant, Jean Talon, initiated several new industries. The goal was to ship wheat, fish, timber, and minerals to France and its colonies in the West Indies, but none of the plans succeeded. For example, fish caught in the Gulf of St. Lawrence couldn't reach French markets as fast as those caught by fishermen from northern France on the Grand Banks, and New England seamen were closer to the West Indies market. It turned out, too, that timber for ships was more expensive than from France's traditional sources in the Baltic states and was of poor quality by comparison. The French Crown had hoped to acquire gold and minerals as the Spanish had done in central and South America, but none could be found. So, the fur trade continued to dominate exports because it was lucrative

¹⁵ Eccles, *The French in North America*, p. 62. Pierre Boucher, governor of Trois Rivières. (He was the cousin or nephew of Marin Boucher.)

¹⁶ Eccles, p.73. The Carignan-Salières regiment

¹⁷ Greer, p. 16. They were not prostitutes, as some stories claim.

¹⁸ Eccles, p. 75. *The French in North America*

¹⁹ Eccles, p. 74-75

and required little capital investment. The colony was growing, nonetheless, and becoming self-sufficient as Colbert had wanted, relying less and less on annual shipments from France.

This was also a period of territorial expansion, even though Colbert opposed it. Talon sent men in search of minerals and the 'China Sea', as well as to establish fur trade alliances along the rivers of the unknown areas west and south of the St. Lawrence Valley. One of his men reached Sault Ste Marie in 1671 and declared the area between the northern and western seas and the southern sea to be French territory (although no French man had ever been that far). He also sent men to explore the extent of the Mississippi River, which they confirmed flowed into the Gulf of Mexico. Another group of explorers went north and claimed James Bay (the English were already there). By 1672, three-quarters of the North American continent was French sovereign territory, but no forts or settlements existed to enforce their claim.²⁰

As the population increased, so did the need for missionaries and priests to minister to the Roman Catholic colonists. The chapel in Château Richer was replaced in 1660 by a church, La-Visitation-de-Notre-Dame, where the Boucher and Plante families, as well as their neighbours, could attend Mass on Sundays and Holy days. In 1663, a seminary in Quebec began to train new priests. The Church was a comfort to the immigrants from France because the liturgies and rituals were identical to those in their home parishes.

In 1671, Marie-Françoise's father died. Marin Boucher (84) had lived in New France for thirty-seven years, raised eight children, and had at the time twenty-four grandchildren. Marie-Françoise had never been to her father's place of birth, nor had her younger siblings or any of Marin's grandchildren. They were *Canadien*, with a blend of cultural traditions from France and the new world.



Clothing in 18th Century New France

Fine cotton was imported from France, but most habitants made their own fabrics with wool from their sheep and linen from home-grown flax. (photo: L. Brunanski)

²⁰ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Jean Talon

Generation 3 – Nicolas Paquin & Marie-Françoise Plante

The white cliffs of Potherie-Cap-d'Antifer on the Normandy coast drop precipitously from fertile fields above. The village is little more than a few shops and houses clustered around a Catholic church, all relying on local farmers for survival. It was much the same almost three centuries ago when Nicolas Paquin was born. His parents, Jean Gilles Paquin and Renée Fremont, made no imprint on history except for the usual church records. They were likely peasants in the hierarchical society of nobility and commoners that King Louis XIV was trying to control and centralize. Perhaps their ancestral roots in Normandy stretched back to the first residents, Vikings from Norway and Denmark. There was no way of knowing on 5 April 1748, that baby Nicolas was destined to extend the Paquin family line to the Americas.

Twenty-four years later, Nicolas Paquin was just completing an apprenticeship in carpentry when he got an offer of employment in New France. Francois Deschamps, Lord of the seigneurie of la Bouteillerie which had been established the previous year where the River Ouelle met the Saint Lawrence River, needed another carpenter. According to the contract, dated 13 April 1672, Nicolas became an indentured servant for three years in exchange for passage to Canada and later home to France, if he wished. He was paid 150 livres annually and provided with tools for his work, along with a promise that the Lord would 'feed, bed and heat' him during his time there.²¹

Throughout the reign of Louis XIV, France was either at war or preparing for war with its European neighbours. The poor were heavily taxed, but not the nobles or *bourgeois* (middle class). One week after Nicolas signed the contract that would take him to North America, France declared war on Holland. Perhaps he avoided being drafted into the army by volunteering for one of the King's pet projects, the colonization of New France.

Weeks later, Nicolas boarded the ship, St. Jean-Baptiste, at the port of Honfleur on the south bank of the Seine River. Samuel de Champlain had left from the same port six decades earlier and established Quebec (now Quebec City). In the past decade, about 250 people per year left from this port, including over seven hundred young women.²² Nicolas was among the last to leave, as state-sponsored emigration to New France ceased that year so the country's resources could be redirected to the Franco-Dutch War.

When Nicolas arrived at the port of Quebec after two months at sea, he was no doubt delighted to see a town as modern and thriving as any in France at that time.²³ The lower town, built along the shore, was dense with the buildings of merchants, artisans, and tradesmen. At the top of the cliff, the palisades of a fort surrounded Chateau St. Louis, the official residence of the governor of New France, and the parish church (which two years later would be designated a cathedral).²⁴ This was not where Nicolas would spend his next three years, however. There were seigneuries on both sides of the St. Lawrence as far west as Montreal, each with narrow frontage on the river and extending inland for two or more miles. His posting was on the south shore about eighty miles east of Quebec.

²¹ Little History of the Paquin Family, p. 29

²² Called *les Filles du Roi* (King's Daughters), most were poor and from urban centres. Greer, p. 16

²³ Historical Atlas of Canada, p. 114

²⁴ Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix was first built in 1647. In 1674, it was modified when it was designated a cathedral.

Nicolas and the other carpenters built houses, stables, and barns for Lord Deschamps using hand tools and techniques from an earlier era in France when there were still trees for building. Small farmhouses had two or three rooms and an attic. Logs were squared, stacked and dovetailed at corners. Gaps were chinked with straw and clay. The exterior was whitewashed. Roofs were thatched or covered with cedar planks. Perhaps the carpenters also worked on a manor for the landowner, a grist mill, or a chapel. Within a few decades, farmhouses were dotted all along the riverbanks of the St. Lawrence and its tributaries.

Nicolas had arrived in the colony just as a change in leadership set it on a new and precarious path. Jean Talon left that year after two terms as intendant (1665-1668; 1669-1672), during which the population had doubled, the colonial government was reorganized, courts of justice established, and peace with the Iroquois negotiated. Arriving the same year to become governor-general was Louis de Baude, Comte de Frontenac. Talon had not been replaced so the position of intendant was vacant. This and Frontenac's military experience led him to take control, much to the dismay of the Sovereign Council and other leaders. In spite of Colbert's policy of restraint, Frontenac began building fur trading posts in the Great Lakes region, in part to enrich his own coffers. The Montreal fur merchants and the *coureur du bois*, who were well-established, feared he would usurp their trade. As well, the French posts were in territory that the Iroquois claimed or wanted, so when they made peace with two rival tribes, they began to prepare to fight the French. By 1682, Frontenac had alienated the new intendant, the Sovereign Council, and the clergy to such an extent that he was recalled to France. He left the colony defenseless against the Iroquois threat – the militia was untrained and ill-equipped, and there were no fortified places for settlers in case of attack.



Nicolas Pasquin

The Carpenter Paquin

There are no photographs or pictures of Nicolas Paquin, but an artist imagined him amongst his tools. (image: Nos Ancêtres #1)

During this tumultuous decade Nicolas Paquin married and started a family. His three-year contract ended in 1675, so he moved to Château Richer where he worked as a master carpenter on a new church.²⁵ By October the following year, he was preparing to marry a local girl, Marie-Françoise Plante. A ceremony in which the marriage contract was signed brought their family and friends together a month before the church wedding.²⁶ Marie-Françoise's parents, grandmother, and five younger brothers were there, as were four other cousins and uncles from the Boucher family line.²⁷ Nicolas' witnesses were Lord Auber, Provost Judge of Beaupré, and a local tailor. The bride's parents promised a dowry of 200 livres and one milking cow, which she would reclaim if the marriage was dissolved. They were married on 18 November 1676 in the Church of Our Lady of Château Richer.²⁸

It was commonplace for a young couple to live with the bride's parents for a year or so until they became established. That's likely what they did until January 1678 when they bought land on Ile d'Orléans.²⁹ Their first child, Nicolas II, had been born the previous year.³⁰ Their lot was on the north shore facing Château Richer across the river. (Lot 61, now 3260 Chemin Royal)

A new governor arrived in the colony in 1685 to replace Frontenac's successor who had achieved little in three years and emboldened the Iroquois by entering into a peace treaty that betrayed some of the French allies.³¹ Jacques-René de Brisay, Marquis of Denonville, was a respected military officer who assessed the situation by travelling from Quebec to Fort Frontenac (Kingston, ON) and back, then taking action on several fronts. He built a palisade at Montreal, established a navigation school at Quebec, regulated taverns to decrease drunkenness, and tried to issue fur trade licenses to reduce the number of men away from the colony. He took measures to protect the colony from three external dangers – the Iroquois who wanted to drive the French out of the western fur trade; the English at New York who were trying to lure the Ottawas of the Great Lakes to trade at Albany; and the English on Hudson Bay who blocked northern expansion of the trade. After months of preparation in which supplies were secretly sent to Fort Frontenac and the western posts, Denonville's men left Montreal in June 1687 to destroy the Senecas, the 'strongest, most aggressive, and most distant of the Five Nations'.³² There were 832 regular soldiers, 400 indigenous allies, and over 900 militia men. During the two-month campaign, the French destroyed the Seneca villages, seized two hundred men, women, and children, and captured two groups of traders from Albany. A few people were killed on both sides, but there wasn't a definitive victory for either.³³

²⁵ Little History of the Paquin Family, p. 32. July 3, 1676 - Nicolas Paquin was listed as a witness when the land for the church at Beauport was ceded to the parish.

²⁶ Little History, p. 33-35. The marriage contract is reproduced in this source.

²⁷ Her grandfather, Marin Boucher, had died in 1671.

²⁸ Little History, p. 37

²⁹ Little History, p. 38-39. Land contract

³⁰ Paquin family database. Nicolas Paquin II was baptized 1677 at Château Richer.

³¹ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Le Febvre de la Barre, Joseph-Antoine

³² Dictionary of Canadian Biography - Denonville

³³ Eccles, Canada under Louis XIV

Additional troops had arrived from France, too late for the Seneca battle, but the ships also brought smallpox and measles. A thousand people out of a population of eleven thousand died, including many of the troops and militia. Once again, the colony was vulnerable to attacks from their English and Iroquois enemies.

In 1687, Nicolas Paquin (39) would have been in the militia since every man in the colony between 16-60 had to serve. There is no record that he served in the Seneca campaign, so it's likely that he stayed on the farm on Ile d'Orléans. The family was not spared, however. Their seventh child, Jean (2), died at the time of the measles epidemic. Genevieve Marie, born the previous month, lived. The early years had been hard. Three of the Paquin babies had died shortly after birth, leaving only Nicolas II (10), Marie (7), Antoine (3), and the new baby.³⁴

There was plenty of food and wheat in the colony, but Iroquois war parties blocked the fur trade and soon many people were out of work. Iroquois raids on the colony and the recent epidemics had left many widows and orphans so that some were reduced to begging. The Sovereign Council established a Bureau of the Poor to collect and distribute money, food and clothing to the needy. (In March 1698, Nicolas Paquin would serve on the committee for Ile d'Orléans, and Marie-Françoise would be one of four women to collect alms for the poor.³⁵) The Bureau also helped to place the sick and elderly in hospital or in care, to put children into service, and to provide tools and materials to those with a trade. Society, the Canadiens believed, was responsible for the well-being of everyone.³⁶

Nicolas, Marie-Françoise, and the four children were living in relative safety on Ile d'Orléans when 1500 Iroquois warriors attacked Lachine (Montreal) on August 5, 1689. Historian W. J. Eccles described the scene: At dawn, the Iroquois came. 'The settlers were startled awake by shrill war cries. Many of them were hacked down in their homes, others as they sought to flee. More were taken alive. Fifty-six of the seventy-seven habitations in the area were put to the torch. Surprise had been complete. Before nightfall the Iroquois horde retired across Lake St. Louis. The survivors, who had taken refuge in the garrisoned forts, were able to see the faint glow of their fires on the opposite shore. The Iroquois were celebrating their first victory of this war, which was to last to the end of the century, by burning a few of their prisoners slowly to death.'³⁷

This was the beginning of a sustained war, described by Eccles as follows. 'For the best part of three years after the mass assault on Lachine, Iroquois war parties infiltrated the settlements, struck swiftly, then vanished like wolves into the forest leaving behind smoking ruins where once a home had stood and, in the ashes, the mutilated, scalped bodies of the habitant and his family.'³⁸

Frontenac, who had returned as governor-general that fall, decided it would be easier to cut off supplies of guns coming from the British than to destroy the Iroquois villages. He launched an attack on three small border settlements in January, which only served to unite the English

³⁴ Paquin database. Genevieve Marie 1678 (died one day old); Marie 1679 (5 days old); Gentien 1683 (10 days old). The second daughter to be named Genevieve Marie was born in October 1688 and would live to marry and have a family.

³⁵ Little History of Paquin Family, p. 44-45

³⁶ Eccles, New France under Louis XIV

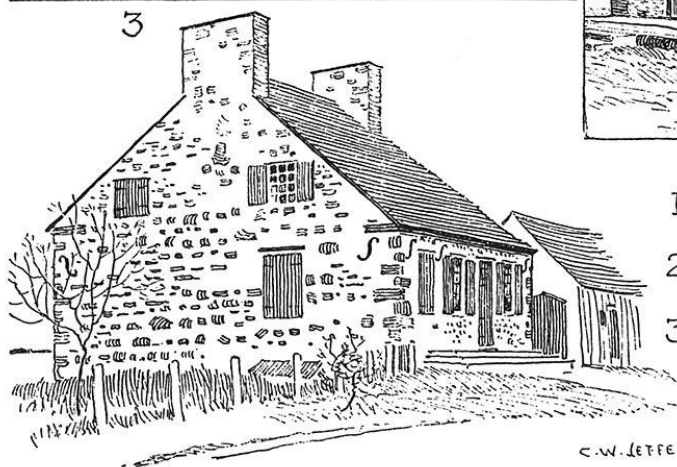
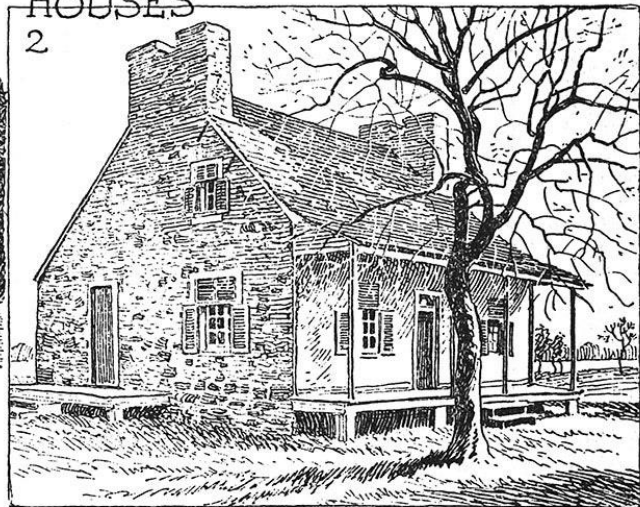
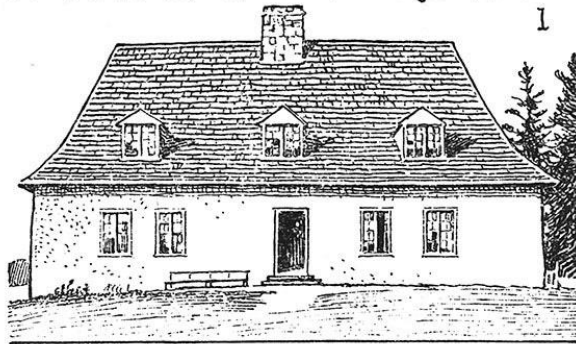
³⁷ Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, p. 120

³⁸ Eccles, Canada Under Louis IV, ch. 11

colonies against the French. A fleet of ships from Boston entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but Quebec was prepared for the rumored attack. Almost certainly, Nicolas Paquin would have been among the habitants near Quebec who were called in to dig trenches and strengthen the log palisade.³⁹ Frontenac also marshalled the men, regular army and militia, to Quebec from across the valley. On the evening of October 15, the Boston fleet dropped anchor off Ile d'Orléans. There were thirty-four ships with 2300 sailors and militia. The Canadiens had the advantage, however, with two thousand men barricaded on the cliffs of Quebec and cannons positioned on the perimeter. Ten days later, following several failed attempts to land troops and an outbreak of smallpox on the ships, the English left.

War would last for a decade, long enough for the Paquin's eldest son, Nicolas II, to join the militia.

TYPICAL EARLY QUEBEC HOUSES



- 1 With central chimney & steep hipped roof at ends.
- 2 Montreal type, with double chimneys & parapet at gable ends.
- 3 Eastern Quebec type, with single chimney astride gable ends.

C.W. JEFFERYS

Early Quebec Houses

Similar houses have been preserved on Ile d'Orleans, which is a National Historic Site. (sketch: C.W. Jefferys)

³⁹ Eccles, Canada Under Louis IV, ch. 11

Generation 4 – Nicolas Paquin II & Marie-Anne Perrault Lagorce

Nicolas II was eligible for the militia in 1693, a few years after Frontenac returned to the colony. By this time, local farm boys had learned to fight like their foes, going out in small war parties, lying in wait for the enemy, attacking them, and fading into the forest.⁴⁰ They mastered guerilla tactics that the regular troops had never learned, so during *la petite guerre* (the little war) with the Iroquois most of the fighting was done by the militia.⁴¹ Nicolas II was likely active in the militia for about three years, until 1697 when peace negotiations began. Perhaps he travelled the whole valley from Quebec to Trois Rivières and Montreal, and decided to settle in one of the rural areas when the time was right.

The fur trade had not suffered during the hostilities. On the contrary, it had expanded as military garrisons were established to supply the colony's indigenous allies with guns. The commanding officers of the forts brought in record amounts of beaver pelts until by 1695 there was a huge surplus piling up in French warehouses. The French government suspended the fur trade and considered abandoning all but one post in the west. The English would move into this abandoned territory, some argued, so the posts were retained. The price of beaver was reduced dramatically, however, and the local economy suffered.

The Great Peace of Montreal in 1701 was finally settled after five years of negotiations, with a promise from the Iroquois that they would remain neutral in any future war between France and England. The colonists rejoiced at the prospect of peace, while across the Atlantic tensions in Europe increased as Louis XIV's grandson was crowned king of Spain. The following year in May, England and its allies declared war on France and Spain, fearing that Philip would eventually be king of both countries and upset the balance of power in the region. Anticipating conflict, Louis XIV had reversed his policy of non-expansion in North America and new posts were added in the Mississippi Valley and the Great Lakes basin to hem in the English colonies. The European conflict reached North America (called Queen Anne's War), but the Iroquois remained neutral as agreed to in the treaty and provided a buffer between the Canadiens in the Saint Lawrence Valley and New York/Albany.

Although the regular troops and militia along with their indigenous allies raided the New England colonies, Nicolas II doesn't appear to have been involved. He left Ile d'Orléans about 1702 for Deschambault, about sixty-five kilometers west of Quebec, where fertile land was plentiful. Perhaps he left the family farm because it was the only way to get a large farm of his own. It was customary to subdivide a concession, but often the farms became too small to support a family. As the eldest son, he was obliged to help his parents as they aged, but there were three other boys still at home and his four sisters would likely marry men who would also help.

Three years later, Nicolas II married Marie-Anne Perrault Lagorce, daughter of French immigrants.⁴² They received a concession in the seigneurie of d'Eschambault in August 1707 and their first child, Joseph, was born soon after. Nicolas II would have eleven children with two wives, ten of whom lived to marry (unlike his parents, who had thirteen children but only six

⁴⁰ Eccles, *The French in North America*, p. 106

⁴¹ Eccles, p. 108

⁴² Her parents were Paul Perrault Lagorce (1645-1712) and Marie Chretien (1655-1733), both from France. Marie-Anne was born 7 July 1682 at Repentigny, Lanaudiere, New France.

survived to adulthood.) His first wife died at age thirty-seven, about five months after giving birth to their eighth child. He remarried in January the following year and had three more sons.

Meanwhile, back at Ile d'Orléans, two of his brothers had died – Louis (9) in 1703 and Antoine (20) the following year. His sister, Marie, married Jean-Baptiste Marcotte from Deschambault and they took over the family farm a few months after their father died. (Nicolas Paquin died in December 1708.) Three younger sisters married men from Deschambault and moved there. His mother, Marie-Françoise Plante, died in 1726, leaving only Marie, her husband, their children, and his youngest brother on Ile d'Orléans.



Église Saint-Joseph, Deschambault

(photo – P. Redhead)

Nicolas II raised his children during a protracted peace. The European War had ended in 1713 with the Treaty of Utrecht and for the ensuing thirty years neither France nor England had the resources or appetite for further conflict. The French empire in North America no longer included territories ceded to Britain – Acadia, Newfoundland, and Hudson Bay – but it kept Cape Breton and the right to fish on the Grand Banks. Louis XIV had died in 1715, but his dream of a robust French colony survived. The population had increased to about forty thousand by the time Nicolas II died, and French forts in the Great Lakes region and along the Mississippi River (Louisiana) contained the British along the Atlantic coast.

There was no widow to attend to him when Nicolas II died at Deschambault in April 1731 at age fifty-four. He had buried two wives – Marie-Anne Perrault Lagorce in 1720 and Marie-Therese Groleau in 1724. The news would have spread quickly to the neighbours, the pastor, and his extended family. Perhaps his sisters, Madeleine Marie and Marie-Anne, washed the body, dressed it, and wrapped it in a sheet as was the custom. Throughout the rest of the day, people came to view the deceased, each adding a pin to the shroud. The pious said prayers and recited the rosary. That night, the family gathered for a midnight supper. The next day, his body was placed in a smoky black coffin made by a local carpenter, the cover placed loosely until it was taken out of the house. On the threshold, it was nailed shut. There were no horses,

so a dozen strong men took turns, four to six at a time, carrying the coffin on their shoulders to the church. His bearers may have included his eldest sons – Joseph (24), Nicolas III (23), Paul (22) – and his brother, Jean-Baptiste (30). Along the route, men took off their hats and people kneeled to pray. As one pastor described the traditional scene, ‘it looked like brother carrying brother to the earth’.⁴³

Generation 5 – Louis Joseph Paquin & Marie Joseph Lesieur

Louis Joseph Paquin was thirteen when his father died; his four younger siblings were 7-12 years old. Typically, the children would have been taken in by their aunts and uncles, but it appears that his eldest sister, Marie-Josephte (20) and an elder brother, Nicolas III (23) continued to work the farm and care for their siblings. (Nicolas III married at thirty-seven when the youngest was twenty-one. His sister married three years later at a similar age.) The ten siblings – two girls and eight boys – likely looked out for each other throughout their lives.

About the time that his father died, men of power and influence in the colony were planning to explore further west beyond the Great Lakes. Pierre Gaultier de Varenne de la Vérendrye set out from Montreal in June with three sons and fifty *engagés* in eight canoes in search of *la mer d’ouest* (the western sea), which was believed to be a great gulf like Hudson Bay or the Gulf of Mexico that opened into the Pacific Ocean.⁴⁴ During the following decade, la Vérendrye, his sons and a nephew would establish a chain of forts from Rainy Lake to Lake Winnipeg, and trading relationships with the Cree, Assiniboine, and Mandan of the Northwest. English fur traders on Hudson Bay, such as James Isham at York Fort, heard reports of French activity in the interior at this time, but were comfortably established in their sea-side posts where Cree and Assiniboine middlemen arrived each summer with furs from distant tribes.⁴⁵ La Vérendrye didn’t find a route to the Pacific, but he pushed the frontiers of New France as far as present-day Manitoba.

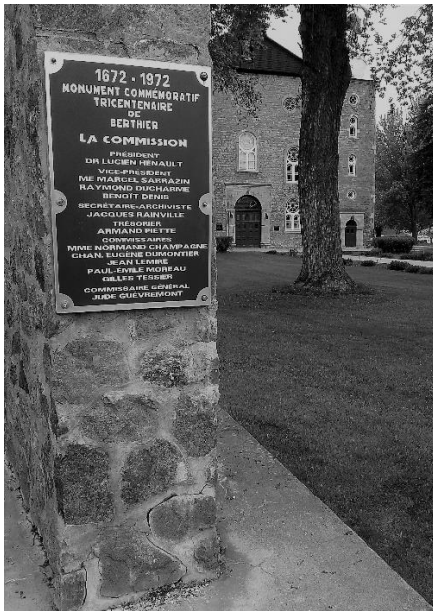
Louis Joseph had been born in peace time, without fear of either the Iroquois or the English. He would be thirty-six when war arrived on his doorstep. By then, France had become rich by trading with its colonies – fish from the Grand Banks of Newfoundland; sugar and coffee from the West Indies - and a threat to the British economy. In the early stages, there was little action in Canada, although trade with France was disrupted when Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island surrendered to New Englanders. The fur trade suffered for lack of trade goods and the western tribes considered driving the French out of their territory. But the three-year War of Austrian Succession (1744-1747) ended quickly, Britain reclaimed Louisbourg, and the fur trade resumed as before. The peace would not last, however, and the next European conflict would begin in North America.

⁴³ The funeral practices are described in *The Little History of the Paquin Family*, p. 48-49

⁴⁴ *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* – Gaultier de Varennes et de la Veréndrye, Pierre

⁴⁵ James Isham arrived as a clerk at York Fort in 1732, just as la Veréndrye was beginning to push west. By the time he became chief factor five years later, he had noticed that competition was affecting his business. (I mention Isham because he, too, is my ancestor.)

Louis Joseph married Marie Josephthe Lesieur⁴⁶ in August 1746 at Yamachiche, west of Trois Rivières about ninety kilometers from Deschambault. How did the couple meet when their home communities were so far apart? The King's Highway had been built a decade earlier along the north shore to link Quebec, Trois Rivières, and Montreal, but it was rough and rutted so most people used the river instead. Perhaps Louis Joseph, the fifth son in a family of eight boys and two girls, had been hired out to a farmer in the area. Or, maybe the couple met at a church festival at Trois Rivières. Whatever the circumstances, Louis Joseph moved while most of his siblings remained in Deschambault. The couple's first child, Louis, was born in 1747 at Yamachiche but by 1752 they would be living in Berthierville, about forty kilometers further west, on the north shore of Lac Saint-Pierre.



St. Genevieve de Berthier Catholic Church

Each stone in the monument at Berthierville has been inscribed with the name of one of the founding families of Quebec. (photos: P. Redhead)

By 1754, the British in the New England colonies far outnumbered the population of New France (2 million to sixty thousand) and land speculators began moving west into the Ohio Valley which France had claimed. Two inciting incidents in North America would eventually involve France and Britain in another European war. In May, Virginia militiamen commanded by a young George Washington (22) ambushed thirty-five Canadiens who were trying to prevent the Ohio Company from building a fort (at present-day Pittsburg, PA). The French commander and several Canadiens were killed, others taken prisoner. A force of six hundred, including French, Canadian, and Indian warriors, retaliated and captured Fort Necessity where Washington was building another fort. He was forced to sign a 'capitulation document' which he promptly ignored

⁴⁶ She was born in 1722 at Louisville, Mauricie. Her father was Charles-Julien Lesieur (1674-17--); her mother, Marie-Charlotte Rivard-dit-Loranger (1681-1744).

when released.⁴⁷ When news reached England, they sent eight hundred men to help the colonists defeat the French. Hearing of this mobilization, France dispatched 3000 troops and appointed a new governor-general, Pierre de Rigaud, marquis of Vaudreuil. A Canadian, Vaudreuil, had just completed a decade as governor of French Louisiana.

In the early days, still without an actual declaration of war, the British fared poorly except on the Bay of Fundy where they seized a French fort on the border between French and English territory. The Acadians of Nova Scotia had been living under British rule since 1713, but their loyalty was suspect, so they were expelled. Many were taken to the English colonies along the Atlantic coast, but about 1500 made their way to Quebec. (Two young children in this group would marry into the Paquin family years later.⁴⁸)

War was declared in May 1756 with Britain and France on opposing sides, along with their European allies. French supply ships managed to reach Quebec each year and local farmers had good crops, but there were many more to feed – the Army, the Acadians, the Indigenous allies – so everyone made do with less. Some of the regular army soldiers were billeted with civilians, putting an additional strain on each habitant household. As well, the militia was pressed into service, which removed most of the young men from their farms. To make matters worse, the crops failed in 1758 and French troops pillaged the farms in a desperate search for food.

New France had the advantage in the early stages of the French and Indian War (as the Americans called it) because they were organized for war. Their leaders were military officers; troops from France were stationed permanently in the colony; every man was in the militia; and, there were numerous Indigenous allies prepared to fight alongside them. The British in the colonies, though more numerous, were farmers recruited to fight. Then in 1758, England sent men, ships, and equipment, and everything changed.

Governor-general Vaudreuil and the new major-general of the troops who had arrived two years earlier, Louis-Joseph de Montcalm, disagreed about strategy. Vaudreuil favored sending out raiding parties to keep the Anglo-Americans on the defensive, whereas Montcalm insisted on European-style regimented warfare. The two leaders disliked each other and eventually Montcalm outmaneuvered his nemesis with French officials and was appointed lieutenant-general in command of all military matters.⁴⁹ Vaudreuil's plans were abandoned and Montcalm set about defending the St. Lawrence Valley from an invasion that was inevitable. (Historians suggest that Montcalm's defeatist attitude contributed to France's eventual defeat at Quebec.)

In May 1759, twenty-two French supply ships arrived at Quebec, followed close behind by the British Royal Navy carrying 8000 experienced soldiers under the command of Major-General James Wolfe. On June 27, they landed on Ile d'Orléans where Wolfe warned the local Canadiens that if they assisted the 'enemy', he would 'exterminate' them.⁵⁰ Frustrated by the resistance of French troops and militia, he then set about to destroy the colony. The American Rangers burned 1400 farms and destroyed crops in every parish along the river. Those who

⁴⁷ Eccles, *The French in North America*, p. 202-203

⁴⁸ Pierre Savoie married Marie-Louis Paquin in 1772; Marguerite Landry married Jean-Baptiste Paquin in 1783. Both were children of Louis Joseph Paquin.

⁴⁹ Eccles, *The French in North America*, p. 216

⁵⁰ Eccles, p. 224

resisted were taken prisoner, shot and scalped. At the same time, he fired cannons at Quebec from across the river, eventually destroying 80% of the buildings.

By September, Wolfe was getting desperate as his troops experienced heavy casualties and he lost men to desertion and illness. The fleet had to leave soon or become trapped in ice, so he made one final attempt to dislodge the French from the Quebec fortress. Ships took his troops west of Quebec where they got into small boats and drifted with the tide to the foot of a 53-meter cliff. By early morning, they had climbed to the top and assembled on the Plains of Abraham. Montcalm, meanwhile, had prepared for an attack at Beauport and left only a small detachment on top of the cliff. Wolfe waited until Montcalm moved his troops into position. Within half an hour, the exhausted French force fled to safety within the city walls, while the British held the Plains. Both Generals Wolfe and Montcalm died that day.

The British fleet sailed in October, leaving most of the army in possession of Quebec. A few French ships also slipped away, taking dispatches asking for more troops to assist those who still held Montreal and parts of the valley. Reinforcements never arrived because France needed its men for the European war. By mid-May 1760, the British ships returned, and the remaining French forces were defeated. They and the colony's top officials were deported to France. The rest of the population lived in fear of being deported, too, as the Acadians had been but hoped that when the European war was over New France would be regained in treaty negotiations.

Louis Joseph Paquin and Marie Joseph Lesieur had eight children between one and twelve years old at the height of the war and no doubt struggled to keep them safe and well-fed. Troop movements would have passed nearby – the French fleeing the defeat at Quebec; the British marching to take Montreal. Family and friends would have been in the militia; some must have died. Louis Joseph's wife died in 1762 at the age of forty, just before the Seven Years War ended. Overnight, their children became British citizens and New France ceased to exist.

Generation 6 – Louis Paquin & Genevieve Marie Lesiege

Louis Paquin was ten when British forces occupied the St. Lawrence Valley; thirteen when the European war ended, and the fate of the colony was clear. During the transition years, *habitants* could concentrate on rebuilding their farms because the militia was disbanded (and their guns confiscated). The merchants needed to find new suppliers in Britain, and the fur traders, new markets for their furs. The clergy no longer had French government support but the English promised freedom of religion, so most remained in the valley. Military commanders at Quebec, Trois Rivières, and Montreal, each with French-speaking staff, maintained law and order with the help of British troops. Louis' mother died a few months before the Seven Years War ended in Europe, so when peace began his family consisted of his father, Louis Joseph (45) and seven siblings (ages 5-14).

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 defined the extent of the new Province of Quebec – from the coast of Labrador on the Atlantic Ocean, southwest through the St. Lawrence Valley, to the Great Lakes and beyond to the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. It also reserved the land west of the Appalachian Mountains for indigenous people, thereby preventing westward

expansion of the Thirteen British Colonies. The Proclamation assumed that French-speaking colonists would eventually be assimilated as English colonists moved in. The Governor would be assisted by an appointed Council and, when the time was right, an elected assembly would be formed. The governors in the early years – James Murray and Guy Carleton – decided instead to combine aspects of British and French law, and never did form an elected assembly.

Expectations that Quebec would attract English-speaking farmers proved to be incorrect, but several merchants from Britain, New York, and New England arrived. By 1764, there were 200 English-speaking households and within a decade of the Conquest, thirty seigneuries were owned by Englishmen.

Quebec farms prospered for the next fifteen years, during times of peace and good weather. Potatoes had been introduced by Governor Murray and soon every farm had a potato patch, while on Ile d'Orléans potato farming became a business.⁵¹ *Habitants* were self-sufficient, able to hunt and fish to supplement their farm produce.

Louis Paquin married Genevieve Marie Lesiege⁵² in November 1772, and their first child was born a year later. Between 1773-1789, Louis and Genevieve would have nine children; eight would survive to marry. At about the same time, his father, Louis Joseph, married a third wife, Marie Marguerite Dubord Fontaine, and had a young family. (Altogether, his father had twenty-one children with three wives; fourteen survived.)

The fur trade continued to flourish, except for a couple of seasons during the occupation when the indigenous traders rebelled against new British masters at former French forts who tried to stop gift-giving traditions. By 1767, the traders were pushing further into the *pays d'en haut* to outposts on Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, and Hudson Bay. Many canoes went to the far Northwest (present-day Manitoba). The great fur companies would merge later; for now, transitory partnerships of merchants, traders and voyageurs would band together for a season or two. The trade was increasingly controlled by British capital and British, mostly Scots, merchants. Although trade goods came from Britain, local dressmakers, tailors, silversmiths, coopers, and blacksmiths also found niches for their skills.

The Quebec Act of 1774, which replaced the Royal Proclamation, acknowledged that French Canadiens were not being overwhelmed by British immigrants and assimilation policies wouldn't work. Growing tension in the Thirteen Colonies was an additional reason to seek the loyalty of people in Quebec. The province's borders were expanded to include the Ohio Valley and the lands reserved for indigenous people in the Royal Proclamation. (The plan was not to allow development of these reserve lands, as the Thirteen Colonies wanted, but rather to protect them by way of 'Quebec's authoritarian government'.⁵³) The Act also guaranteed freedom of religion and restored French civil law but retained British criminal law. The Crown would appoint a Governor and enlarged Legislative Council, but an elected assembly would have to wait. That year, Guy Carleton returned to Quebec as governor-in-chief and continued to govern indirectly through the people he considered to be the real leaders, the seigneurs and the clergy.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Hilda Neatby, *Quebec 1760-1791*, ch. 6

⁵² Born 10 August 1752 to Joseph Lesiege and Genevieve Plante

⁵³ Canadian Encyclopedia, Quebec Act

⁵⁴ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Sir Guy Carleton

Anti-Catholic Protestants in the Thirteen Colonies added the Quebec Act to their list of grievances with the British Crown and, by April 1775, war was declared. Carleton tried to recruit *habitants* to form a new militia to defend Quebec, but they refused. Both Louis Paquin and his father, Louis Joseph, would have been eligible, but one can assume they, too, refused to fight. Initially, the Americans tried to convince Quebecers to join them in their struggle for 'freedom', but the seigneurs and clergy remained pro-British.⁵⁵ Then, the Americans decided to invade Quebec. In late November, Carleton abandoned Montreal where a nearby fort had fallen, and fled to Quebec (city). By late December, one thousand Americans led by Generals Benedict Arnold and Richard Montgomery laid siege to the port of Quebec. The garrison was defended by 1800 British troops and militia under Carleton and, although Arnold reached Lower Town, they repulsed his men. American troops remained throughout the winter but fled when the British ships arrived in the spring with 4000 troops. Throughout the siege, *habitants* like Louis Paquin and his father remained neutral, refusing to fight for either the British or the Americans. The rebels (patriots) eventually won the war and were formally recognized as the United States of America (USA) in October 1781.

Carleton and his successor, Frederick Haldimand, both military generals, paid little heed to their councils and ruled almost as dictators in the following decade. Martial law had been imposed during the American Revolution and a purge of traitors was conducted in the aftermath to restore law and order. Three men – a militia captain, a seigneur, and a lawyer – went to each parish to establish the militia and to identify those who had helped the rebels.⁵⁶ Louis Paquin and his father were likely among the men in Berthierville who were forced to fall in line. As the public watched, the tribunal replaced officers who had been disloyal with new ones. Then, the *habitants* were harangued to be 'loyal and submissive' and encouraged to shout '*Vive le Roi*'. (In one parish, those who refused were forced to apologize at Church the following Sunday.) Later, militia captains were ordered to arrest anyone indulging in 'seditious talk'.⁵⁷

When the American Revolution ended in 1783, Britain lost the Thirteen Colonies, as well as that part of Quebec with the Ohio Valley. France, which had entered the war on the side of the Americans, regained some territory lost earlier, but the country was financially devastated, conditions that likely led to the French Revolution (1789-1799). Eighty thousand people loyal to Britain fled the USA, many settling in Nova Scotia and the Great Lakes region. About six thousand Loyalists settled in Quebec, some in Yamachiche just 40 kilometers from Berthierville.⁵⁸

The Loyalists demanded British laws and representative government, as did the merchants of Quebec and Montreal, so in 1791 the British Parliament passed a new constitution act that divided Quebec into Upper Canada (now southern Ontario) and Lower Canada (now southern Quebec). Although an elected legislature was introduced for the first time, true power resided in the Governor and Council, appointed by the Crown. Lower Canada retained French civil law and the seigneurial land system, whereas their neighbours to the southwest used British common law and a freehold land system (in which individuals owned property). In both provinces, a few

⁵⁵ Canadian Encyclopedia, American Revolution – Invasion of Canada

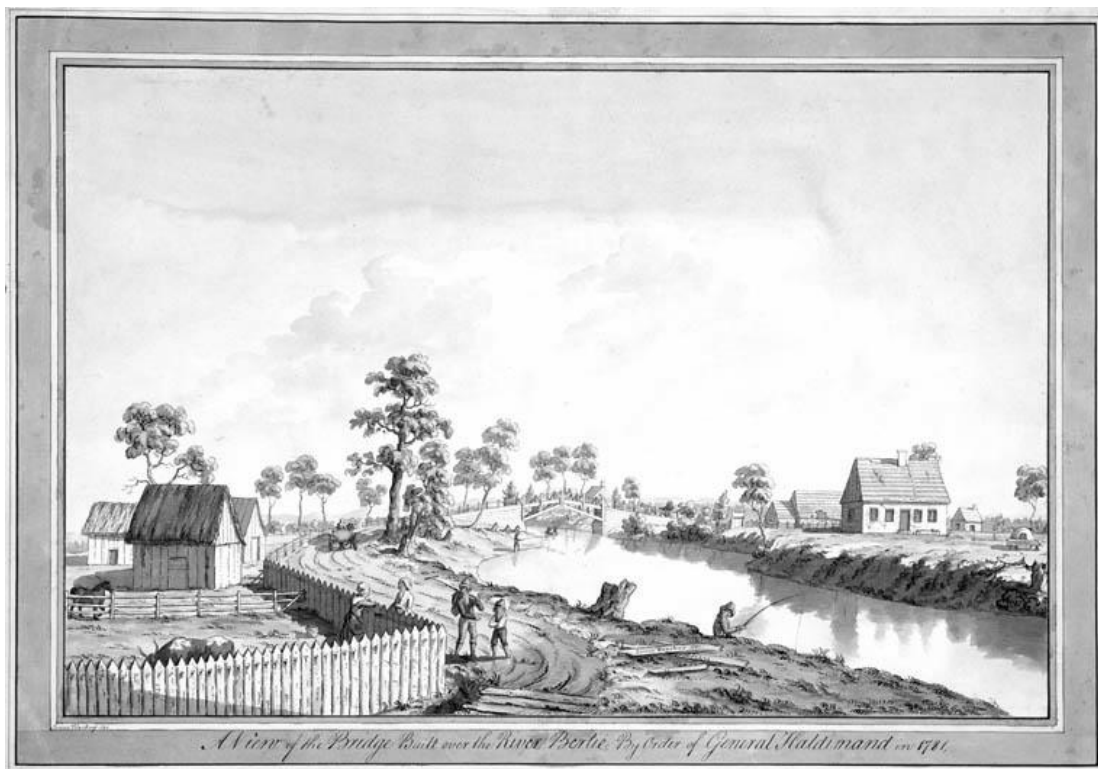
⁵⁶ Neatby, ch. 11

⁵⁷ Neatby, ch. 11

⁵⁸ Canadian Encyclopedia – Loyalists in Canada

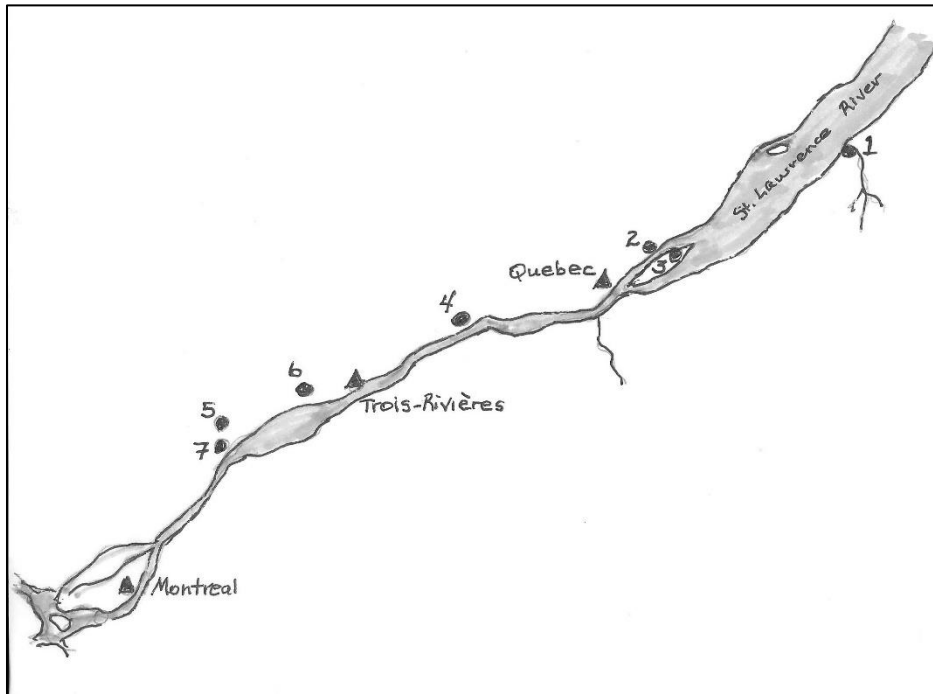
influential families eventually controlled the Councils and dissatisfaction among the populace grew.

Louis Paquin's entire life had been a regular rhythm of seeding and harvesting, disrupted by war. His final two decades, while peaceful, would end in another attack on the colony during the War of 1812. Three of his sons - Toussaint, Joseph, and Louis (Jr) - had left years earlier for the adventure and profit of the fur trade in the Northwest. None were home when Louis died.



Berthier 1785

Watercolor by James Peachey (Library and Archives Canada c045559k, W.H. Cloverdale Collection of Canadiana)

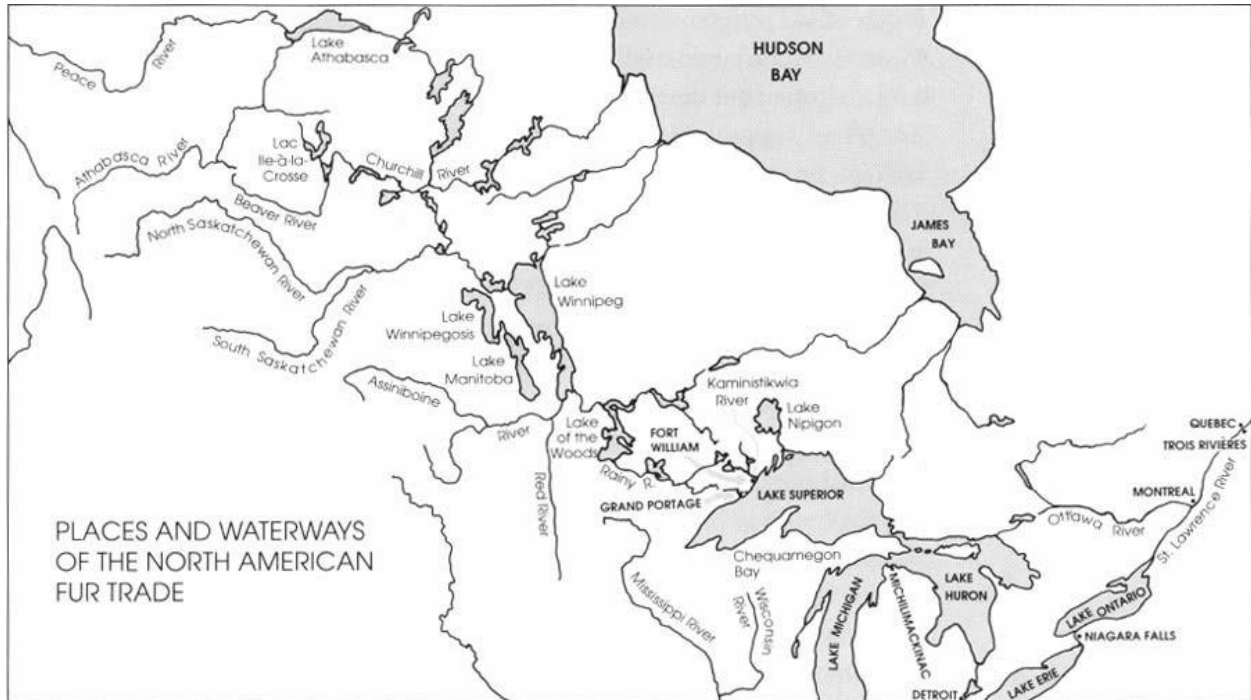


Locations of Joseph Paquin's ancestors in Canada, 1672-1778

Canada was essentially the area along the St. Lawrence River where three population centers were developing – Quebec, Trois Rivières, and Montreal – and the rest of the land was divided into seigneuries. Over the generations, the Paquin family moved southwest along the valley.

- (1) *La Bouteillerie seigneurie*
- (2) *Chateau Richer*
- (3) *Ile d'Orléans*
- (4) *Deschambault*
- (5) *Saint Cuthbert*
- (6) *Yamachiche*
- (7) *Berthierville*

Part Two – Joseph Paquin, voyageur



Canoe Routes

Numerous lakes and rivers provided canoe routes across the Northwest for indigenous people and European newcomers during the fur trade era. Three lakes – Superior, Winnipeg, and Athabasca – were hubs or gathering places, each with six or more routes radiating out in various directions. Although the Hudson’s Bay Company claimed Rupert’s Land as their exclusive trading territory (which included all rivers draining into Hudson Bay), the Northwest Company disputed that claim. They pushed inland to Athabasca country where rivers rushed to the Arctic Ocean via the Mackenzie (and were, therefore, beyond the reach of the HBC charter). By the time Joseph Paquin became a voyageur, both the HBC and NWC had fur trading posts as far west as the Rocky Mountains and as far north as Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca. There were no towns or settlements in the Northwest, however, because the Canadian Shield posed a daunting barrier to travel, except for the most skilled and courageous. (Map: U.S. National Parks Service)

1797 Lachine, Lower Canada

Joseph Paquin was paddling in the middle position of a voyageur canoe when it set off from Lachine in a brigade of similar craft in May 1797. This was Joseph's first trip to the *pays d'en haut* (upper country), that little-known region of rivers, lakes and dense forest west of Montreal. It was common for a son or two in a farm family along the St. Lawrence River to be sent inland for a few years to supplement the family income with wealth from the fur trade.⁵⁹ Joseph, now nineteen, had signed a contract with the Northwest Company (NWC) to go to Grand Portage, the company's fur trade depot on the north shore of Lake Superior.⁶⁰

Joseph had joined a company that was well-established in the Northwest, with provisioning depots along the canoe route from Montreal to the western end of Lake Athabasca.⁶¹ The NWC had formed in 1784 when multiple players in the fur trade decided to work together in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), whose headquarters were in London, England. The brokers and provisioners in Montreal (the agents) had a business partnership with the key traders in the field (the wintering partners). Small players like Joseph did not have a share in the company as these men did; he was under contract and when the trip was complete five months later would return to farming.

His first journey west started in Lachine, the embarkation point for all NWC brigades. Lachine was on the south shore of Montreal Island, above an imposing section of rapids on the St. Lawrence. One can envision thirty or more canoes that year, being loaded with provisions and trading goods for the western posts. Between Lachine and the Grand Portage, the large *canot de maître* (master's canoe) was used. At thirty-six feet long and six feet wide, it carried three tons of cargo with a crew of eight to ten men. Besides several *milieu* like Joseph, there was an *avant* in the bow (bowsman) and a *gouvernail* in the stern (steersman), who navigated and steered the canoe.

The route they took from Lachine to Grand Portage was 1300 miles long⁶² – west along the Ottawa River, through Lake Nipissing, along the French River, and across the north shore of Lake Superior. The first day, they reached Ste. Anne's where there were mild rapids that the heavily-laden canoes could not cross without damaging the fragile birchbark. Most of the men walked around the rocky section, carrying heavy packs to lighten the canoe. A few men paddled or pulled or walked the canoe through the rapids, *demi-chargé* (with a half load). The voyageurs stopped long enough to be blessed by the local priest in preparation for the rest of the journey.⁶³ The two-month trip involved numerous portages in which both canoe and payload had to be carried along well-worn muddy paths through dense shrubs and trees cluttered with boulders and fallen logs. Black flies and mosquitoes tormented the men on these forays into the bush.

⁵⁹ Greer, *The People of New France*, p. 33

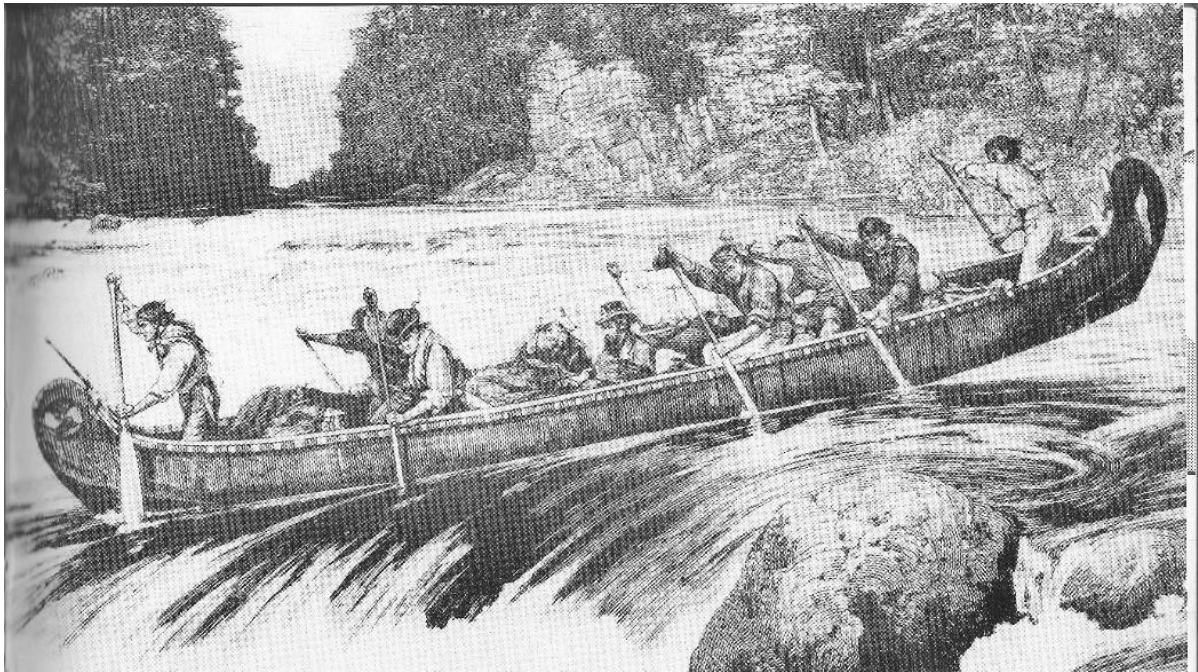
⁶⁰ Centre de Patrimoine, Winnipeg. The Voyageurs database, M620/1198. Joseph Paquin signed a contract with McTavish, Frobisher & Company, agents of the NWC, on April 29, 1797. Destination – Grand Portage. Functions – milieu (middleman in canoe). Wages – 230 livres & advance of 72 livres.

⁶¹ In 1788, the NWC established Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca, which straddles the Alberta-Saskatchewan border.

⁶² Huck, *Exploring the Fur Trade Routes of North America*, p. 138

⁶³ Huck, p. 53

Joseph and the other novices were initiated into the brotherhood of travelers at a place where the Ottawa River narrowed between high granite cliffs and the current increased. After the rapids, they pulled ashore at a sandy point, known as '*pointe au baptême*'. The ritual usually involved dunking the new man in water, sprinkling water on his face with a cedar bough, or some act like a Christian baptism. A shot of rum and Joseph was no longer an *habitant* but was now a *voyageur*.⁶⁴



Voyageurs were typically no taller than five foot six inches because larger men might damage the birchbark canoes. Each man wore leather pants, moccasins, a long-sleeved cotton tunic, a hat or knitted cap, and on cool days a capote or blanket coat. A red or blue sash was looped around the waist several times, creating pockets into which a man could tuck his tobacco, knife, and other personal items. (Image: Library and Archives Canada)

⁶⁴ Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World*, p. 58-59

A typical day began at 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. when the canoes were loaded and launched. By 8:00 a.m., they stopped for a breakfast of cold beans and pork. Lunch was more beans or perhaps a chunk of pemmican (desiccated meat with fat and berries). Throughout the long day, the pace was fifty-five strokes of the paddle each minute, with rest stops each hour long enough to smoke one pipe of tobacco. By 8:00 or 10:00 each evening, they camped beside the river, canoes unloaded and overturned to provide the men with cover as they slept. After supper, the cook put on a pot of dried beans in water to cook all night. The next morning the men awoke to shouts of '*Aller, aller*' (Come, let's go), and the routine began again.

Just before they arrived at their destination, the canoes stopped so the men could wash away the grime and sweat of the voyage. They would arrive *en masse*, the entire brigade singing songs in unison, such as '*Alouette*' and '*En roulant ma boule roulant*'.

About the time Joseph's brigade arrived at Grand Portage, other groups of smaller canoes were coming in from the west, laden with bales of furs. This was the rendezvous or meeting place of the wintering partners and the Montreal agents. By 1797, when Joseph was there, a stockade surrounded sixteen buildings – storehouses, dwellings, shops, a counting-house, and the mess (communal eating house). Outside of the stockade, there was an Ojibwe village of cone-shaped lodges made of birchbark, as well as the tipis of more distant tribes who had come to trade.

Joseph would have stayed at Grand Portage throughout the annual meetings of June and July before returning to Montreal with furs from the Northwest. The NWC partners met in the Great Hall to discuss company business, while outside the clerks and *engagés* (contracted workers) unpacked the trade goods and repacked them for the trading posts inland. Joseph would have slept outside of the fort and eaten communal meals with the other laborers, while the partners, guides and interpreters dined on fine food and slept indoors. It was generally a time of relaxation and celebration for the thousand or so NWC men gathered there each year.

1798 Grand Portage, Lake Superior

Joseph Paquin returned to the Northwest in 1798, but he didn't stop at Grand Portage as did the others who returned a few weeks later to Montreal. He was no longer a seasonal *engagés*, called *mangers du lard* (pork eaters) because they didn't eat wild meat as did those who travelled further into the *pays d'en haut*. Evidence that he was in the vicinity of Lake Winnipeg in 1798 or 1799 would be recorded in government documents decades later when his son, born in the Northwest, was an old man.⁶⁵

The *canot du nord* (northern canoe) used west of the Grand Portage was smaller than the grand canoes that Joseph had learned to paddle on his first trip. There were numerous

⁶⁵ Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha named Joseph Paquin as his father in two documents – the 1870 Manitoba Census and his 1876 affidavit for Metis Scrip (C14931-1231). His birthdate is about 1800, but no records have been found to confirm this. (There were no churches, so the only record might have been in a trading post journal.) On the census, he reported he was sixty years old (therefore, born about 1810), but on the scrip application he claimed to be born in 1800. His headstone at Lindsay (Maddowall, SK) adds to the confusion by noting that he was one hundred years old in 1896.

whitewater sections on the route between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg, and many portages that the larger canoes could not navigate. The first day out was a taste of things to come. Before the canoes could be launched in the Pigeon River, they had to be portaged 8.5 miles over rough terrain that rose seven hundred feet above the shores of Lake Superior. Each man was responsible for eight ninety-pound packs, which he carried two at a time from one *posé* (resting place) to the next. Every half-mile, he left two packs and went back for two more. In this way, Joseph and the others covered seventy miles altogether going back and forth between sixteen *posés*. At the end of the day, they had reached Fort Charlotte, a small supply depot where they celebrated and spent the night. Men like Joseph were initiated as 'north men', an informal fraternity of voyageurs who had ventured beyond the known world.

The next 150 miles to Lac la Croix was through a chain of small lakes along the international border, a route with twenty-nine portages. The continental divide between two of the lakes meant that the rest of the trip would be downhill. From Lac la Pluie (Rainy Lake) to Lake of the Woods the current was fast and there were no portages because they left behind the rocky Precambrian Shield and entered an area of rich soil deposited during the Ice Age. The voyageurs covered eighty miles in two days, arriving at last at the south-east corner of Lake of the Woods. There was no time to admire the thousands of tiny islands as they covered the 120 miles across the lake in one day. The last leg of the journey required twenty-six portages around rapids and waterfalls until the men arrived at Lake Winnipeg.

Joseph's brigade beached their canoes at Bas de la Rivière within days of others also returning from the Grand Portage. There is no record that he was under contract to the NWC, but even independent traders stopped here to mend their canoes, rest, and acquire more supplies. There were two depots built by the rival companies. The NWC catered to voyageurs from Lake Athabasca, the northern terminus of the route between the Northwest and Montreal. The HBC fort supplied their traders on the way to Hudson Bay from the Red and Assiniboine Rivers further south. Potatoes, peas, barley, and other vegetables were grown on the delta, and fish were abundant in the river and lake. Bas de la Rivière was the most important stopping place on the route to and from the Northwest and had been a gathering place for indigenous people for centuries.

In the Northwest, rivers formed natural boundaries that the indigenous people used to define their territories. The Dakota Sioux lived and hunted buffalo west of the Red River and south of the Assiniboine, whereas the Cree hunted north of the tributary. The Saulteaux moved seasonally between Netley Creek on the Red River near Lake Winnipeg to the forks of the Red and Pembina Rivers. Conflict occurred when groups entered the territory of their rivals, perhaps following a herd of buffalo or intent on stealing horses. First-hand accounts, such as the journal of NWC chief trader Alexander Henry⁶⁶ (the younger) document numerous incidents in which the Saulteaux trading at his post raised the alarm when Sioux were nearby. The American border had not been marked at this time, so people - both indigenous and fur traders - moved freely within the area some called the borderlands.

⁶⁶ Alexander Henry the Younger was the nephew of Alexander Henry (sr), who also wrote a detailed journal of his time in the Northwest.

By 1800, Joseph Paquin's son was born at Beaver Creek⁶⁷ near the confluence of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Rivers, where the HBC's Fort Ellice⁶⁸ stood. He had taken a Cree wife, whom he called Marguerite, married *a la façon du pays* (according to the custom of the country). There were no priests in the Northwest, so indigenous protocols prevailed. (Both French and English churches would question the legitimacy of these marriages, but many men formed life-long relationships with their indigenous wives.) There was a significant population of mixed Cree-French Canadian people (later called Métis) when Joseph arrived in the Northwest. Even before la Vérendrye and his sons built a chain of forts in 1730-1750, *coureur de bois* (early independent traders during the French regime) had families with indigenous women. Likewise, the English men of the Hudson Bay Company had intermarried and recently the Company had relaxed their policies to allow native-born families to live within its forts.⁶⁹



Rivers as Borders and Corridors

Travelling south of Lake Winnipeg, Joseph would have become familiar with three rivers – the Red, Assiniboine, and Pembina. The Red River flows north from Lake Traverse (on the border between Minnesota and North Dakota) in a broad flat valley. The Pembina River winds along the international border (sometimes in present-day Manitoba, other times in North Dakota) and joins the Red River about two miles south of the border. The Assiniboine flows south from its origins (in east-central Saskatchewan) and takes a large bend, after which it flows eastwards to its confluence with the Red River (the Forks, Winnipeg). Note that Upper and Lower Fort Garry shown on the map did not exist at this time but provide familiar reference points for a modern reader. (Map: U. of Manitoba)

⁶⁷ Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha identified his birthplace as Beaver Creek in his Metis Scrip affidavit (1876). Possibly it was Beaver Creek Post, of which little is known. If so, perhaps his father worked for the NWC at the time or contracted with the post as a free trader.

⁶⁸ In 1794, Fort Ellice was established on the Qu'Appelle River, upstream from its confluence with the Assiniboine River.

⁶⁹ The HBC policy changed in 1790.

1803 Fort Pembina, in the Borderlands

Joseph Paquin's whereabouts in 1803 are unknown, but it's likely that he was still in the Northwest. If he was operating as an independent trader, he may have moved his small family from Beaver Creek to the confluence of the Pembina and Red River where a large group of freemen lived. (He would be in this area in 1806, so it's probable that he knew it well.)

Pembina was bustling with activity in 1803. There were two NWC forts, one on the south side of the Pembina river built by Chaboillez in 1797, and another across from it built by Alexander Henry in 1801. The XY Company, a recent rival also out of Montreal, had a post nearby, and the HBC had one on the east side of the Red River. Cree and Assiniboine parties arrived regularly to trade at the forts. The Saulteaux wintered here, close to the bison herds on the open plains.

In October 1803, Antoine LaPointe worked at the NWC post where he would be employed until 1808. He would eventually have a family with a Cree woman and their daughter, Marie, would marry Joseph Paquin's son.

LaPointe was mentioned in Alexander Henry's journal. In the following scene recorded on October 3, 1803, Henry was observing the action from the top of his house within the palisades of the fort. A caravan was leaving for the Hair Hills, where a small outpost was also Henry's responsibility.⁷⁰ (The Hair Hills, now called the Pembina Escarpment, was a steep slope three to four hundred feet above the Red River Valley.) The guide of the caravan rode in a cart pulled by two horses; his Cree wife walked behind carrying an infant on her back in a cradleboard. The cart was loaded with boxes, baggage, kettles and other items. The second cart held packs for the outpost as well as the driver's own baggage and two young children. His wife walked with a 'squalling infant on her back, scolding and tossing it about'. Next walked a man with a long-stemmed *calumet* (pipe) in his hand, followed by his wife with his beaded tobacco pouch. Behind them was a cart loaded with packs for the outpost and more baggage. Antoine LaPointe drove a cart with two horses, loaded with goods for the outpost and the baggage of three other men. A kettle hung on each side of the heap of packages. Next, three men walked with guns slung over their shoulders, smoking freshly-lit pipes. Following them, a man led a young mare loaded with potatoes, squashes, a keg of fresh water, an old worsted bag, and 'two young whelps howling'. Three horses with travois came next. One horse 'kicking, rearing, and snorting' nearly lost its load of flour, cabbages, turnips, onions, and a large kettle of broth. The master of the caravan walked beside a horse pulling the third travois in which his daughter and a woman reclined under a painted tent. Both were lying down, very sick. The girl's mother walked behind to look after her. A long train of twenty dogs, some for sleighs, others for hunting, were last in the mile-long procession.

Winter at Pembina, with Antoine LaPointe in the NWC fort and Joseph Paquin in the camp of the free traders, began in October with frosty nights and snow. The men in the fort took in their vegetables – cabbage, carrots, onions, turnips, beets, parsnips, and potatoes – and began stockpiling firewood. Swans and geese flew by on their way south. The creeks and rivers froze. Although the ground was covered with snow, prairie fires burned in all directions. The bison

⁷⁰ In 1803-04, Alexander Henry the Younger was master of a cluster of NWC outposts in the Lower Red River Department, in addition to Fort Pembina – Portage la Prairie, Lake Manitoba, P. en Longue, Dead River, the Forks, Hair Hills, and Park River. Alexander Henry's journal, p.245

were nearby even during the winter months, but even so food became scarce by December and the NWC men had 'nothing but tough and lean bulls to eat, and the XY not even that'.⁷¹

The freemen lived in tipis with their Cree wives and children, providing for them by hunting, fishing, and trading furs with Cree, Assiniboine, and Saulteaux hunters. They sold the furs to the NWC, XY and HBC posts, and supplied them with meat and pemmican. Henry had nothing good to say about them, as when he complained about his hunter. 'Those freemen are a nuisance in the country and generally scoundrels', he wrote in his journal, 'I never yet found one honest man amongst them.'⁷²

By April, the grass began to sprout, and prairie fires glowed again in the distance. At the NWC fort, LaPointe and the other men were busy, some making wheels or carts, others sawing boards and squaring timber. The blacksmith made nails, others made sturgeon nets, and some were smoking bison tongues. The 'most active and capable' were away hunting beaver with 'the Indians'.⁷³

In mid-May, the NWC canoes left for the annual rendezvous at Fort William on Lake Superior. By June 1, they had travelled as far as Bas de la Rivière on Lake Winnipeg. Eighteen canoes from the Upper and Lower Red River districts and Swan River, along with some of the XY Company, arrived 'abreast, all singing and keeping time with their paddles and oars'.⁷⁴

1806 Berthier, Lower Canada

Joseph Paquin returned to his home parish in late August 1805 with the brigades from Fort William. By Christmas, he would have told his stories of the Northwest to everyone he knew. His parents may have heard how he chased bison on horseback, holding extra shot in his mouth so that he could reload his gun quickly. Perhaps he told his younger brothers and sisters about encounters with bears, cougars and snakes. He likely confided in his elder brother, Toussaint, that he had a Cree wife and family. He certainly confessed his sins to the parish priest. Eventually, he was just another farm boy, looking ahead to many similar years of repetitive labor, and few stories.

On April 16, 1806, Joseph and three friends signed a contract promising to travel together to the Red River.⁷⁵ They would pool their resources to buy a northern canoe and leave in about three weeks. The other three were Charles Bellegarde, Michel Jenton-dit-Dauphiné, and Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière. Bellegarde had been working for the NWC since 1793, whereas Dauphiné was likely on his first trip.⁷⁶ Lagimodière had been in the Red River area for five years operating as a freeman. It's possible that the three experienced men had met on these trips to

⁷¹ Coues, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, (Henry's journal), p. 232 – Dec. 10, 1803

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 231 – Nov. 30, 1803

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 240 – April 2, 1804

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p.246 – June 1, 1804

⁷⁵ Centre de Patrimoine, Winnipeg – Voyageurs database, M620/1864. The contract was signed on 16 April 1806 before the notary, François-Xavier Dézéry.

⁷⁶ Charles Bellegarde signed a two-year contract with NWC partners, David and Peter Grant, and Les Robertson on 1793/09/23, destination dans le nord. (Voyageur database M620/1198). Also, Alexander Henry the Younger noted the return of the 1800-01 Red River Brigade with Charles Bellegarde in the fourth canoe (p.49, Henry's journal)

fur country. All except Bellegarde, who was from Riviere du Loup (north-east of Quebec City), lived within 25 km of Berthier, where the contract was signed.⁷⁷

What made this trip noteworthy was that Lagimodière brought his new wife along at her insistence. He and Marie-Anne Gaboury married five days after he signed the contract in which he negotiated space for her in the canoe. No French-Canadian woman had ever gone west before, so they were the first white couple whose children were born in the Northwest. (Their grandson, Louis Riel, would also be memorable as the rebel leader of the 1870 provisional government of Manitoba.)

Years later, Marie-Anne told her children about her adventures. On the trip, she did not have to carry heavy loads or handle an oar like the men. Nevertheless, she had to walk the portages and sit in the canoe for hours on end. Her long gathered-skirts and petticoats must have been permanently soiled along the hem because, according to her biographer, she wore typical French-Canadian women's wear throughout her life.⁷⁸ Her presence may have put extra stress on the men who would have been looking out for her welfare, but they were still friends upon their arrival at Pembina. (Paquin, Bellegarde, and Lagimodière were together for several years, but there is no record of Dauphiné.)

About the time that Paquin's entourage arrived, the NWC master at Pembina, Alexander Henry, came back from a five-week trip⁷⁹ to the Mandan villages on the Missouri River (near Bismarck, ND). The Mandans lived in round earth lodges, cultivating corn and beans which they exchanged with other indigenous traders for horses and various crafts from as far away as Mexico and the Pacific. The Mandan villages were one hub in a vast North American trade network that had been operating for centuries before Europeans arrived.⁸⁰

Joseph reunited with his Cree wife, Marguerite, and his six-year-old son, Joseph Jr, at Pembina. Lagimodière also had a Cree wife, Josette, with whom he had a daughter.⁸¹ She was angry when he arrived with his new wife, Anne-Marie recalled years later, and intent on taking revenge on her rival. Therefore, Lagimodière decided to move to the Grand Camp some miles upstream where most hunters and their families stayed when they were hunting buffalo. It's likely that Paquin and Bellegarde went with him. By January, the couple were back in Pembina and their first child was born at the HBC post.⁸²

Joseph Paquin and his friends decided to leave Pembina as soon as the ice cleared on the rivers because it was becoming too dangerous to stay there. Besides the threat from Lagimodière's rejected Cree wife, the Sioux were becoming active in the Pembina area. (The following year, Henry would write in his journal about the threat posed by a Sioux war party in the vicinity of his fort.) In May, Paquin's group set off for the North Saskatchewan River.

⁷⁷ Dauphiné was from Lanoraie; Lagimodière from Maskinongé.

⁷⁸ Dugas, *The First Canadian Woman in the Northwest*, p. 6. She 'kept as much as possible to the dress of her native land'.

⁷⁹ Coues (*Henry's journal*), p. 285-421. Henry left Pembina on July 7 1806, and returned on August 14. The American explorers, Lewis and Clark, preceded him in the winter of 1804-05, and returned in August 1806 after he had left.

⁸⁰ John S. Milloy, *The Plains Cree: Trade, Diplomacy, and War 1790 to 1870*. Winnipeg: U of Manitoba Press, 1988.

⁸¹ Antoinette Lagimodière, *Metis scrip*, Centre de Patrimoine - Chronology

⁸² Reine Lagimodière was born Jan. 6, 1807. Centre de Patrimoine - Chronology

umet... s'obligeant... Renonca
tat... s'obligeant... Renonca
seigneur de françois-piet l'an m
t... six he... sans le...
unt... pentres de claria
air... de l'enquisant...
m... enquis... d'inaies...
jean-baptiste de Lagimodière
marque
Joseph Pakin
marque
Michel Jenton dit Dauphiné
marque
Charles Bellegarde
marque
G. D. P.
1806

Voyageur Contract

Four men signed a contract on April 16, 1806, agreeing to buy a canôt du nord (northern canoe) and travel together to the Red River – Joseph Paquin (Pakin), Charles Bellegarde, Michel Jenton-dit-Dauphiné, and Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière. Each man signed with an 'X', which indicates that they were illiterate. Each was required to carry provisions from Berthierville to Sault Ste Marie, i.e. 50 pounds of bacon, 80 pounds of biscuit, a half-pound of peas, and 400 pounds of sugar. (image: Centre de Patrimoine, Winnipeg)

1807 Pembina to Cumberland House

Joseph Paquin left the Pembina area in May 1807 with a group of freemen that included Jean-Baptiste Lagimodière and Charles Bellegarde, who had been with him since they left the St. Lawrence Valley the previous year, and Michel Chalifoux, who had recently completed a contract with the NWC.⁸³ They filled two canoes with baggage, provisions, and their families. Joseph's eldest son was seven; the Lagimodière baby was five months old. No doubt there were several other children under ten. Early one morning in late May, the canoes set off for Forts Augustus and Edmonton (in present-day central Alberta).

Although there is no daily record of their journey, both NWC master, Alexander Henry the younger, and explorer David Thompson made the same trip the following year, leaving detailed journals that describe the route.⁸⁴ In late May, the Red River would have been deep and fast, engorged with spring run-off. Two days after embarking, the group arrived at the Forks where the Assiniboine River joined the Red. They may have camped alongside other independent traders or beside Cree, Assiniboine, and Saukteaux who frequented the spot. There were signs that this had been a gathering place for a long time. An old grave site dated back to the 1781-82 smallpox epidemic that killed thousands of indigenous people across the Northwest.⁸⁵ Chimneys and cellars remained from small forts built as far back as 1738 when La Vérendrye was in the area, and as recently as 1803 when Alexander Henry had an outpost there for one winter.⁸⁶ (Four years later in 1812, the first colonists would arrive at the Forks and begin building the Red River Settlement, now Winnipeg.)

The Paquin party continued north on the Red River to Netley Marsh where the river enters Lake Winnipeg. The Saukteaux, who had arrived in the area fifteen years earlier from Sault Ste Marie⁸⁷, planted corn and potatoes at their summer camp on Netley Creek. Perhaps like Henry the following year, Joseph's group purchased a small quantity of provisions from them.⁸⁸ The freemen likely knew Chief Peguis from the buffalo hunts in the Pembina area where his band spent their winters.

The common route through Lake Winnipeg was along the east shore if one was heading to York Factory on Hudson Bay. Had they been going back to Montreal, the freemen would have gone east as far as the mouth of the Winnipeg River and turned toward Lake Superior. But Joseph's group was headed to the west and the forts along the Saskatchewan River, so they followed the western shore of Lake Winnipeg to Tête du Chien (Dog's Head), a strait connecting the small southern basin with the larger northern one. Lake Winnipeg is about 250 miles long,

⁸³ Dugas, p. 6; Henry, p. 612, footnote #15.

⁸⁴ Coues, p. 447-567.

⁸⁵ Estimates vary, but between 60-90 % of people in some communities died during the 1781-82 smallpox epidemic. Alexander Henry reported seeing the remnants of old forts and the graves on August 19, 1800. (Coues, p. 46)

⁸⁶ Bell, MHS. Fort Rouge existed for only one season, 1738-39, built by La Veréndrye's friend and colleague, de Marque.

⁸⁷ Sutherland, Peguis: A Noble Friend, p. 9. Peguis' band of Saukteaux left the Great Lakes area some time between 1770-1790. By 1790-95, they were at the Forks.

⁸⁸ Coues, p. 448. August 11, 1808

south to north, and 20-60 miles wide, covering almost 9500 square miles. When Alexander Henry reached the Narrows the following year, there was a heavy swell and he put ashore for a few hours until the wind abated.⁸⁹ His men spread the baggage out to dry in the sun and gathered raspberries, a brief respite in a grueling trip. It's likely that Paquin's group encountered gales and storms along the way, too, and would have been constantly on the lookout for places to seek refuge should black clouds begin to form in the distance or an unexpected breeze catch the canoes as they rounded an outcrop of limestone.

About five days later, the freemen reached the entrance to Cedar Lake and, crossing it, came to the delta of the Saskatchewan River. It was a marsh with numerous channels that required the men to pull the canoes through muddy slurry, sometimes sinking up to their waists.⁹⁰ Eventually, they entered the main channel of the Saskatchewan River and a few days later arrived at Cumberland House, where the NWC had a small depot to supply the brigades trading further north. The HBC post, in comparison, was large and well-stocked for the Cree and Assiniboine trappers who had gathered there every summer for more than thirty years. (Cumberland House, built in 1774 by Samuel Hearne, was the first inland post established by the HBC.) It was also a provisioning stop for canoes coming from as far away as Edmonton House on their way to York Factory. It was a good place to stop, replenish their provisions, and repair the canoes. They stayed for a week.

The arrival of the Paquin party caused quite a stir in the tipis of the Cree and Assiniboine who were trading at the fort. Word spread quickly that a fair-skinned woman and child were nearby, and soon crowds gathered to gaze at her. (This was the recollection of Madame Lagimodière.⁹¹) The small group of freemen must have witnessed similar reactions as they travelled across the Northwest in the following months and encountered various groups of indigenous travelers.



Joseph Paquin and three other freemen left Pembina in late May 1807, headed for Fort Augustus and Edmonton House. They travelled by canoe along the western shore of Lake Winnipeg, then west on the Saskatchewan River to about present-day Prince Albert. A few days later, they traded the canoes for horses and completed their journey over land.

⁸⁹ Coues, p. 435

⁹⁰ Coues, p.469

⁹¹ Dugas, p. 7

1807 Cumberland House to Paint River House

Soon after leaving Cumberland House, the freemen were forced to set aside their paddles and use poles and lines because the current was so strong. Their families remained on board and one woman in each canoe paddled to keep it straight. Two men from each canoe attached themselves to the towing-line with their portage slings, which passed over one shoulder across the breast and under the other arm.⁹² The river bottom was sand and gravel, so the poles worked well, but the shoreline was stony and muddy in places where creeks crossed the men's path. They would sink knee-deep, then suddenly stumble upon loose stones. It was dangerous work because they moved at a fast trot, the long lines catching on rocks or driftwood, and sending the men tumbling. Soon they were exhausted.

One evening, Joseph's group camped on shore and lit a large fire near the water's edge beside some fallen trees. After they had eaten, the men sat around the fire, chatting and smoking their calumets with a man named Bouvier they had met that day. The women were some distance away, preparing the tents for the night. Light from the campfire illuminated each man's face, but beyond the circle it was as dark as a cave. Suddenly, Bouvier cried out and seemed to be struggling with an attacker. All four men in Paquin's party grabbed their guns and rushed to help as the man was dragged into the bush by a bear, followed by her two cubs. The men shot the bear, but not before she had clawed the man's face and blinded him. The women dressed his wounds and cared for him until they reached a fort where they could leave him.⁹³

Six days into the journey they arrived at the forks of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers, about ten miles east of present-day Prince Albert. They followed the north branch, still using lines because the current was even stronger, rapids were more frequent, and the descent much greater. Eventually, they could put aside the tow lines and use paddles and poles as the current became smoother and the water shallow. Maneuvering between sand banks and small islands of willow, they could see that they had left the woodlands behind. Beyond the river, Aspen groves and watery sloughs dotted the plains of the transition zone. In places, they saw deep paths created by the bison as they descended the bank to cross the river. Eventually, they reached the *Monté* or crossing place where they would abandon their canoes and use horses for the rest of their journey. The two branches of the river were only a few miles apart at this point, and the Cree had beaten a path across the land between them. Both the HBC and the NWC had forts on the south branch, so perhaps a couple of the freemen took the injured man on the dirt road to Fort Carlton. (This was the second location of the fort. The present-day Fort Carlton Historic Site is a reproduction of the third location.)

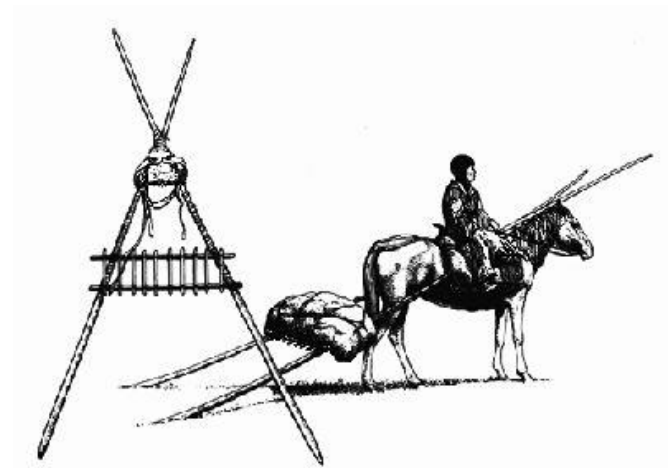
The freemen likely acquired horses from Cree or Assiniboine people who were camped near the crossing place. They bartered with trade goods in the same way as the men of the fur trade companies – a twist of tobacco, a jug of alcohol, some powder and shot. The negotiations, preceded by lengthy speeches by the elders and smoking the calumet, would take hours until finally a deal was struck. In the ensuing months, Paquin and the other north men would repeat

⁹² Coues, p. 478-479

⁹³ Dugas, p. 7-8. Dugas claimed that they took him all the way to Fort des Prairies (Edmonton), but Paquin's group didn't arrive at Edmonton until the next fall. The closest fort was Carlton on the South Branch of the Saskatchewan River (between present-day Batoche and St. Louis.) and it's likely they left him there. He ended his days at the Red River Settlement, living with the priests at St. Boniface.

this deal-making scene several times as they collected furs from local hunters to exchange for goods and money at a company fort.

Joseph's group didn't race toward their destination; they moved and camped in spurts, never very far from the North Saskatchewan River. The horses pulled *travois* loaded with tents, trade items, provisions, and baggage, while the men, women, and children walked. A few days out on the plains, they may have set up camp at 'a beautiful meadow at the river's edge' as Alexander Henry would the following year.⁹⁴ From here, the men could go buffalo hunting on foot or on horseback and bring the meat back to camp where their wives would process it into pemmican and hides. The herds were large in these years, often grazing 'as far as the eye could see' as Henry put it. This pattern of camping, hunting, and moving, with occasional stops to trade for furs, eventually delivered the freemen and their families to the confluence of the Vermillion River with the North Saskatchewan.



The freemen adopted several strategies that indigenous people used to survive. Joseph Paquin's Cree wife likely showed him how to make a travois for a horse or dog, among other things. (Image: Canadian Encyclopedia)

1808 Paint River House to Fort Edmonton

Two forts stood side-by-side on a high plateau on the north bank of the Saskatchewan River, opposite the mouth of the Vermillion River (nowadays about 40 km NW of Lloydminster). The NWC's Fort Vermillion and the HBC's Paint River House, each named after the red clay along the river, were surrounded by a single palisade. The men in the forts kept a look-out for groups of traders, never allowing both Cree and Blackfoot to arrive at the same time. These traditional allies were now at war.

The balance of power on the plains had shifted ever since the HBC began building posts inland, west of Hudson Bay. Joseph Paquin and his party of freemen had seen evidence of those original trading posts all along the Saskatchewan River on their trek from Pembina. The rotting walls and crumbling fireplaces of abandoned forts and buildings told the story of competition between the NWC and HBC beginning in about 1776. Each time one of the companies would build an outpost further west on the river, the other would leap-frog and build a new one. When a new post was built, the old one was abandoned until there were derelict

⁹⁴ Coues, p. 493

buildings almost at every bend. Alexander Henry, travelling the same route as the freemen the following year to his new assignment at Fort Vermillion, recorded each site in his journal.

The Cree and Assiniboine had become trader 'middlemen' in the early years when the HBC men stayed in their forts on the shores of Hudson Bay and the indigenous traders came to them. The Blackfoot acquired guns and English goods by trading with the Cree, who in turn got horses. The Cree could prevent their enemies from getting guns and so a deep resentment developed in groups like the Gros Ventre. Things changed once the posts were inland where all tribes could trade directly with the English and French Canadians. In 1806, James Bird, the master at Fort Edmonton, wrote about a 'fatal quarrel' between the former allies and two years later when the freemen arrived at the Vermillion River, the Cree and Blackfoot were at war. Some historians call the years 1806-1850 the 'Horse Wars' because the Cree were cut off from their traditional supply of new horses and horse theft was the chief cause of friction among the indigenous people.

Paquin's freemen were travelling in the area of the Saskatchewan River during dangerous and uncertain times. They were accepted as kinfolk by the Cree because of the men's wives, but this meant that the Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and others were enemies. The freemen had gained a reputation as good hunters who brought clean, well-prepared pelts to the forts. They didn't compete with the Cree because the former middlemen had become buffalo hunters, providing the forts with fresh meat and pemmican.

The freemen may have spent the winter of 1807-08 in the vicinity of the two forts where hunting was good – beaver on the north side of the river and bison on the south. James Bird wrote about meeting them in September 1808 as he arrived at Paint River House from visiting forts further east. 'Several freemen arrived with us', he noted. They were headed to Fort Edmonton where they intended to trade the furs they had collected, but they wanted to be paid in cash rather than trade goods. The London Committee of the HBC was considering issuing currency, but Bird decided not to wait for their decision and created 'bills on my own account'.⁹⁵ Paquin and the other freemen were willing to sell their services – trapping, hunting, various forms of labor – to either company, but on their own terms. The NWC had paid them in 'livres' when they were engagés, so they knew that currency could be sent home to their parents and siblings on the St. Lawrence. Having negotiated a good deal with James Bird, they packed up their families and headed to Fort Edmonton.

Two weeks later, Bird wrote in the post journal that Lagimodière, his wife, and two of the freemen arrived at Edmonton. Bird agreed to 'entertain as a lodger' Lagimodière's wife and two small children for the winter.⁹⁶ (Reine was under two and La Prairie was six weeks old.⁹⁷) The two forts – the HBC's Fort Edmonton and the NWC's Fort Augustus – were teaming with women and children. Situated in a deep river valley in an area now called Rosssdale Flats (Edmonton, AB), the forts were surrounded by a single palisade. Within the walls, men like James Bird, who at this time had six boys by his first wife and two by his second, were raising the first generation of 'mixed-blood' children in the Northwest.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Ens, *Edmonton House Journals*, p. 122, Sept. 17, 1808

⁹⁶ Ens, p. 122-123, Sept 30, 1808

⁹⁷ Reine Lagimonière, born 6 Jan 1807 at Pembina; La Prairie (Jean-Baptiste), born 15 Aug 1808 at Fort des Prairies (likely Fort Vermillion)

⁹⁸ James Bird would eventually have 19 children with three wives.

Whether Joseph Paquin was with Lagimodière at Fort Edmonton or still at Paint River House with the other freemen in September 1808 is unknown. However, all four men who had left Pembina together continued to travel as a group for another year or so, according to the reminiscences of Lagimodière's wife.

The following June, the Canadians – Bellegarde, Chalifoux, and Paquin – were on the plains trading with Cree hunters or killing buffalo. Their wives and children were camped about five-days distance from Edmonton, along with the families of several other freemen. Lagimodière's family was a few miles away, camped beside a lake. Marie-Anne Lagimodière recalled that their horses were stolen overnight, and her husband went to find them. He didn't return that night. By noon the next day, a group of Sarcee (Tsuut'ina) warriors surrounded the tent, armed and painted for a battle. When her husband returned, the Sarcees refused to let the family leave until the rest of their men arrived. Lagimodière convinced them to let his family camp in a quiet spot so that Marie-Anne and the children could sleep. They slipped away and didn't stop until they reached Fort Edmonton five days later. Marie-Anne remembered seeing a group of Sarcee in the distance as they reached safety.

The Canadian freemen were at the fort when the Lagimodière family arrived. The Sarcee had massacred their wives and children days earlier, taking revenge on the Cree for a recent theft of horses. Only Bellegarde's family survived. Although no list of the dead was recorded, it's likely that Joseph Paquin's wife and youngest children were killed that day. Somehow, his nine-year-old son, Joseph, was spared (and would eventually have a large family born in the Northwest).

1810 Fort Edmonton to the Columbia

By 1810, Joseph Paquin's brothers, Toussaint and Louis, had joined him at Paint River House/Fort Vermillion where both companies were packing to leave for a new fort further west. Alexander Henry the Younger, master of the NWC post, mentioned the brothers in an incident of horse theft. On May 21 while Henry and his men were shooting ducks in a small pond near the fort, 'Indians' stole the horses which were feeding on the hill behind it. They cut the hobbles and rode away, two men on each horse. Both the NWC and HBC lost horses that day, including 'two from the Paquin. The latter was just packing to set off.'⁹⁹

On May 31, 'we all mounted and abandoned Fort Vermillion', Henry wrote in the post journal, 'leaving our icehouse open, containing about 400 limbs of buffalo, still frozen'.¹⁰⁰ In the NWC cavalcade that day, there were '44 horses, 60 dogs, 12 men, 6 women, and 1 blind man'.¹⁰¹ (Perhaps Bouvier who had been mauled by the bear was in this group.) They were leaving the Vermillion river because of increased violence among the Cree and Assiniboine who were fighting amongst themselves but also threatening the men in the forts. The new site, called

⁹⁹ Coues, p. 599. Sunday, May 20, 1810. Future events show that there were three Paquin brothers at Paint River House in 1810. They likely arrived the previous summer because the Montreal brigades returned to the west each year in about August. Toussaint, being older, may have been in the west years earlier than Joseph, but there are no records to confirm this. Louis was no doubt on his first adventure. (See part one of this book for more about the brothers.)

¹⁰⁰ Coues, p. 601

¹⁰¹ Coues, p. 602

White Earth House, was mid-way between the Vermillion forts and Forts Edmonton and Augustus. All four forts were relocated, and a common palisade was built to protect the inhabitants.

The Paquin brothers had been hired by James Bird, in charge of the HBC's Saskatchewan River forts, for an expedition to establish trade relations west of the Rocky Mountains. The NWC had been trading in the area named after the Columbia River for a decade, but the HBC had only sent their first men over the mountains the previous year. Joseph Howse made the first exploratory trip with three men in four months and was about to return with a larger crew to stay for a year.¹⁰²

On June 19, Henry observed that the HBC men were 'off in two canoes for the Columbia, with nine men, including the two Pacquins'. Joseph and Toussaint were in this group, taking trading goods and provisions such as tobacco, 'high wine', gun powder, ball, shot, and pemmican.¹⁰³ The following day, a second group left on horseback – Howse, two NWC men, four Cree guides and hunters, and 'the youngest of the Paquins'.¹⁰⁴ The whole HBC Columbia expedition, Henry noted, 'consists of 17 persons'.

Four days later and a few miles before Fort Edmonton, the Howse expedition met David Thompson on his way to the annual NWC rendezvous at Rainy Lake.¹⁰⁵ Thompson had begun his career with the HBC and was trained on the job to be a surveyor and map maker.¹⁰⁶ When his contract expired, he joined the much larger NWC and eventually became a partner. The company became concerned about competition in the Pacific region when American explorers Lewis and Clark made their 1806 trip by land to the coast. Thompson had been sent to determine if the Columbia River could be used as a gateway to the area.

Howse and his men followed the North Saskatchewan River almost to its source in the Rocky Mountains¹⁰⁷, travelling in two groups – some in canoes; others on horseback. The first milestone was the HBC's outpost, Acton House, which was steps away from the NWC's Rocky Mountain House. The Paquin brothers must have gasped with delight when they first saw the 180° panorama of the mountains. David Thompson, seeing it for the first time a decade earlier, had gushed, 'All it's snowy cliffs to the southward were bright with the beams of the sun, while the most northern were darkened by a tempest'.¹⁰⁸

Howse and his crew likely spent a few days at the two forts, repairing canoes and resting the horses and dogs. This would be the last provisioning outpost for several weeks. From there, they continued west along the river through foothills and broad valleys, called the Kootenay Plains (now under an artificial lake formed in 1972 by the Bighorn Dam). Day after day, the mountains loomed in the distance, but seemed never to get closer. Finally, they arrived at Glacier Lake in the shadow of a towering peak that marked the beginning of a pass through the

¹⁰² Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Howse, Joseph

¹⁰³ Coues, p. 605 - June 19, 1810.

¹⁰⁴ Coues, p. 605 - June 20, 1810

¹⁰⁵ Coues, p. 607 - June 24, 1810

¹⁰⁶ The HBC's official surveyor, Philip Turnor, trained both David Thompson and Peter Fidler....

¹⁰⁷ Howse did not keep a journal, but he summarized his route in a letter to the HBC. He followed the same route that David Thompson took in 1800 when he crossed the Continental Divide for the first time. (Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Thompson, David)

¹⁰⁸ Belyea, Columbia Journals, p.4 - Oct. 6, 1800

mountains.¹⁰⁹ The peak, the pass, and a tributary of the North Saskatchewan, all in the same general area, were eventually named after the Howse expedition, even though they were following a well-known route.

Howse Pass was the most challenging part of the trip. Forty miles long at more than 5,000 feet above sea level, the track wound along rocky channels on river flats and into forests littered with deadfall. The men abandoned the canoes about three miles before the 'Height of Land', when the streams that had been rushing toward them, suddenly were running away. This was the continental divide, the point at which meltwater from glaciers and seasonal snow fed the Saskatchewan River on the east and the Columbia on the west. The descent became steeper and the streams more treacherous. Perhaps the Paquin brothers had to help the horses cross some areas as Thompson had a decade earlier. His men built a bridge of logs and carried the packs across. Then, they crossed the 'horses one at a time by tying a strong halter to them & 3 or 4 men hauling them [across] in the water – for altho' not more than 3 ft deep, such was its extreme descent and velocity, that our best horses were immediately thrown off their legs & swept under'.¹¹⁰ The trail across Howse Pass nowadays can be completed in two days by an unencumbered hiker, but in 1810 it likely took them much longer.¹¹¹ The following February, Alexander Henry would take only six days to travel from Rocky Mountain House to the Height of Land, but he wasn't carrying heavy packs.¹¹² It's likely that three weeks after leaving Acton House, the HBC explorers reached the Columbia River (a few miles NW of Golden, BC).

Although Howse did not keep a journal, there were reports of the expedition's progress from David Thompson's guide and the man Alexander Henry sent to watch them.¹¹³ Howse was spotted at the NWC's Kootanae House at the headwaters of the Columbia River on October 22 (near Invermere, BC). When Henry's spy left them in mid-December, Howse had settled in at Flathead Lake (near Kalispell, Montana), where the winters were relatively mild in the shelter of the Mission mountains. The Flatheads (interior Salish) welcomed them to their territory and in February led Howse and two of his men to the head of the Missouri River (Three Forks, Montana). On May 14, Thompson heard that Howse was on the move and had reached Columbia Lake (south of Windermere Lake), evidently on his way home. It was likely at this point that Joseph and Louis Paquin left Howse and joined Thompson on his epic trip to the mouth of the Columbia (Astoria, Oregon).

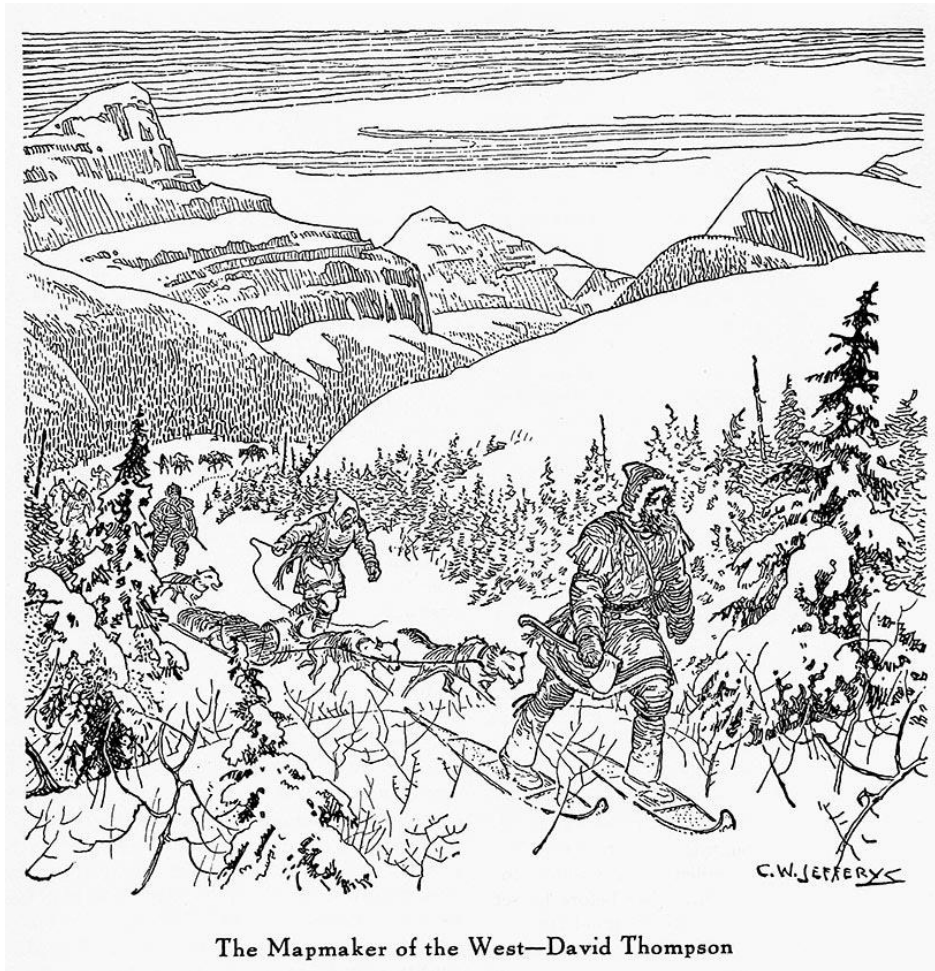
¹⁰⁹ Nowadays, the Glacier Lake Trail begins across the highway from Saskatchewan River Crossing, which is at the intersection of the road from Rocky Mountain House and the Icefields Parkway between Banff and Jasper.

¹¹⁰ Belyea, p. 48 – June 29, 1807

¹¹¹ Even now, the trail is poorly maintained. See Dave Higgins, The Vanishing Trail (www.greatdividetrail.com/the-vanishing-trail/)

¹¹² Coues, Ch. xxi, p 676-699, Feb. 3 - Feb 13, 1811 He completed the round trip in ten days.

¹¹³ On July 9, 1810, James McMillan left White Earth House and 'set off for the Columbia to watch the motions of the H. B. in that quarter', Coues, p. 611



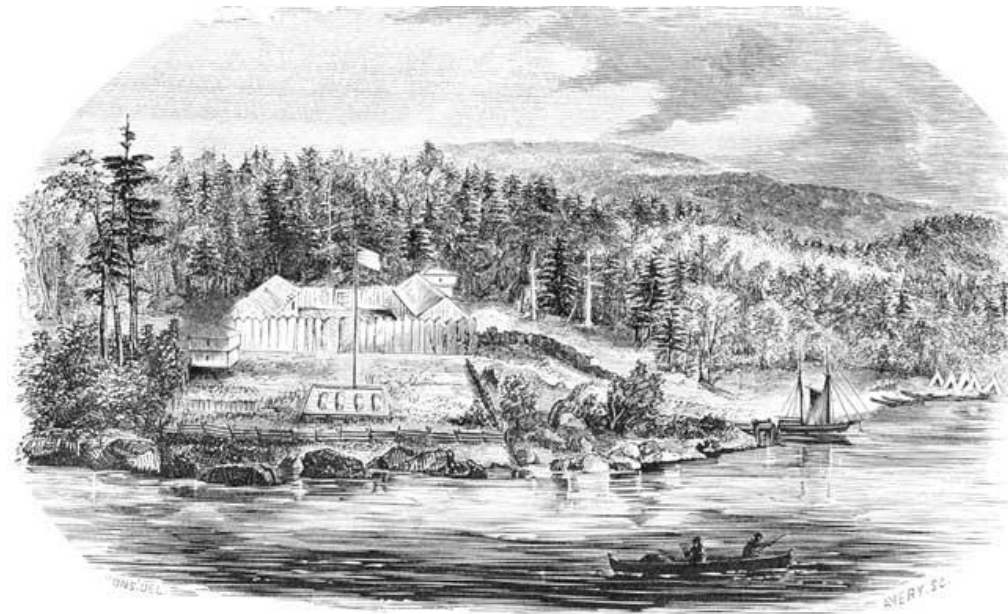
David Thompson

David Thompson was delayed by a Peigan (Blackfoot) blockade when he set off for the Columbia in 1810 and forced to change his route to the more northerly Athabasca Pass (Jasper to Valemont). By December, the snow was so deep that he and his twenty-three men stopped to make sleds and snowshoes. The men became discontent and dispirited over the following weeks, sometimes refusing orders or lagging behind, until late January when most deserted. Thompson, with only three men left, decided to stay at Canoe River for the rest of the winter.¹¹⁴ (image – C.W. Jefferys)

¹¹⁴ Tyrrell, p. 455. The three men who stayed with Thompson were Pierre Pareille, Joseph Coté, and René Valade.

Thompson and his remaining three men, 'being the only men that had the courage to risk the chances of the voyage', headed south in April to Saleesh House (east of Spokane, Wash). 'I knew I should find the free hunters', Thompson wrote, 'and engage some of them to accompany me'.¹¹⁵ Joseph and Louis Paquin were both with Thompson on the Columbia in May 1811 and, by June 5, Louis had a contract with the NWC for two years.¹¹⁶ Thompson added others so by the time he reached the Pacific Ocean, he had a crew of nine men.¹¹⁷

A ship was anchored offshore and Americans were building a fort for the Pacific Fur Company (PFC) when Thompson's group arrived on July 15. The site was 'studded with trees of almost incredible size', wrote Alexander Ross who was a partner in the PFC, 'many of them measuring fifty feet in girth, and so close together and intermingled with huge rocks' that clearing it and leveling the ground was arduous work.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, by February they had built a trading store, blacksmith shop, storage shed for furs, and a house, all surrounded by a stockade of rough-hewn logs with cannons dotted along the perimeter. Local Chinook people led by Chief Concomly helped the traders by supplying food, such as fish and Wapato root (a potato-like tuber), and by trading furs.



ASTORIA, AS IT WAS IN 1813.

Astoria / Fort George

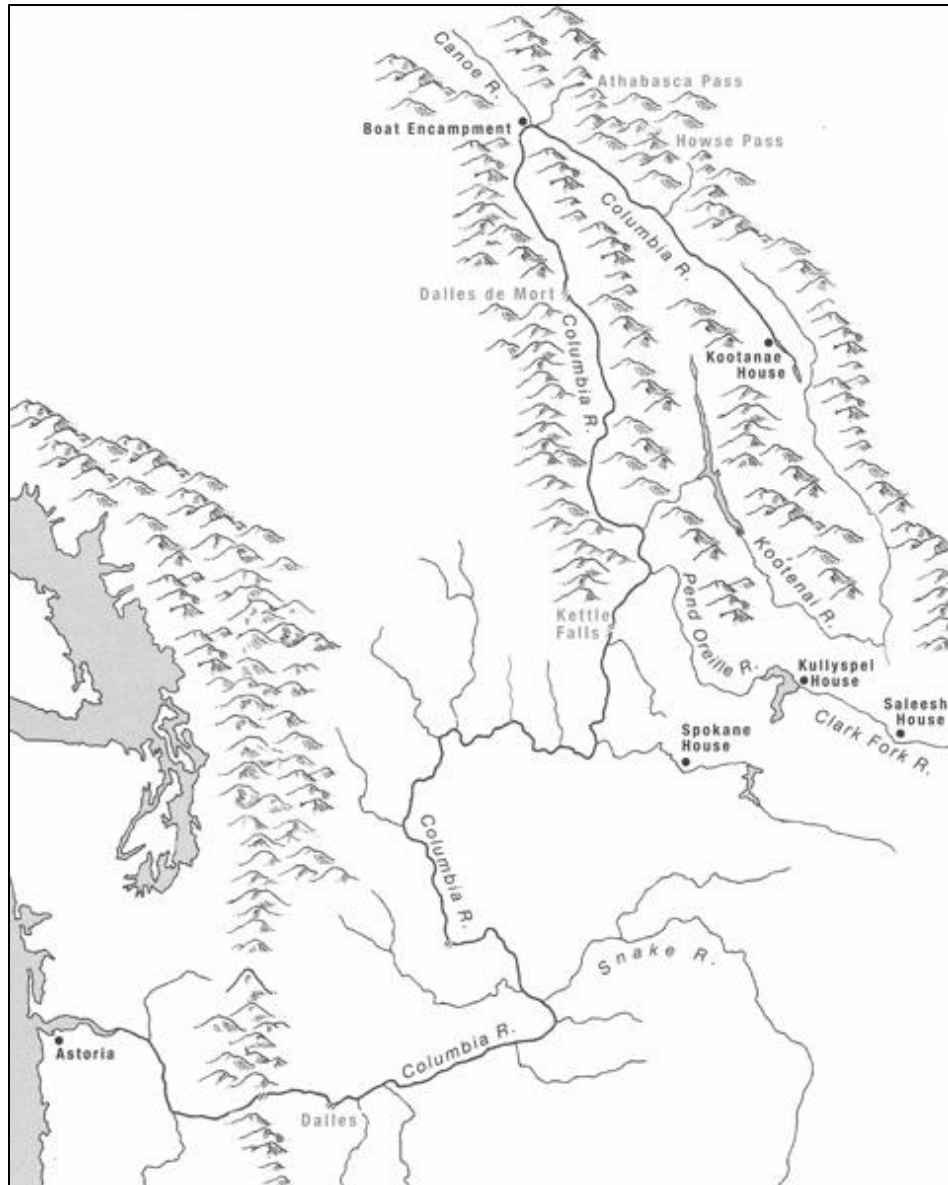
Fearing that British ships would attack during the War of 1812, Fort Astoria was sold to the NWC. It was renamed Fort George and soon became the center of NWC operations along the Columbia River. (image: Gabriel Franchère, 1813)

¹¹⁵ Tyrell, p. 455. April 16, 1811

¹¹⁶ Coues, p. 869 Footnote

¹¹⁷ Tyrell, p. 298

¹¹⁸ Ross, Alexander. *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River*, p. 69-71. (1849)



Columbia River

The Columbia River originates in the wetlands of south-east British Columbia, which are fed by the Columbia Icefields. It flows north-west through Windermere Lake and the towns of Invermere and Golden to the north end of the Selkirk Mountains where it turns sharply south. Entering eastern Washington state, it turns west at the Spokane River confluence, then south again near the junction with the Okanagan River. It makes a tight turn to the west again, forming a natural boundary between Washington and Oregon. The Columbia River empties into the Pacific Ocean near Astoria, Oregon. (map – Thompson’s Columbia District, Jason Blake 2005, Discovering Lewis & Clark)

About the same time as Thompson was in Astoria, Joseph Howse and his men, including Toussaint Paquin, reached Fort Edmonton. The Peigan continued to threaten traders attempting to cross the mountains to trade with their enemies, so the Howse expedition was the only one to go across the Rocky Mountains for the HBC until the two companies merged in 1821.

Thompson stayed at Fort Astoria for only one week, during which relations with his competitors were cordial because he assumed that the NWC had a one-third interest in the PFC. The deal, however, had fallen through. On July 22, 1811, he set off with his men (including one assumes Joseph and Louis Paquin) to return to Canoe River where his record-setting trip along the entire Columbia River ended.

It was during these summer months of 1811 when the paths of the three Paquin brothers diverged. Joseph was the first to leave the Northwest and return to Berthierville. It's likely that he stayed with David Thompson through the winter of 1811-12 at Saleesh House and was in the explorer's brigade to Montreal in the spring of 1812. Louis surfaces again on a list of men at Fort George in 1814, where Alexander Henry the Younger was master following the acquisition of Fort Astoria by the NWC¹¹⁹. Toussaint no doubt returned to Paint River House with Joseph Howse's party in July 1811; there is a record in the HBC Edmonton House journal of a payment he received for furs traded during the Howse expedition.¹²⁰ It would be another decade before all three brothers returned to the St. Lawrence Valley for good.

1813 Berthierville, Lower Canada

Joseph Paquin, then thirty-four, decided to return to farming along the St. Lawrence River after fifteen years in the Northwest. He was no longer the slender, sinewy youth who had left on his first trip west at age nineteen. Years of paddling, hunting, hauling and climbing had broadened his shoulders and built up the muscles of his arms and legs. He was tanned and whiskered from living outdoors and smelled of wood smoke and sweat. Among other men who had engaged in the fur trade, he was a champion – one of few who had crossed the Rocky Mountains and seen the Pacific Ocean. How could such an adventurer settle down on a farm?

When Joseph returned to Berthierville in the summer of 1812, he learned that his father had died in February (at age 64). His brothers – Pierre, Théotiste, and Etienne – were married, as were his sisters – Genevieve Marie and Madeleine Marie. Perhaps he felt obliged to help his mother. This was also a time of war, although the fighting hadn't reached the St. Lawrence Valley (nor would it).

Joseph married Marie-Rose Gilbert-dit-Contois on 30 June 1813. The following year, their first son, Norbert, was born. Joseph was illiterate, so there are no personal letters or diaries that could reveal whether he ever told his wife about the boy he had left in the Northwest - his son, Joseph. The couple had seven children in twelve years. Joseph died in 1826 at age 49 when the youngest was two. The cause of his death is unknown. His widow remarried the following year but had no more children.

¹¹⁹ Coues, p. 868

¹²⁰ Binnema & Ens, *Edmonton House Journals*, p. 214. Toussaint received payment for the furs three years after the Howse Expedition, on July 18, 1814. James Bird noted that he paid the free Canadian a note on the HBC for 2638 Livres. Toussaint also asked Bird to insure him a passage on the brigade going to Montreal the following year.

Joseph's brothers, Toussaint and Louis, eventually returned to Berthierville, too. Toussaint took a brief furlough in 1815, returning to the St. Lawrence Valley with an HBC brigade as he had arranged with James Bird. The following year, he was back out west in or near Green Lake (200 km NW of Prince Albert, SK) when a group of NWC men seized the HBC post 'with circumstances of extreme violence and outrage'.¹²¹ The incident occurred at the height of the NWC's efforts to maintain control of the Northwest. In 1811, the same year that the three Paquin brothers were on the far side of the Rocky Mountains, the Red River colony was established at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers (present-day Winnipeg). It threatened to disrupt the NWC supply lines and, when the governor of the fledgling colony decreed that no pemmican could leave the settlement, the NWC men set about to destroy it. The Battle of Seven Oaks in which the HBC governor and twenty men were killed (June 1816) is regarded as the climax of the struggle. The Coltman Report commissioned by Governor Sherbrooke of Lower Canada provides first-hand accounts of the conflict, including Toussaint Paquin's witness deposition.

Toussaint retired from the fur trade about 1818. In August 1819, he married a French-Canadian woman and they had eleven children between 1821 and 1842.¹²²

Louis, the youngest of the brothers, signed a contract with the HBC in December 1815 but no records of his exploits have been found.¹²³ He married a local girl in Berthierville in February 1821 (age 31) and they had eleven children between 1821 and 1841.¹²⁴

The Paquin brothers were among the last of the voyageurs to travel from Montreal to the Northwest. By 1821, the NWC and HBC merged into a single fur trade company that retained the name, Hudson Bay Company. Under the leadership of George Simpson, it abandoned the Montreal route in favour of the shorter one from York Factory on Hudson Bay. This was merely the last stage of a changing economy in which wheat and lumber exports now dominated. The transcontinental traffic that used to originate at Montreal at the beginning of each fur season, ceased and so too did the links between the St. Lawrence Valley and the Northwest.

Descendants of the French-Canadian fur traders who had families with indigenous wives during the previous century, meanwhile, lived on and had families of their own. Most, like the young Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha, never forgot their French fathers.

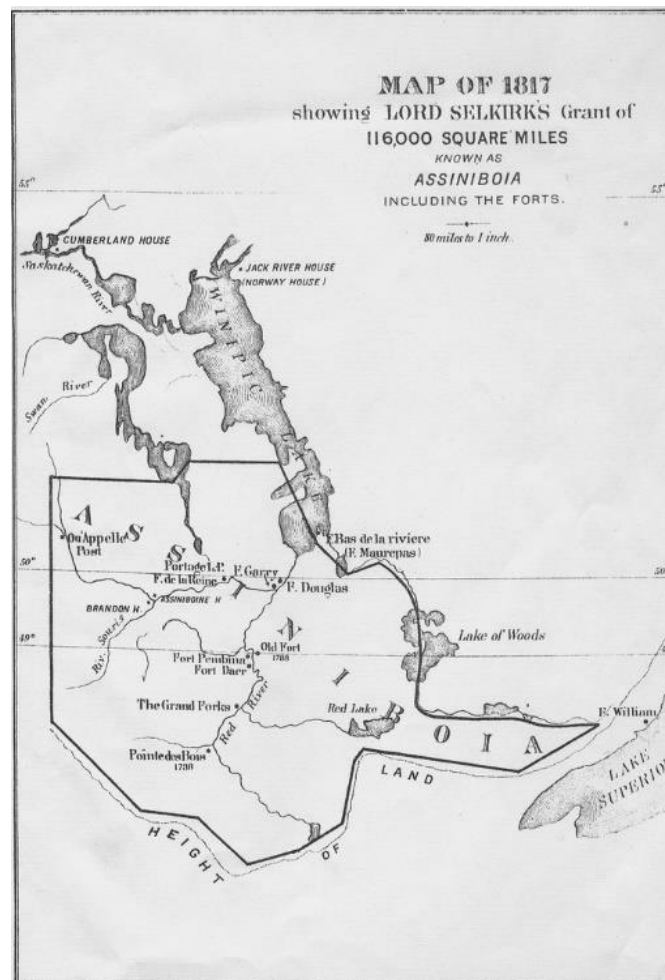
¹²¹ Coltman Report, p. 133. Deposition 353: Toussaint Paquin.

¹²² Paquin family database - Marie-Anne Bastien

¹²³ Centre de Patrimoine, Voyageur Contracts Database – M620/1281. 1815/12/15, signed at Montreal. Destination – pays sauvages. Wages – 1500 livres, advance of 30 piestres.

¹²⁴ Paquin family database – Angele Marie Baril Barry

Part Three – Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha



Assiniboia & the Red River Settlement

The HBC granted Lord Selkirk a large tract of land which he called Assiniboia. The Red River Settlement at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers was the first colony in the Northwest, started in 1811 to relocate Scottish farmers who were being evicted by landowners. The scheme was partially successful but only three groups arrived from Scotland and another from Switzerland. Then, immigration from Europe ceased when Selkirk died, and his family ignored the settlement. From then on, it was administered by the HBC. (map: George Bryce (1881), Royal Society of Canada)

1813 The Northwest

Young Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha grew up in the camps of the freemen who traded and hunted between Paint Creek House (Vermilion, AB) and Fort Edmonton. His father travelled with the same men for several years – Lagimodière, Bellegarde, Chalifoux, and others. His mother had left her kinfolk behind (in southern Manitoba), but the Cree wives of the other freemen shared her language and culture. The boy learned to speak both Cree and French, to find sweetgrass for smudge ceremonies, and to fire a gun from a galloping horse. When Joseph was eight, Sarcee warriors attacked the camp while the men were away, killing more than one hundred women and children. The incident was part of the ongoing hostilities between the Cree-Assiniboine and the Blackfoot Confederacy that included the Sarcee. Perhaps the boy was away with the men hunting buffalo; somehow, he survived while his mother and younger siblings did not.¹²⁵

When Joseph was ten, his father left with a group of HBC explorers led by Joseph Howse to cross the Rocky Mountains. This may have been the last time he saw his father, or perhaps it was two years later when the man stopped briefly at Paint Creek House en route from the Columbia to Montreal. It's likely that young Joseph continued to live with the freemen because it was common in both Cree and French-Canadian cultures to adopt children in such circumstances.

What other choices did his father have than leaving his son in the care of his friends? In the early days of the fur trade, it was common for traders to leave their children with their indigenous wives who returned to their birth families. But the boy's mother was dead, and her family was far away. Another option was to take the boy to the St. Lawrence Valley as the explorer David Thompson did. Thompson and his Scottish-Cree wife had five children by the time he returned to the east and retired from the fur trade.¹²⁶ A third choice was to stay in the Northwest with Lagimodière who, hearing that a colony was about to be established at the Forks, had moved his family there in 1811.¹²⁷ A decade later when the HBC and NWC merged and reduced its workforce, many fur traders also moved to the Red River Settlement with their native families. The voyageur, Joseph Paquin, did none of these things, however. He left the boy in the care of others, and never returned.

NOTE – Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha didn't use this formal construction of his surname. On documents, he was either Paquin or Pocha and, in the case of his scrip affidavit, both. I have used Paquin-dit-Pocha in the story to avoid confusion with his father, Joseph Paquin. The children, however, are called Pocha because it was with their generation that the surname completed its transformation.

¹²⁵ Memoir of Marie-Anne Gaboury

¹²⁶ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Thompson, David.

¹²⁷ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Lagimonière, Jean-Baptiste

1828 Red River Settlement

Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha was living in the Red River colony when he started his own family. There were about two hundred houses there when Joseph married Josephte Descoleaux and had a daughter, Marie.¹²⁸ The HBC's Fort Garry situated at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers formed the nucleus of the community. Across the Red River from the fort, the Roman Catholic Church of St. Boniface was the heart of a French-Canadian community that survived by hunting buffalo and trading in furs. On the northwest side of the Red River there were two Anglican parishes – St. John's and St. Paul's – each surrounded by English-speaking farmers; some were the early colonists from Scotland and others the native-born descendants of HBC men. West along the Assiniboine River was Grantown (now St. Francis-Xavier), created when several Métis families moved north from Pembina.

The farms on the west bank of the Red River were laid out in long narrow strips fronting onto the river in the same way as the seigneurie farms of the St. Lawrence valley. A modest farm would have 3-5 acres under cultivation with perhaps a cow and a garden plot. It was two years after the largest flood ever recorded in the area, so most of the log huts were new.¹²⁹ A trail from Fort Garry cut across the farms parallel to the River (present-day Main Street, Winnipeg) and each farmer had a canoe or boat at the shoreline.

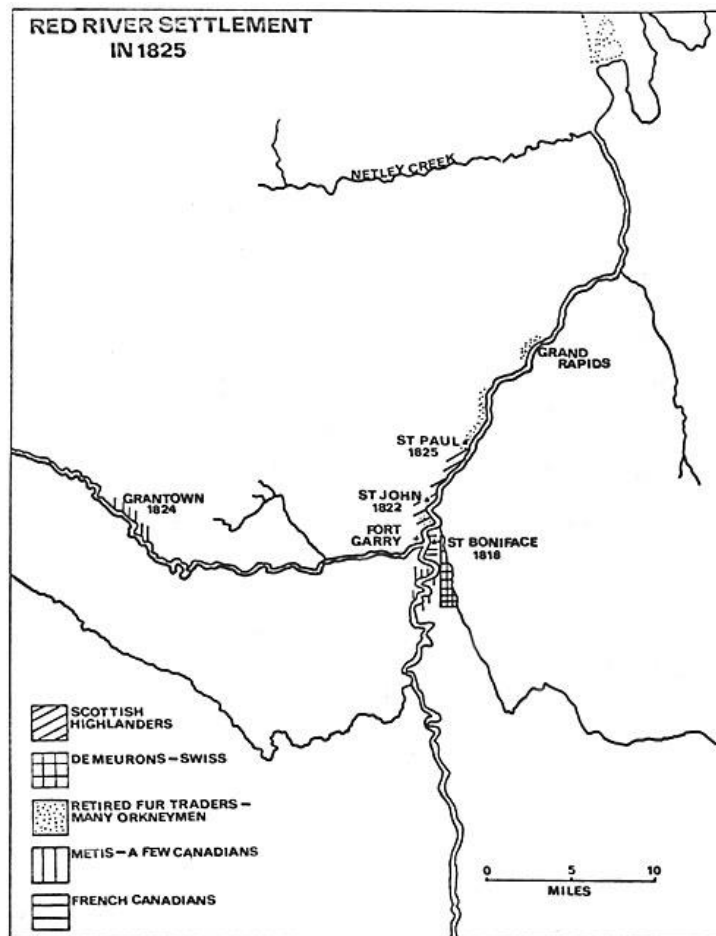
Twice a year in spring and fall, a cavalcade of carts, horses, and people of all ages would leave Fort Garry to hunt buffalo in the Pembina area. A rutted path followed the same route that Chief Peguis and his Saulteaux band used each year as they moved to their summer home at Netley Creek. The line of carts stretched for five or six miles, taking about one-third of the colony away for two months at a time. Each evening, the carts were pulled into a large circle that enclosed and protected both animals and people. When a buffalo herd was finally spotted, the captains and guides of the hunt organized the hunters at one end of the camp. On the signal, 'Start!', they began moving forward slowly. The pace quickened to a gallop as they neared the herd and then a stampede began. The horsemen followed at full speed, firing and reloading without stopping. The carcasses were skinned and cut into chunks right where they fell. Carts from the camp collected the bounty and took it back to the women to process. By nightfall, the remains of the kill had to be abandoned for the wolves.

No doubt Joseph went on several buffalo hunts as a young man. A memoir written by a family friend, George William Sanderson, describes 'the Pocha's, father and seven sons' as experts with their guns and horses.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Métis Scrip Affidavit – Marie Paquin

¹²⁹ The flood of 1826 was the largest in recorded history, including modern times.

¹³⁰ Sanderson, George. *Through Memory's Windows*, 1934-36



Map: Red River Settlement 1825

Fort Garry was the administrative hub of the Red River Settlement, but parish churches were the social centers for residents. (map – Red River North Heritage)

By 1833, Joseph's first son was born. He married Marie Lapointe when his daughter was about four. Perhaps Joseph Descoleaux died in childbirth, or perhaps she was a victim of an epidemic of measles or influenza that occasionally hit the nascent community.

It was from this second family that the Pocha surname emerged. Even later when he was seventy, Joseph used both Paquin and Pocha on government forms. Perhaps Pocha was a misspelling recorded by an English-speaking clerk. Joseph was illiterate (he signed such forms with an X) and Paquin is pronounced 'pakin' with a silent 'n'. Eventually Joseph's children with Marie Lapointe would adopt Pocha as the family name. (His daughter by his first wife, Marie, continued to use Paquin as her maiden name, however.)

Marie Lapointe was the daughter of an NWC voyageur/fur trader from Lachine (Montreal) and his Cree wife whom he called Charlotte. Antoine Lapointe entered service as early as 1794 when he was 18-20 years old. His initial posting was at Niagara, but a decade later he was in the Northwest at Pembina (south of Winnipeg). He remained at Pembina for five years where

Alexander Henry the Younger was master.¹³¹ Henry left in 1808 and it seems that Lapointe did, too. Antoine was in Duck River (60 miles east of Swan River, near Lake Winnipegosis) two years later when his daughter, Marie, was born. The family moved to Portage la Prairie where the NWC had a fort that had been established by La Vérendrye decades earlier. Marie was three years old when the Battle of Seven Oaks nearly destroyed the Red River colony.¹³² Her father continued to receive 450 livres in wages annually until 1821 when the NWC merged with the HBC.¹³³ He was likely among the hundreds of men of both companies who were suddenly let go. They moved into the Red River colony where Marie grew up. When she was nineteen, she married Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha. The last mention of her father was in 1838 when at sixty-three he was living with the family of Andre Beauchemin.¹³⁴ It's likely that he died a few years later.

Joseph and Marie took their newborn son to St. Boniface in 1833 to be baptized. Most records of this era were destroyed in a fire years later, but the one for Joseph Paquin survived.¹³⁵ It gives a glimpse of the people that the young couple knew in the community, such as godfather, Joseph Desmarais, and godmother, Marie Peltier. Marie's father, Antoine Lapointe, undoubtedly attended the baptism, as did family friends such as Beauchemin, Lagimodière, Descoleaux, and others.

The social hierarchy in the colony was like that in Lower Canada or Britain where a few wealthy, educated men were at the top. Joseph Paquin and others like him, the children of Cree women and British or French-Canadian fathers, accounted for 80% of the population but had less status than the men employed by the HBC, the retired HBC men, the priests, or the British-born and Canadian businessmen. Women regardless of rank were expected to marry and have children. Ethnicity was not a factor in selecting friends or mates, but communities had grown around parish churches, so the English-speaking Anglicans and the French-speaking Catholics evolved into recognizable groups. (The annual Red River census tallied how many people were in each group.) Even so, Cree was their common language and kinship ties crossed language and religious barriers.

A social chill blew across the colony in 1833 when George Simpson decided to move there. Simpson was the governor of the HBC, commanding all HBC lands in North America from Rupert's Land and the Athabasca to the Columbia. He was a confident, well-organized, energetic leader who held the fate of every HBC man in his hands. He had stratified the HBC since taking control in 1821 when the HBC merged with the NWC so that officers were superior to servants (lower ranks). He introduced the position of postmaster, a rank below clerk, which became the highest a 'half-breed' could attain. His biases were evident in his private notes about each employee in which he often judged a competent man as 'tolerable for a half-breed'. When he moved to the colony with his new British wife, he announced that non-white wives

¹³¹ Coues, Elliott (ed). *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson 1799-1814*.

¹³² Coltman Commission Report – Baptiste Lapointe dictated a deposition for the Coltman Commission that investigated the Seven Oaks incident. His relationship to Antoine is not clear.

¹³³ HBCA Biographical Sheets – Lapointe, Antoine

¹³⁴ HBCA - 1938 Red River Census

¹³⁵ B.578 Sacramental Register of the Parish of Cathédrale de Saint-Boniface (MB). Copy acquired 2018.

would not be allowed in his social circle.¹³⁶ This was likely the first time that Joseph and Marie, both 'half-breeds' judged inferior by Simpson, experienced discrimination. He left the colony three years later, but relationships among the diverse peoples were never the same.

By 1840, the Paquin household had five children – Marie (11), Joseph (7), John (5), Margaret (3), and newborn Fanny. Across the colony, people were having large families so that the population in the previous decade had almost tripled. There were 680 houses, most with stables and a third with barns.

There was little contact with the outside world, although HBC brigades continued to arrive with supplies and news from the inland forts and imports from Britain. The standard of living began to improve in the 1840s as goods from the American frontier became available. Taking the same route to Pembina as the buffalo hunters had for almost three decades, trains of Red River carts now went to Fort Snelling and nearby St. Paul (Minneapolis, Minnesota). They took furs, buffalo robes, and farm produce from the colony to exchange for wood-burning stoves, tools, implements, seed, spices, and liquor. No immigrants took advantage of this route, however, so the colony remained isolated for another thirty years.

1846 Red River Settlement

Marie Lapointe was pregnant with her eighth child, Ann, when a series of epidemics spread across the colony. In January 1846, many people had influenza and by May measles had spread along the Red River. Weakened by these early diseases, the population was hit hard in June by the 'bloody flux' as people called it. Symptoms included diarrhea, fever, nausea, and vomiting. In all, 321 people died or one in sixteen, often several people in the same household. The Grey Nuns, who had been in the colony for two years by this time, went door to door helping Catholic families and teaching them about cleanliness. By late September, the epidemics had ended and the Paquin family had been spared.

Ann was born at about the time that her half-sister, Marie, married Michel Allary (Allaire) and moved to Grantown (St. Francis Xavier). Allary was the grandson of a man by the same name from Trois Rivières who had been with David Thompson on his journey to the mouth of the Columbia River¹³⁷, as had Joseph's father. Between 1847-1856, they would have four children – Suzanne, Daniel, Magdeleine, and Pierre.

The HBC, which had assumed control of the colony from Selkirk's family, took a census every year that recorded the assets of each family and the name of the 'head of the household'. The census of 1849 provides a glimpse of life in the Paquin household.¹³⁸ There were eleven people in one house – Joseph, Marie, seven sons and two daughters all under sixteen years old. (The eldest by Joseph's first wife was married.) They had a stable but no barn. Eight acres were under cultivation and there were several animals – four horses, two mares, two oxen, three cows, a calf, and two pigs. They had six carts, which suggests that they were involved in the

¹³⁶ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Simpson, George

¹³⁷ Coues, p. 776, footnote 42. Michel Allaire was with David Thompson June 18, 1811 at Ilthkoyape Falls.

¹³⁸ Red River Census 1849 – record #292 Pacquin, Joseph

freighting business between the colony and the American forts as well as the semi-annual buffalo hunts.

The 1849 census also reveals that the Paquin's identified as protestant. Their eldest boy had been baptized in St. Boniface Catholic Church, so why one wonders did they change their affiliation? Perhaps since both Joseph and Marie had grown up before churches had arrived in the Northwest, they had no firm allegiance to the Catholic faith. Furthermore, they had built their farm in the protestant parish of St. Andrew's and would have attended the same church as their neighbours¹³⁹. What we do know is from about this point on the Pocha family was protestant.

Fur traders and freighters like Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha were chafing under HBC rule in 1849. Ever since taking over from the Selkirk family in 1836, the company had maintained law and order in Assiniboia. The members of the Council (like a town council) were all HBC appointees, so they passed bylaws to protect the company's monopoly of the fur trade. Tariffs were imposed on imports and exports. Men suspected of free trading had their mail opened and their houses searched. The HBC considered Paquin and his neighbours to be 'smugglers' and the governor rejected their argument that as indigenous people they had the right to trade in furs. The free traders had organized themselves and sent petitions, one to Washington asking to be admitted to Iowa territory as citizens¹⁴⁰, and another to the British Colonial Office in London asking to be governed by the British constitution which would have granted them the right to trade. Neither was successful.

The HBC decided to make an example of four free traders who continued to trade furs at the American fort in Pembina. The first trial, against Pierre Guilleaum Sayer, was scheduled for a Sunday when most people would be in church. Two leaders in the French-Catholic parishes, Louis Riel Sr and father Bellecourt, rallied a large group of traders and surrounded the courthouse. The crowd was agitated, so when a guilty verdict was delivered, the HBC dropped the other cases that were to be tried that day. Word spread rapidly with shouts of 'Le commerce est libre!' (Trade is free!). From then on, the company had no power over the free traders. George Simpson, reflecting on the Sayer trial years later, would conclude that it 'gave the people a consciousness of their strength'.¹⁴¹

1860 High Bluff, Rupert's Land

The Paquin family moved west along the Assiniboine River in the late 1850s, just as the eldest children were reaching adulthood. Joseph's first daughter, Marie, and her husband were living in St. Francis Xavier with their four children, and soon the others would be looking for their own farmland. No doubt the desire to keep the family together was what prompted them to settle in High Bluff.

They were not the first to discover the riches of the area – good soil, leafy trees along the river, fish, berries, and buffalo a short distance away on the open prairie. The Adams family had already established farms along the Assiniboine. George Adams and Ann (Heywood) lived on

¹³⁹ William and George Pocha were born at St. Andrew's parish, Red River Settlement.

¹⁴⁰ Rich, *The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857*, p. 263

¹⁴¹ Dale Gibson, *Law, Life, and Government at Red River*, vol. 1, p. 118

lot 24 adjacent to Portage la Prairie, and some of their children had farms nearby.¹⁴² A new Anglican mission had recently been established near the small HBC fort in Portage la Prairie, and in 1852 several other families moved west after the rivers flooded yet again in the colony.¹⁴³

The homestead that Joseph and Marie established fronted onto the river and extended back in a narrow strip, in the same river lot plan as in the main colony. By 1860, four of the Paquin/Pocha children were living on their own river lots with their young families – Joseph III, John, Margaret and Fanny¹⁴⁴. There was a new Anglican church and a one-room schoolhouse for the burgeoning population of High Bluff.

| Family | Lot # |
|--|-------|
| George Adams Jr. & Mary (Cook) | 24 |
| Charles Adams & Ann (Norquay) | 51 |
| James Adams & Elizabeth (Bruce) | 52 |
| Robert Adams & Ann (Pocha) | 53 |
| George Sanderson & Elizabeth Barbara (Adams) | 54 |
| Joseph Adams & Ann (Bird) | 58 |
| John Foulds & Nancy (Adams) | 59 |
| William Pocha & Maria (Anderson) | 60 |
| Joseph Pocha Jr. & Matilda (Hodgson) | 61 |
| James Tait & Margaret (Pocha) | 62 |
| Thomas Pocha & Rosalie (Flammand) | 63 |
| John Pocha & Harriet (Spence) | 64 |
| Charles Pocha & Mary Ann (Tait) | 66 |
| Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha & Marie LaPointe | 68 |

Adams-Pocha Kinship Group in High Bluff, Manitoba (1870)

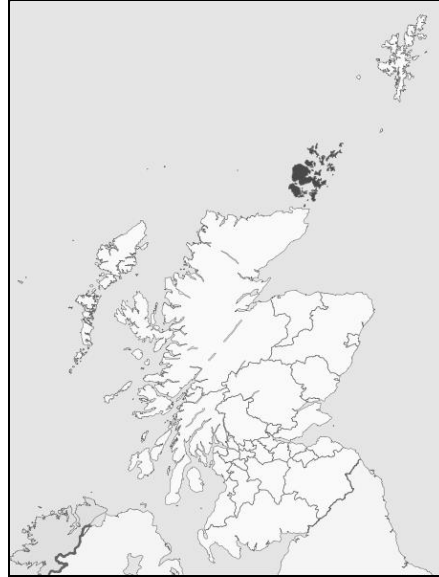
By 1870, the Paquin family lived on adjacent lots, interwoven with the Adams clan who also dominated the parish of High Bluff. There were fewer than ten extended families in High Bluff – (1) ADAMS – Ann, her 3 sons, 2 daughters and their families; (2) PAQUIN/POCHA – Joseph, his 5 sons and one daughter and their families; (3) INKSTER – Robert and 3 sisters, all married to men from the Isle of Lewis; (4) COOK – four cousins; (5) HOURIE – 2 brothers; and finally Joseph McKay and Thomas Sinclair and their families. (Data: 1870 Manitoba Census, Library & Archives Canada)

¹⁴² River lot numbers for the Adams clan are from The Descendants of George Adams and Ann Heywood (1997)

¹⁴³ The flood of 1852 was two feet lower than 1826, but there was more destruction because the settlement had grown.

¹⁴⁴ By 1860, these four were married and having children, so do doubt living on own farms.

As the Pocha children married, their kinship network expanded to include descendants of English and Orcadian HBC men, as well as French-Canadians – Adams, Allard, Anderson, Cook, Flammand, Foulds, Hodgson, Tate, Spence and Work. (See Appendix B for details about the ancestry of the spouses.)



Map: Orkney Islands off Northern Scotland

Six of the children of Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha and Marie Lapointe married spouses descended from Orcadian HBC men and their Cree/Saulteaux wives. Men from the Orkney Islands filled the lower ranks of the HBC because they were thought to be honest, sober and hard-working. Company ships stopped at Stromness Harbor to take on fresh water, foodstuffs, and recruits before sailing across the North Atlantic to Hudson Bay.

Two scientific expeditions arrived in the Northwest in 1857, one led by John Palliser and the other by Henry Youle Hind, to determine the potential of the area for farming and colonization. Palliser was sent by the British government which was also deciding whether to renew the HBC's Royal Charter. Hind was sent by the colony of Canada¹⁴⁵, which wanted to annex the Northwest for settlement. Results were mixed. Palliser described a semi-arid region of short grass prairie that would not, he believed, be suitable for agriculture¹⁴⁶ (from south-west Manitoba to south-east Alberta). Hind decided there was a fertile belt suitable for crops from south of the Red River Settlement, northwest to the forks of the Saskatchewan River (Prince Albert, SK), and along the North Saskatchewan River to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.¹⁴⁷ Meanwhile, Britain's parliament confirmed the original HBC Charter which meant that Canada would have to compensate the Company if they annexed the Northwest.

¹⁴⁵ Canada at this time consisted of Canada East (Quebec) and Canada West (Ontario) as of the 1840 Act of Union.

¹⁴⁶ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Palliser, John

¹⁴⁷ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Hind, Henry Youle

Henry Youle Hind was in the area of Portage la Prairie/High Bluff in 1857. Hind met with local people such as John Spence, father-in-law to John Pocha. Spence was 'a Cree half-breed of great experience in Rupert's Land' according to Hind.¹⁴⁸ He grew corn, not the 'horse-teeth corn' common in the settlement, but 'Mandrill corn' which had been 'procured from the Indians near the headwaters of the Missouri; probably the Mandan corn would be the correct name'.¹⁴⁹ A small house beside Spence's main house was filled with corn.

Hind also learned from John Spence that coal was to be found cropping out in bands along the banks of the Little Souris, a tributary of the Assiniboine. A local blacksmith told Hind that it worked but required a strong draft and when Hind examined specimens, he determined it was lignite, or brown coal, rather than 'true coal' (bituminous coal). Hind wasn't able to convince Spence to take him to the lignite outcrops because the farmer demanded the company of ten men who could stand watch at night for 'Sioux Indians' who were reported to be 'on the trail of the buffalo hunters, who were then coming in from the Great Prairies after their summer hunt'.¹⁵⁰

The Sioux that John Spence feared moved freely within the borderlands where their traditional territory included the Yellowstone River (in North Dakota and Montana), the Qu'Appelle River (in southern Saskatchewan), and the land south of the Assiniboine River (in Manitoba). There were two distinct groups – the Minnesota Sioux (Dakotas) and Missouri Sioux (Lakotas, Yanktons, Yanktonais). The Sioux preferred to trade with the HBC at Red River because they were abused by American traders and their elders had been allies of the British in the War of 1812. As Spence's demand for a protection squad suggests, the Sioux were feared in the colony. The local Saulteaux were their enemies, so the HBC master generally tried to keep the two groups apart. Spence had served on a trial a decade earlier (in 1845) in which a Saulteaux, Capenesseweet, was found guilty of murdering a Sioux man, Tatungaokaysnay, by shooting him as a crowd of people walked up to Fort Garry from the riverbank.¹⁵¹

More recently, as American settlers flooded into the Midwest, the Sioux spent more time near the Assiniboine River. At the time of Hind's conversation with Spence, locals were excited about reports that some Dakota had stolen ten horses from the tail-end of a buffalo-hunting caravan.¹⁵²

By May 1863, Dakota lodges were pitched near Portage la Prairie, High Bluff, and Poplar Point. Conflict in the USA had forced them to flee and by December there were 600 camped six miles west of Fort Garry. By August the following year, there were 3000 in about 350 lodges. From then on, the Dakotas lived near the western parishes along the Assiniboine where they hunted, fished, trapped, and worked for farmers at harvest time.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Hind, Vol. 1, p. 143. John Spence was Harriet's father.

¹⁴⁹ Hind, vol. 1, p. 145

¹⁵⁰ Hind, vol. 1, p. 144

¹⁵¹ Gibson, Law, Life and Government at Red River, vol 2, p. 17. Capenesseweet was hanged, the only execution in the colony.

¹⁵² Hind, vol. 1, p. 145

¹⁵³ Meyer, The Canadian Sioux-Refugees from Minnesota, p. 13-28

1867 High Bluff, Rupert's Land

By 1867, Joseph (67) and Marie (54) were well-established at High Bluff and their hopes for their children were being fulfilled. The five eldest were married and altogether there were twenty-two grandchildren. Two sons, William and Charles, married that year and more grandchildren were expected. The six children living at home ranged in age from eight to twenty-two, old enough to help on the farm.¹⁵⁴

Meanwhile, the Dominion of Canada was formed of four provinces – Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The first time the new parliament met, they passed a resolution to annex Rupert's Land and negotiations with the HBC began. While talks with the HBC continued, the Canadian government sent a crew to build a road between Lake of the Woods and the Red River Settlement. The following year, surveyors joined the road crew to map out future homesteads. They began by selecting the location of the first meridian, a north-south line that formed a reference point for the six-mile-square townships that would divide the prairies into a checkerboard of homesteads. The first meridian was plotted about ten miles west of Pembina on the border, straight north as far as Shoal Lake.¹⁵⁵

Neither the HBC nor the Canadian government talked to the people in the colony, so rumours spread and residents began to take sides. Some demanded annexation to Canada; others feared they would lose their river lots; and a few promoted a takeover by the USA. Tensions increased.

The farmers of High Bluff and Portage la Prairie were far removed from the trouble when it first began. In mid-October 1869, the Canadian surveyors got too close to farms in the Saint Norbert parish, south of Fort Garry. One of the farmers stopped them and neighbours set up checkpoints on the main trail south. At the same time, William McDougall arrived in Pembina on his way to the Red River to take over as lieutenant-governor of a new Canadian territory. Still, no one in authority had informed local people of the transition. By November, about 200 men led by John Bruce and Louis Riel Jr seized Fort Garry and forced McDougall to retreat across the border to Pembina.

Stories of the 'rebellion' spread among the parishes and opinions hardened. The Métis occupying the fort tried to mobilize the whole colony by forming a committee called 'the Convention of 24', with twelve French and twelve English delegates. They couldn't reach consensus about whether to let McDougall come to the colony, but they adopted a list of rights that Canada would have to respect if annexation was to proceed.

By December, the Métis forces led by Riel took drastic action to prevent opposing forces from gaining more support. They jailed forty-five men in Fort Garry for conspiring against them; most were followers of John Christian Schultz who advocated annexation. The next day they proclaimed a provisional government. McDougall left Pembina for Ottawa and the colony fell quiet over Christmas. All the while, however, Riel's Métis remained in Fort Garry and guarded the prisoners.

¹⁵⁴ Still at home in 1867 – Gilbert (22), Ann (21), Henry (19), Thomas (17), George (15), Betsey (8). Ann married Robert Adams in 1868, so by the 1870 Manitoba Census there were five children at home.

¹⁵⁵ Boulton, *Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellions*, p. 50, 59.



Envoys address crowd at Fort Garry – January 1870

The Canadian government sent three men to negotiate with Riel's occupying force. They addressed crowds of one thousand or more on two consecutive days in minus 40° weather. Riel accepted their proposal to send a delegation to Ottawa to discuss terms of the annexation. In the meantime, a Representative Assembly of twenty-eight men would govern the colony. (image - HBCA)

The envoys returned to Ottawa and Riel ordered elections to be held in each parish to select members for the interim Representative Assembly. The crisis was not over, however. The prisoners were still held in Fort Garry and the leaders not in jail continued to mobilize to get them out. Major Charles Boulton, who had been recruiting and training a militia at St. Andrew's, moved to Portage la Prairie and was joined by other leaders of the pro-Canadian gang¹⁵⁶. They formed a so-called 'Portage party' of local volunteers to free the prisoners.

Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha, now seventy, joined the Portage party, along with two sons (John and William), a son-in-law (Robert Adams¹⁵⁷), and a family friend (George Sanderson¹⁵⁸). By mid-February, they saw action.

No doubt emotions were inflamed when the Portage group marched into the parish of St. Andrew's where dissenters from across the colony had gathered. It took only a word to create a spark that set the crowd off. "Traitor!" Someone accused Norbert Parisien, a labourer at the fort,

¹⁵⁶ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Boulton, Charles A.

¹⁵⁷ Robert Adams was the son of George Adams and Ann Heywood.

¹⁵⁸ George Sanderson married Robert Adams' sister, Elizabeth Barbara, in late 1870.

of being Riel's spy. Parisien escaped the angry crowd but shot a farmer in the process. According to reports at the time, the two Paquin brothers were in the gang that captured him. They struck the first blow, hitting him on the head with a hatchet.¹⁵⁹ Parisien was beaten severely and when he tried to escape again the next day, a guard shot him.

Meanwhile, Riel freed the prisoners in Fort Garry, so the pro-Canadian group disbanded and headed home. The Portage party took a route that was close to the fort and Riel's men arrested them. George Sanderson wrote about it years later in his memoir. "When we came near the Fort", he said, "a man on horseback shot out of the gate like an arrow, then another and so on until ten or twelve came out. One rode towards us and stopped to speak. He held up a white handkerchief in his right hand. We stopped [but none of our leaders] came forward so old Mr. Pocha walked up to the rider and said in French, "Good day. What do you want?"

The man answered, speaking French also, "Our leader, Louis Riel and his Officers, wish you all to come into the Fort, and have dinner with them." Well, that was very acceptable; we couldn't dream of refusing such an invitation as we had not had too much to eat since we left home. We were all ushered into the Fort where we had to stay more than a month."¹⁶⁰

Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha, Johnny and Billy Pocha, Robbie Adams, and George Sanderson would each spend 30-33 days in jail.¹⁶¹ Two of the forty-four prisoners would later write memoirs that provide a glimpse of life in the fort. Sanderson said, 'We were all put into a large room to sleep; there were no beds, so we just bunked on the floor and benches. Most of us had a buffalo robe of our own.'¹⁶² Major Boulton, who had been in charge of the Portage Party, was put in a room alone but he could hear the other prisoners 'through the thin wooden partition, or when I met them in the hall where the guards were and where we were allowed to bring our pemmican to stew it on the stove.'¹⁶³ 'The prisoners whiled away the weary hours by singing songs and telling stories', Boulton recalled, and 'some were put to menial work, cleaning out the premises about the Fort.'¹⁶⁴ 'On the whole, we were used fairly well', Sanderson declared, and after a few days people from the town were allowed to supply the prisoners with one meal a day – 'cakes, pies, bread and butter, and sugar for our tea'.¹⁶⁵

While the men were imprisoned, the people of High Bluff elected local farmer and teacher John Norquay as their representative in the new provisional government.¹⁶⁶ Three days later, a firing squad executed one of the prisoners, Thomas Scott. Scott was 'troublesome' from the start, according to Sanderson. 'He would kick the board partition, yell and curse, and was most impudent to the guard.'¹⁶⁷ Scott was moved to an adjoining room and days later was taken away under guard. Boulton described how Scott 'was allowed to go to each room and say, "Good-bye, boys!" He was then marched down the stairs, between the guards, with fixed bayonets, his hands tied behind his back, and a white rag tied over his head and hanging down behind ready

¹⁵⁹ Ronaghan, p. 206

¹⁶⁰ George William Sanderson, *Through Memory's Windows*, p. 13-14

¹⁶¹ Begg, p. 289-290

¹⁶² Sanderson, p. 15

¹⁶³ Boulton, p. 125

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*

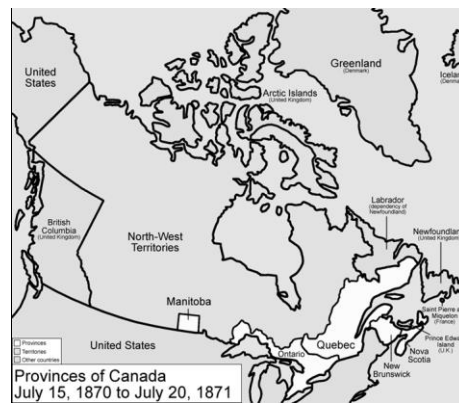
¹⁶⁵ Sanderson, p. 16

¹⁶⁶ *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* – Norquay, John

¹⁶⁷ Sanderson, p.15

to throw over his face when the fatal shots were to be fired. We watched his departure and listened to the receding footsteps, and for fifteen minutes a dead silence pervaded the building. Presently we heard the fatal shots fired from beneath the walls of the Fort. A few minutes afterwards, the Rev. Mr. Young returned to our prison and gave me back my Bible, and his eyes blinded with tears, told me what had happened. Loud and deep were the murmurs of the remaining prisoners.¹⁶⁸ Sanderson knew one of the guards, 'so I asked him what had become of Scott. He was very quiet and just said, "be very careful", and beckoned me to follow him out. We went into one of the bastions and looked out of the window. There was an empty barrel lying in the snow, and beside it the snow was stained red with blood.'¹⁶⁹ That day would haunt the prisoners for the rest of the month and long after.

The men from High Bluff were released from jail in mid-March. Why had they joined the Portage party to oppose Riel? Perhaps their reasons were like others, both English and French, who refused to follow Riel because they disapproved of his methods.¹⁷⁰ Riel had occupied Fort Garry, taken HBC supplies to feed his men, and stolen cash from the HBC strongbox to pay them. He had imprisoned his opponents and made decisions without consulting the elders of the French Métis or the leaders of the English parishes who were elected to the conventions and the provisional government. Perhaps, the men from High Bluff were willing to fight because they wanted to join Canada and their families were traditionally staunch supporters of the HBC. Or, it may have been because they were young and naive as Sanderson stated in his memoir years later. 'I have found out since that there are always busy bodies making more trouble than is necessary on these occasions', he said, 'but I was young then, so of course a bunch of us went.'¹⁷¹



Manitoba 1870

The Manitoba Act of May 12, 1870, created the new Canadian province of Manitoba, and Rupert's Land ceased to exist. The small province some compared to a postage stamp included the Red River Settlement south to the American border. The rest of the former HBC territory of Rupert's Land became the North-West Territories. (map – Wikimedia)

¹⁶⁸ Boulton, p. 129

¹⁶⁹ Sanderson, p. 16

¹⁷⁰ Gerhard Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Metis in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), p. 127

¹⁷¹ George William Sanderson, *Through Memory's Windows* (1934-36), p. 13

1873 High Bluff, Manitoba

Three years after the Red River Rebellion¹⁷², as it would come to be called, law and order prevailed. The first lieutenant-governor, Adams G. Archibald, had established electoral districts, created the province's first elected government, and conducted the 1870 Manitoba Census to determine how many people would be considered 'half-breeds' in the government's plans to extinguish their land claims.¹⁷³ The first of eleven treaties with indigenous peoples had been negotiated in 1871 – Treaty One with the Saulteaux and Swampy Cree of south-east and south-central Manitoba; and Treaty Two with the Saulteaux for a large track of land to the west and north of the new province.

The Dakota (Sioux) who had wintered in the High Bluff and Portage la Prairie area for a decade, were not included in the treaty process because government officials thought of them as 'American Indians'. When Alexander Morris arrived in 1873 as the new lieutenant-governor, he was informed that the Sioux were gathering near Fort Ellice and were preparing to raid the Red River Settlement.¹⁷⁴ Morris hired two emissaries to gather information, both members of the Legislative Assembly. John Norquay, who represented High Bluff, had orders to form two companies of mounted 'half-breeds of both races' if threats proved to be serious; and Pascal Breland was sent to the plains to meet with the Lakotas. Norquay reported the results of a public meeting he held and noted that 'a man from High Bluff, one Mr. 'Pocha' had told him that many more Sioux were expected in the spring'.¹⁷⁵ The emissaries ascertained that fears were unfounded and people had confused two different groups, the Dakotas and the Lakotas. The Dakotas of Mr. Pocha's experience had not been involved in the 1870 troubles, and had lived peacefully among their traditional enemies, the Saulteaux, for years. So, Canada granted them reserve land, but not a reservation with other rights. (By 1886, the Dakotas of Portage la Prairie purchased twenty-six acres on the Assiniboine River within the town limits, locally called the Old Sioux Village.)

The Manitoba Act had promised the 'half-breeds' that they could keep their farms and 1.4 million acres would be distributed to their children. (The census had enumerated about 12,000, of which 8000 were children.) It took a few years for the government to reserve tracts of land for this purpose, but by August 1875 Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha and Marie Lapointe were able to apply for 'Métis Scrip' (certificates redeemable for land) for their minor children.¹⁷⁶

When the HBC sold Rupert's Land to Canada for £300,000, the company also got one-twentieth of whatever land was surveyed for homesteads. As land sales became part of the business and fur sales declined, retail sales increased in response to settlement. In 1881, the

¹⁷² The Red River Rebellion is also called the Red River Resistance. Library & Archives Canada.

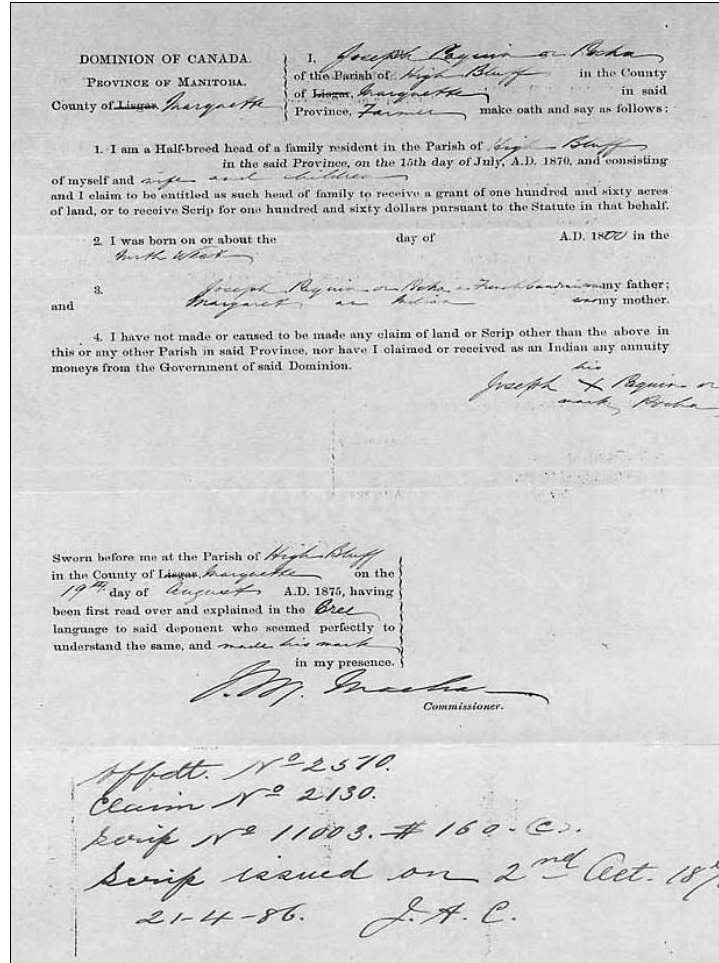
¹⁷³ The Manitoba census of 1870 counted French Metis (5696) and English half-breeds (4082). "The term 'half-breed' was used almost exclusively by the federal government throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries when referring to these people (in western Canada who trace their roots to a shared Aboriginal and European ancestry). The term completely pervades departmental memoranda, reports, registers, federal statutes, orders-in-council, and official publications. Indeed, it is possible for researchers to use the federal record of this period without ever encountering the term 'Metis'." (Library and Archives Canada/Metis Scrip Records/Use of Term Half Breed)

¹⁷⁴ McGrady, p. 40

¹⁷⁵ Norquay to Morris, Winnipeg, 17 Mar 1873, HBCA MG12B1, no.139, M134

¹⁷⁶ Library and Archives Canada, Metis Scrip Affidavit – Paquin or Pocha, Joseph - #2570

HBC opened its first Winnipeg sales shop at the corner of York and Main, using stone from old Fort Garry's walls and ramparts for the foundation.¹⁷⁷ The following year, they sold the fort and eventually the rest of the buildings were demolished, except for one gate which nowadays is a National Historic Site.



Métis Scrip Affidavit of Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha

Applicants for Métis Scrip completed a form to prove they were entitled to land set aside for 'half-breed' residents of the new province of Manitoba. Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha's affidavit was explained to him in Cree and he signed with an X. Witnesses on his behalf were George Adams Jr and Andrew Spence, both of High Bluff. (image: Library and Archives Canada)

¹⁷⁷ John Selwood, "Manitoba History: A Note on the Destruction of Upper Fort Garry" (1982). Accessed March 29, 2017, http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/04/fortgarrygate.shtml

1878 Prince Albert, Northwest Territories

Joseph and Marie joined one of the wagon trains heading west in 1878 to find a new homestead in lands just opening near Fort Carlton and the small settlement of Prince Albert.¹⁷⁸ In recent years, many people native to the Northwest had left the Red River Settlement as newcomers moved in from Ontario. The population had almost tripled since annexation and the members of the Legislature were now mostly former Ontarians. As one old-timer put it, every second person on the street was a stranger. (One such was Jean Paquin, a tailor from Quebec.¹⁷⁹) Farming was changing, too, as transportation improved, and external markets became accessible. The river lots which had provided a subsistence living were not large enough for export crops. Real estate prices were rising, and it was a good time to sell.

Joseph and Marie travelled with their youngest daughter, Betsy, but otherwise their children were all married or independent. Two sons were in their group that year – John (Harriet and four children); and Gilbert (Margaret and four children). Another son, William (Marie and five children), who had been at the Victoria Settlement near Edmonton moved the following year¹⁸⁰. By 1882, nine of their adult children and their families would have followed them to the Prince Albert area.¹⁸¹

It's hard to imagine the tenacity and goodwill needed to complete the five-hundred-mile journey by Red River cart, especially for an elderly couple like Joseph (78) and Marie (65). The pace was slow, about ten miles a day, because most carts were pulled by oxen. It's likely that Joseph and his sons used horses instead because they were expert horsemen. Some people would ride in the cart, but generally they walked or rode horses. Meals were cooked on open campfires and everyone slept outside near the carts and animals. It took about two months to complete the trek, each day filled with the incessant screeching of the carts and the dust of so many footsteps.

By winter, log houses had been built on homestead land situated in township 47, range 27, west of the second meridian. Each plot was a quarter section consisting of 160 acres. Joseph and Marie settled on land about two miles west of present-day St. Paul's Lindsay Graveyard. Their adult children clustered around them on adjoining quarter-sections, so that no one was more than three miles from the old folks. By 1882, most of the Adams families had joined the Pocha's in the area locals called 'the Ridge'.

The Pocha homesteads were situated on fertile land between the two branches of the Saskatchewan River, with prairie on the south and parkland forest on the north. The North Saskatchewan River flowed through Edmonton and Battleford; the South Saskatchewan passed

¹⁷⁸ The Pocha families moved west in 1878, 1880, and 1882. The births of Joseph's grandchildren were used to estimate when each family moved. In the case of Joseph and Marie, the marriage of their youngest daughter in Prince Albert in 1879 was an indication that they likely moved the year before.

¹⁷⁹ Jean Paquin (1832-1905), son of Paul Paquin and Therese Larue, arrived in St. Norbert about 1880. Census 1881, 1891, 1901.

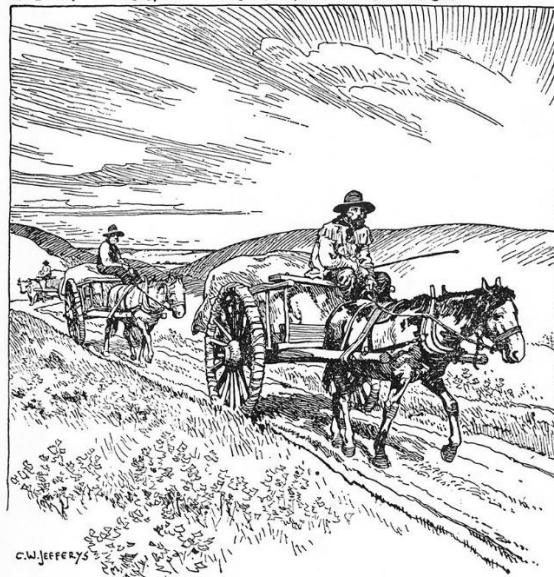
¹⁸⁰ William Paquin testified at the trial of Thomas Scott on September 10, 1885, that he had moved to the Ridge in 1879 from the Red River. The births of his children indicate that the family lived at the Victoria Settlement (Edmonton) for about five years before moving to Prince Albert.

¹⁸¹ In addition to the births of their children, the location of the homesteads suggests when each family moved. 1880 - Joseph (Matilda and seven children); Charles (Mari Ann and three children); Fanny (Thomas & six children). 1882 – Ann (Robert Adams and six children); Henry (unmarried); George (Eliza & two children).

through present-day Saskatoon, and the two met twenty-five miles east of Prince Albert. Small rural communities in the area were reminiscent of the original parishes of Red River. The English lived in Prince Albert, Red Deer Hill, Halcro and the Ridge¹⁸²; the French Métis lived in Duck Lake, Batoche, St. Laurent, and St. Louis.

Prince Albert, about twenty-eight miles to the north of Joseph's family, was the largest in the area, with a population of about eight hundred. Although it was not yet incorporated as a town, it was a commercial center that included lumber and flour production. By late 1882, Prince Albert had seven general stores, two hardware stores, three banks, two watchmakers, six lawyers, a dentist, a druggist, and four churches. There was a real estate office, too, opened in response to booming land sales, and local leaders were confident a railroad branch line would be built soon. By comparison, Regina, Saskatoon, and Battleford were small and undeveloped.¹⁸³

THE RED RIVER CART



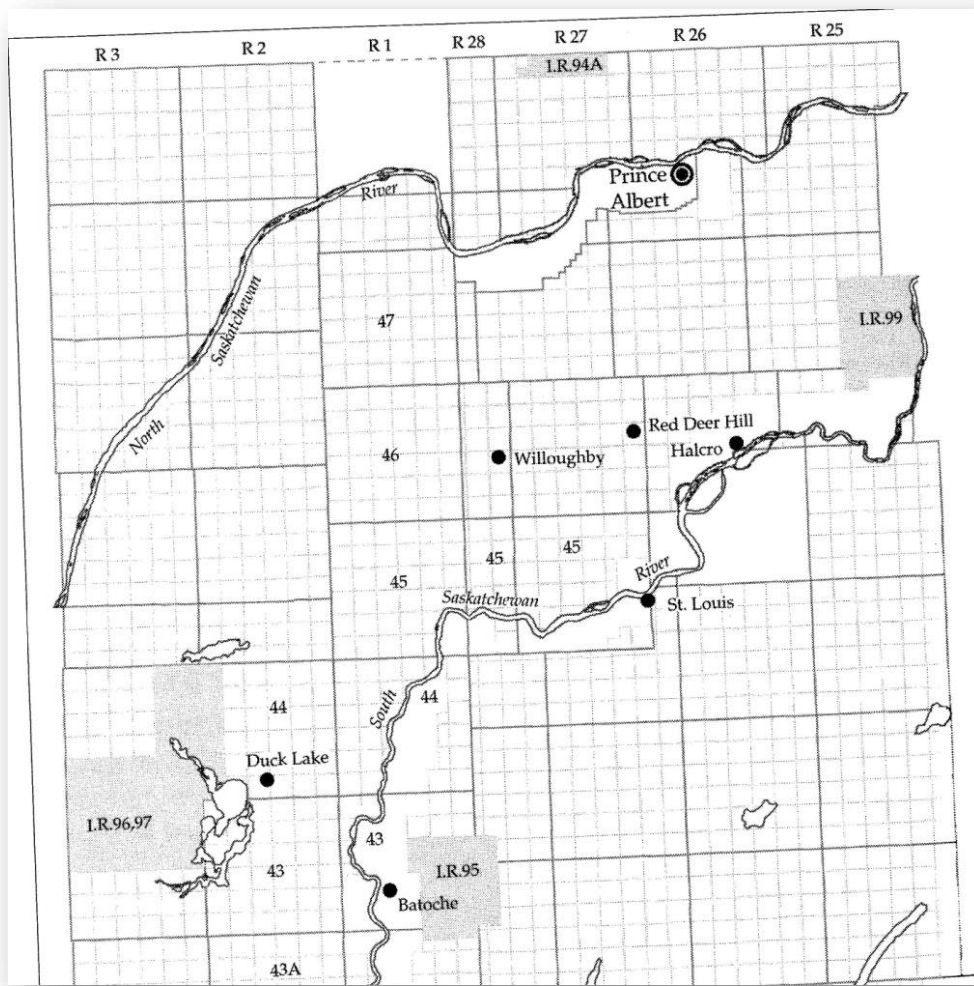
No iron was used. The frame was held together with wooden pegs. The tires were bound round with strips of 'haganhappi', raw fresh skin of buffalo or cattle, which, as it dried, shrank & held them tightly, forming a hard & durable rim. These carts followed the Métis hunting parties & carried the meat of the slain buffalo. They were also employed in transporting freight. Sometimes they were fitted with a round-topped hood of hide or canvas.

The Carlton Trail 1878 – 1882

The Carlton Trail was a well-worn path from Winnipeg to Fort Carlton (south of Prince Albert, SK). The Pocha family followed the route from Portage la Prairie to Fort Ellice, and beyond to the Touchwood Hills and present-day Humboldt. They crossed the South Saskatchewan River by ferry at Batoche, passed Duck Lake and left the trail at Fort Carlton for one going north to Prince Albert. (Image – C.W. Jefferys)

¹⁸² The Ridge is an area north of present-day Macdowall, Saskatchewan, where most of the Adams and Pocha homesteads were located. St. Paul's Lindsay Anglican Church sat at the top of a sandy hill. The area had several local names, including 'Lindsay' and the 'Pocha Settlement'.

¹⁸³ Gary W. D. Abrams, *Prince Albert: The First Century 1866-1966* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1966), p. 35



Map of Prince Albert area in late 1880s

The 'Pocha Settlement' was in township 47 range 27 west of the 2d meridian. The English lived in Prince Albert, Red Deer Hill, Halcro and Lindsay (Willoughby on this map). There were four French Métis settlements along the South Saskatchewan River: Duck Lake, Batoche, St. Laurent, St. Louis. The four Indian reserves shown are; Wahpeton Dakota (north of Prince Albert); Muskoday (SE of Prince Albert); One Arrow (near Batoche); and Beardy's and Okemasis (near Duck Lake). (Source: Douaud, *The Western Métis*, adapted from LAC National Map Collection, V1/502 (1903))

By 1883, the Pocha and Adams families were established on the Ridge south of Prince Albert and there were signs that the area would prosper. A Dominion Land Office had opened in 1881 prompting a brief boom in land prices and sales, although no one had title to their land yet because they had to reside on it for three years from the time the office opened.¹⁸⁴ The first newspaper had started publishing in 1882¹⁸⁵; and the same year the HBC moved their northern headquarters from Fort Carlton to Prince Albert. In 1883, farmers formed the Lorne Agricultural & Industrial Society (now the Prince Albert Exhibition) which held a fair to showcase local products and handicrafts. Also, Emmanuel College which had opened in 1899 to train Anglican clergy became known as the University of Saskatchewan.¹⁸⁶ The population of the settlement was about 700, but an equal number of people lived on farms in the surrounding area.

Even so, the Pocha's and their neighbours were restless. Plans for a railway had changed and it was not going through Prince Albert as expected so crops could not be exported. The Canadian government was moving slowly and local concerns such as roads, schools, police, and fire services were not being addressed. Although the first election had been held for the North-west Council which would govern the vast territory, the town was not yet incorporated so local bylaws were absent. A country-wide depression began in mid-1883 and soon businesses were sitting vacant. The following spring there was no rain and the crops of 1884 failed. Furthermore, it had been three years since the last buffalo herd had been seen.

1885 Prince Albert, Northwest Territories

Another grandchild was born in January 1885, Florence May, daughter of George Pocha and Eliza Work.¹⁸⁷ Across the parish of St. Paul's Lindsay (the church was built in 1884), most families were also growing so the need for a school was urgent. Three men formed the first school board – James Adams, William Pocha, and William Miller – and built the Lindsay schoolhouse within walking distance of their homesteads.¹⁸⁸ Before it could be used as a school, however, it was the site of several meetings during the 'troubles' of 1885.

The Northwest Rebellion of 1885 involved three local groups pitted against their national government, each with different concerns. The French Métis, who lived east of the south branch of the Saskatchewan River, were upset because federal surveyors were mapping out the land in square sections and ignoring the long, narrow river lots they had claimed for themselves. The English farmers who lived west of the river were suffering from low grain prices on world markets when the railroad was delayed because of the poor economy. Farmers couldn't get their crops to market and real estate values plummeted. The indigenous people were starving because the buffalo had disappeared, and Indian agents refused their requests for food. From Ottawa's perspective, the natives were out of control and the west was a single, coordinated enemy.

¹⁸⁴ Abrams, p. 41

¹⁸⁵ Abrams, p. 38. The Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review

¹⁸⁶ Canadian Encyclopedia – University of Saskatchewan by Belinda A. Beaton (2012)

¹⁸⁷ Redhead, Descendants of George Adams & Ann Heywood, p.224

¹⁸⁸ Ed Adams, unpublished history of Lindsay Schools



George Pocha's Log House

George Pocha and Eliza Work built a log house at the Ridge in 1882 on NE 36-46-01 West of the Third Meridian. Early houses in the area were similar. (photo – B. Krack)



House of Ann Pocha and Robert Adams

Ann and Robert arrived at the Ridge in 1882 with six children and Robert's mother, Ann Heywood Adams. Robbie purchased a sawing outfit and soon the family had a two-story frame house large enough to host local dances. (photo – B. Krack)



St. Paul's Lindsay Anglican Church

Built in 1884, St. Paul's was dismantled in 1987 but the graveyard is still used. It sits beside a sandy rural road atop a small hill a few miles north of Macdowall, SK. Looking to the east, you can see Red Deer Hill. Most of Pocha, Adams, and other families who homesteaded at the Ridge are buried here. (photo: V. Redhead)



Lindsay Schoolhouse.

The Lindsay schoolhouse was a log building with a thatched roof. The first teacher, Rev. R. W. Atwater, opened the school in 1886 with 65 pupils. It had been the site of several meetings during the early days of the 1885 rebellion. (photo: B. Krack, 1979)

At first, the French and English communities worked together as members of a settlers rights association to lobby Ottawa to address their grievances. The English farmers of the Lindsay District were 'at the forefront of political action' during these tense times.¹⁸⁹ Andrew Spence was president, Charles Adams was an officer, and William Pocha was one of several volunteers. 'They had seen what sitting on the sidelines had done in Manitoba', one historian has concluded, 'and were determined this time to play an active role in securing their rights.'¹⁹⁰

Spence had suggested that the settlers association needed a charismatic leader and proposed that Louis Riel be invited to return from Montana. When he arrived, a series of meetings were held to gain support for a petition to Ottawa. Riel also met with Mistahimaskwa (Big Bear), a prominent Cree chief from the Fort Pitt area (north of present-day Lloydminster) who was talking to local chiefs about a better way to establish reservations. Neither man got support for his cause from the other, however. Andrew Spence sent the petition to Ottawa, but there was no response. This was 'one of the last acts of cooperation between the French and English Métis communities.'¹⁹¹

On March 18, Riel established a council of twelve men from among his supporters at Batoche and declared a provisional government. Gabriel Dumont began organizing a militia along the lines of the buffalo hunt and two days later they looted a store in Duck Lake, cut the telegraph lines, and took five prisoners. The English at the Ridge were alarmed. They held a meeting at the Lindsay schoolhouse and decided to send a delegation to Batoche to assess the situation – Thomas Scott, Hugh Ross and William Pocha.

William 'Billy' Pocha (41), the third son of Joseph and Marie, had taken risks before so it's not surprising that he volunteered to go to Batoche that day. He had been a member of the Portage Party in 1870, jailed by Riel for opposing his forces. He had been the first in the family to move away from High Bluff, staying five years at the Victoria Settlement (near Edmonton) before moving on to Prince Albert. He and his brothers had become known 'for their courage and resource[fulness] throughout the prairie country' according to one old-timer, and among the English farmers 'were leaders of their community' along with the Hallet's, the Gaddy's, and the McKay's.¹⁹² The seven Pocha brothers were among the leaders of the buffalo hunt, first at High Bluff and in their early years at the Ridge before the bison disappeared. Like their counterpart in Batoche, Gabriel Dumont, they could organize two hundred or so men into smaller groups, each with a captain of the hunt. William would have felt part of a tight-knit community that could help if he ran into trouble.

The delegation from the Ridge was detained by Riel for several hours until his scouts returned. During that time, Riel sent an ultimatum to Major Crozier of the NWMP at Fort Carlton, demanding that he surrender or be attacked in 'a war of extermination'.¹⁹³ When the delegates were released, they carried a letter from Riel to 'les autres Métis', as he called the English at the Ridge, asking for their cooperation. 'The Ottawa government has been maliciously ignoring the rights of the original half-breeds', he wrote, 'Petitions are not listened to, moreover, the dominion has taken the high-handed way of answering peaceable complaints by dispatching and

¹⁸⁹ P.J. Code, *Les Autres Metis: The English Metis of the Prince Albert Settlement 1862-86*, p. 85

¹⁹⁰ Code, p.85

¹⁹¹ Bill Waiser, *A World We Have Lost*, p.526

¹⁹² Code, p. 43. *Memoir of W.C. McKay*

¹⁹³ *Sessional papers*, vol. 12, 43-6.

reinforcing their mounted Police, threatening our liberty and our lives. The aboriginal half-breeds are determined to save their rights or to perish. Justice commands to take up arms.”

The Pocha's and their neighbours were caught between two opponents. Riel, on the one hand, wanted them to join the fight, whereas Crozier at Carlton hoped that they would remain neutral, thus diminishing Riel's forces. Crozier recruited Reverend Matheson, an Anglican minister from Prince Albert, to hold meetings in the following days in all three English communities - St. Catherine's (Prince Albert), St. Andrew's Halcro (Red Deer Hill), and the Lindsay schoolhouse (the Ridge). Charles Adams and Andrew Spence were among the signatories of resolutions developed at those meetings. While we sympathize with the French half-breeds, they stated, we 'don't approve of the resort to arms or the raising of the Indians and wish to remain neutral'.¹⁹⁴ While James Isbister and George Sanderson headed to Batoche with copies of the resolutions, Charles Adams and William Miller began the trek to Fort Carlton on snow-covered trails. Their copy never reached Crozier at the fort, however, because as they drew near, they heard of trouble at nearby Duck Lake and turned back.

There were two more meetings at the schoolhouse, on March 23 and 24, before the conflict erupted into a battle and men died. At the final one, Riel tried one last time to recruit the men of the Ridge, but to no avail. They were determined to be neutral.

The first skirmish in a series that the Canadian government would later call the North-West Rebellion¹⁹⁵ lasted only thirty minutes on March 26, 1885. Earlier in the day, nineteen men from Fort Carlton, on their way to Duck Lake for supplies, had encountered Riel's militia. They returned to the fort, where Crozier quickly organized a force of fifty-three NWMP and forty-one Prince Albert Volunteers. By the time they reached the Métis, Gabriel Dumont had positioned his thirty men among the trees and in a house along the trail. Men were sent out from each side to parley, someone fired, and a brief battle began. The Métis lost five men, including Dumont's brother, Isidore, and an elderly Cree chief, Assiwyin.¹⁹⁶ Twelve of Crozier's men were killed and eleven wounded (nine of those killed were Prince Albert Volunteers). Crozier retreated to the fort, packed quickly, and left, taking his men to Prince Albert. As the last man left, the fort caught on fire (and wasn't rebuilt until 1976 when it became a National Historic Site.¹⁹⁷)

The day before the Battle of Duck Lake, the federal government had dispatched troops in response to Riel's demand for Fort Carlton to surrender. Five thousand men made the journey to Qu'Appelle in only five days on the partially completed national railway, walking some sections and riding in wagons in others.

The day after the battle, the Pocha families left their farms to seek refuge in Prince Albert, where a stockade had been hastily erected around the large Presbyterian church. Their homesteads were in a precarious location, where the trails from Duck Lake, Fort Carlton, and

¹⁹⁴ Sessional Papers, vol 12, 43-47 Supplementary Return

¹⁹⁵ John A. Macdonald's government discussed whether to elevate the 'domestic trouble' to the 'rank of rebellion', rather than speaking of it as 'a common riot'. It suited their purposes to convince the public that harsh measures were needed to prevent an 'Indian war'. Waiser, p. 558

¹⁹⁶ A. Blair Stonechild, *The Indian View of the 1885 Uprising, 1885 and After – Native Society in Transition* (Regina: U. of Regina, 1986), pp.155-170

¹⁹⁷ Some accounts claim that the NWMP deliberately set Fort Carlton on fire as they left. Others describe it as an accident during the flurry of activity as they left.

Batoche converged at the Ridge, so if the Métis and their Indian allies attacked Prince Albert, they would use this route. Perhaps they were reluctant to leave like Sanderson who wrote years later in his memoir that he didn't want to leave his stock to starve and besides he wasn't afraid of 'a few French Half-breeds at Duck Lake'.¹⁹⁸ Before long, however, he was forced to leave or be arrested as a 'rebel'.

Most of the families around Prince Albert abandoned their farms at this time and stayed in town for the following fifty-three days. One thousand people were billeted all over town, as well as in the NWMP barracks, and told to seek shelter within the church if the alarm rang. Every house in the main part of town was occupied, Sanderson said, so they stayed at the west end, outside of the protective stockade. There, they were among 'the Pocha's, Adams, and other country people who had been like us compelled to move into town'.¹⁹⁹

There were three separate incidents in the following six weeks that contributed to people's fears across the Northwest Territories. Big Bear's warriors, angry at the government and its agents for reducing rations promised in Treaty Six and emboldened by word of the Métis victory at Duck Lake, killed most of the people attending a church service in Frog Lake (50 miles north of Lloydminster). The old chief tried to stop his men, but they shot the Indian agent, farm instructor, two priests, and five other men on April 2, 1885.²⁰⁰ One month later, NWMP forces from Battleford arrived at Chief Poundmaker's reserve near Cut Knife Hill (25 miles west of Battleford), intending to punish the band for pillaging the town while residents were hiding at the nearby police barracks. Although the Cree were outnumbered, they had a strategic advantage in the hilly terrain and the NWMP were forced to retreat.²⁰¹ The final battle for Riel's Métis ended on May 9 when Captain Middleton's eight hundred men overwhelmed the two hundred at Batoche.²⁰² Riel surrendered, and Dumont fled to the United States. Ten days later, Middleton's troops entered Prince Albert and the siege was over.

The farmers of the Ridge returned to find that their animals had been taken by the Métis militia and it was too late to plant crops.

The government moved quickly to bring the 'rebels' to trial, demonstrating to the indigenous people and the Canadian electorate that they were in control. Louis Riel was found guilty of high treason and hanged in November. Twenty-six Métis soldiers were tried for felony-treason and, of these, eleven sentenced to seven years in jail. Chiefs One Arrow, Big Bear, and Poundmaker served time in Stony Mountain Penitentiary and each died soon after release.²⁰³ Fourteen of Big Bear's warriors were sentenced to two years in prison. The final trials were held in Battleford, where sixty Indians were held. Eight men were hanged there on November 27 and buried in a mass grave.

¹⁹⁸ Sanderson, p. 5

¹⁹⁹ Ibid

²⁰⁰ F. Laurie Barron, *Indian Agents and the North-West Rebellion, 1885 and After – Native Society in Transition*, pp.139-154. Thomas Quinn, Indian agent, and John Delaney, farm instructor, were killed at the Frog Lake Massacre. Quinn was known as a bully with an explosive temper who was contemptuous of Indian society and stubbornly refused to give rations without work (which was government policy at the time).

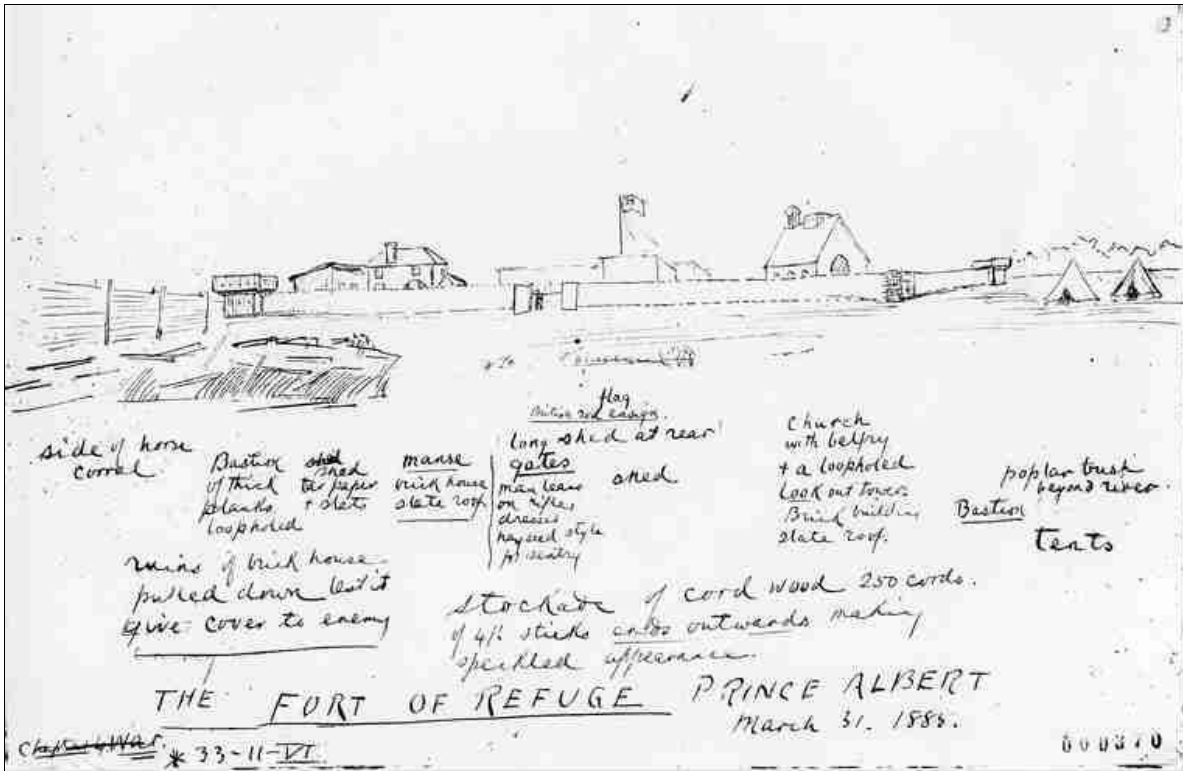
²⁰¹ At the Battle of Cut Knife Hill, fourteen soldiers were wounded and eight killed. Three native men were wounded and five killed.

²⁰² Eight of Middleton's men died and forty-six were wounded. Sixteen Metis were killed and 20-30 wounded.

²⁰³ In 2018, Poundmaker was pardoned by the Canadian government for his peace-keeping efforts in 1885.

Two men were found not guilty. Dakota Sioux chief, Whitecap, was a member of Riel's governing council, but a witness confirmed that he had been at Batoche against his will.²⁰⁴ The second was Thomas Scott of the Ridge, who had attended meetings of English farmers, but was not at either the Duck Lake or Batoche battles.²⁰⁵ William Pocha testified at Scott's trial that they heard there was trouble and wanted to know what was happening. Besides, he claimed, the women were afraid of the Indians.²⁰⁶

The department of Indian Affairs identified twenty-eight bands as disloyal and suspended the annuity payments promised in treaties. A 'pass system' that required residents to apply to the Indian Agent before leaving the reserve was applied to all bands, whether loyal or not.



Prince Albert 1885

When violence erupted at Duck Lake on March 26, 1885, about one thousand people left their farms for refuge in Prince Albert. A stockade was hastily erected around the large Presbyterian Church and people were billeted in homes and the NWMP barracks. There never was an attack on Prince Albert. After fifty-three days, the farmers could return to their homes. (photo – PA Historical Society)

²⁰⁴ Dictionary of Canadian Biography - Whitecap. Gerald Willoughby of Saskatoon was the witness in Whitecap's defence.

²⁰⁵ Sessional Papers, No. 52 – Trial of Thomas Scott

²⁰⁶ Sessional Papers, No. 52, Trial of Thomas Scott

The Pocha, Adams, and other families at the Ridge must have felt vulnerable in the aftermath of 1885. The Prince Albert Times chastised the 'English half-breeds and Canadian settlers who had deliberately aided and abetted the sending for Riel', which included everyone who lived at the Ridge. That's likely when they fell silent about their involvement and why generations later many people don't know about their Métis roots.²⁰⁷

Joseph and Marie's children became successful farmers. A local business directory described the success of the Ridge and the Red Deer Hill area: "It is the most thickly settled, and the majority of the farmers are in comfortable circumstances, having numerous horses, cattle and sheep."²⁰⁸

1896 Prince Albert, Northwest Territories

Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha died on 30 January 1896 and was buried beside Marie Lapointe, his wife of sixty-three years, who had died the previous March. He had lived to be almost one hundred in a century that transformed the Northwest.²⁰⁹ He had lived the life of a free trader with his French-Canadian father during the era in which the Cree and Blackfoot were at war. He had lost both parents while young – his Cree mother killed in a Sarcee attack; his father to adventures across the Rocky Mountains and then home to the St. Lawrence Valley. He had lived well in the Red River Settlement as a farmer and bison hunter. He resisted Riel in 1870 and spent a month in jail along with two of his sons. He moved with his adult children to the Prince Albert area where he watched them get involved with Riel again in 1885.

He began his life riding horses and paddling canoes over well-known routes between Pembina and Edmonton. He died a few years after the train arrived in Prince Albert, and the trails and Red River carts were abandoned.

His identity changed gradually as he chose where to live and who to associate with. His parents started him off in both Cree and French-Canadian cultures but were gone from his life before he became an adult. The Red River Settlement offered both French-Catholic and English-Protestant communities and, when he moved to High Bluff, he became immersed in the latter. His family settled among English farmers when they moved to Prince Albert and although he and Marie likely spoke French and Cree, watched as their grandchildren became English. His descendants would eventually drop the surname Paquin and use 'Pocha' instead, but even today they acknowledge they are 'formerly Paquin'.

²⁰⁷ Code, *Les Autres Metis*, p.72

²⁰⁸ McPhillips, Henry Thomas. *McPhillips' Alphabetical and Business Directory of the District of Saskatchewan, NWT 1888*. Prince Albert: The Author, 1888.

²⁰⁹ His headstone claimed he was 100, but the date of his birth was most likely 1800.

Appendix A – Family Trees of Common Ancestors

Generation #1 begins with the first family on the PAQUIN line to arrive in North America from France. Each generation is named after the father because the children carried on his family name, but this is not to suggest that the mother and her ancestry are unimportant. Indeed, the lineage of the Paquin family began with the daughters of two of the 'founding families of Quebec'.

Only the direct ancestors of Joseph Paquin (1778-1828) of Berthierville are included in generations #1-6. To access information about the siblings in each generation that are not on this primary path, consult the Paquin family database. (afpaquin.org/dic).

Reconstituting the Ancestry of Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha

How can you be certain, one might ask, that the ancestral line of Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha is accurate? He named his parents on the Manitoba Census (1870) and his Métis Scrip Affidavit (1875). His father, Joseph Paquin, signed at least two contracts as a voyageur, and was named in journals written at the time by James Bird, David Thompson, and Alexander Henry the Younger. From these, we know his father's approximate birthdate, that two brothers were in the Northwest with him at one point, and that he disappeared from the West in about 1812. Only one record in the Paquin Family database²¹⁰ matches all these facts. (The database was created in the 1970s from church records and maintained by a keeper ever since.)

To confirm that the Joseph Paquin I had located was the right one, I went in search of DNA matches with descendants of his second family. (According to the record I had found, he had seven children with a French-Canadian wife after 1812.) I found two such matches on Ancestry.ca, and more since, which proves that he is our common ancestor.

From there, the Paquin Family database provided data for the earlier generations.

²¹⁰ Ancêtres famille Paquin (afpaquin.org/dic/)

Generation 1 – Marin Boucher

Marin BOUCHER (1587–1671)
m₁ Julienne BARIS (1591-1627)

François BOUCHER (1617-1672)
m. Marie- Françoise GARMAN (1629-1689)

m₂ Perrine MALLET (1604–1687)

Louis Marin BOUCHER (1630–1700)

Jean-Galeran BOUCHER (1633-1714)
m. Marie LECLERC (1640-?)

Marie-Françoise BOUCHER (1636-1711)
m. Jean PLANTE (1621-1706)

Pierre BOUCHER-DIT-PETOCHE (1639-1707)
m. Maria-Anne ST. DENIS (1650-1686)

Marie-Madeleine BOUCHER (1641-?)
m. Louis HOUDE (1617-?)

Marie BOUCHER (1644-1730)
m. Charles GAUDIN (1631-?)

Guilleaum BOUCHER (1647-1729)
m. Jeanne-Marguerite THIBAULT (1657-?)

Generation 2 – Jean Plante

Jean PLANTE (1621–1706)
m. Marie-Françoise BOUCHER (1636-1711)

Claude PLANTE (1653-1729)
m. Marie PATENAUDE (1660-1699)

Marie- Françoise PLANTE (1655-1726)
m. Nicolas PAQUIN (1648-1708)

Jacques PLANTE (1657-1737)
m₁ Françoise TURCOTTE (1668-ca1697)
m₂ Genevieve DUCHESNE (1675-1742)

Georges PLANTE (1659-1718)
m. Marguerite CREPEAU (1669-1745)

Jean PLANTE (1662-1711)
m₁ Mathurine DELUGRE (1670-1698)
m₂ Suzanne LEFEBVRE (1680-?)

Thomas PLANTE (1664-1730)
m. Marie-Marthe PALLEREAU (?)

Pierre PLANTE (1666-1737)
m. Marguerite Patenaude PATINOSTRE (1669-99)

Francois PLANTE (1668-1742)
m₁ Marie-Louise Berard LEPINE (1674-1699)
m₂ Marie-Anne COIGNAC (1678-1749)

Genevieve PLANTE (1671-1703)
m. Jacques J. B. COCHON (1663-?)

Angelique PLANTE (1673-1745)
m. Michel CHABOT (1662-?)

Joseph PLANTE (1674-1730)

Anonyme PLANTE (1676-1676)

Louise-Marie PLANTE (1678-1733)
m. Pierre COIGNAC (1675-1741)

Generation 3 – Nicolas Paquin

Nicolas PAQUIN (1648–1708)

m. Marie-Françoise PLANTE (1655-1726)

Nicolas PAQUIN (1677-1731)

m₁ Marie-Anne Perrault LAGORCE (1682-1720)

m₂ Marie-Therese GROLEAU (?)

Genevieve-Marie PAQUIN (1678-1678)

Marie PAQUIN (1679-1679)

Marie PAQUIN (1680-1756)

m. Jean-Baptiste MARCOTTE (1676-1731)

Gentien PAQUIN (1683-1683)

Antoine PAQUIN (1684-1704)

Jean PAQUIN (1686-1688)

Genevieve Marie PAQUIN (1688-1726)

m. Francois Jean Baptiste Jos. NAUD (1686-1758)

Madeleine Marie PAQUIN (1690-aft 1735)

m. Jacques Perrault LAGORCE (1690-1750)

Louis PAQUIN (1693-1703)

Marie-Anne PAQUIN (1695-aft 1734)

m. Pierre GROLEAU (1692-1769)

Marguerite PAQUIN (1698-1699)

Jean-Baptiste PAQUIN (1701-1743)

m. Marguerite Marie CHAPELAIN (1708-1790)

Generation 4 – Nicolas Paquin II

| | |
|--|---|
| Nicolas PAQUIN (1677–1731) m ₁ Marie-Anne Perrault LAGORCE (1682-1720) | Joseph PAQUIN (1707-1776) m ₁ Marie-Anne MARCOTTE (1709-1748) m ₂ Marie-Angelique GAUTHIER (1719-1789) Nicolas PAQUIN (1708-1791) m. Marie-Josephe ARCAND (1719-1788) Paul PAQUIN (1709-before 1771) m. Marie-Josephe Bordelais ARCAND (1717-1784) Marie-Josephte PAQUIN (1711-before 1750) m. Jean Baptiste CASAUBON (1682-1755) Jean-François PAQUIN (1714-1715) Jean-Baptiste PAQUIN (1716-1787) m ₁ Marie-Elisabeth Isabelle DOUCET (1728-1770) m ₂ Marie-Marguerite Ricard RIVARD (1739-1816) Louis Joseph PAQUIN (1718-1790) m ₁ Marie-Josephte LESIEUR (1722-1762) m ₂ Marie-Josephe MARTINEAU (1726-1768) m ₃ Marie-Marg. Dubord FONTAINE (1751-1820) Marie-Anne PAQUIN (1719-?) m. Etienne COTTENOIR (1707-?) |
| m ₂ Marie-Therese GROLEAU (?) | Joseph Marie PAQUIN (ca 1721-1805) m. Marguerite Marie CLOUTIER (1721-1790) Pierre PAQUIN (1723-1768) m. Cecile Marie MARTINEAU (1729-1803) Francois PAQUIN (1724-1806) m. Marie-Anne GREGOIRE (1729-after 1771) |

Generation 5 – Louis Joseph Paquin

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Louis Joseph PAQUIN (1718–1790) m₁ Marie Josephte LESIEUR (1722-1762)</p> | <p>Louis PAQUIN (1747-1812) m. Genevieve Marie LESIEGE (1752-1814)</p> <p>Marie-Anne-Louise PAQUIN (1749-1812) m. J. LESIEUR-dit-DUCHAINE (1747-1822)</p> <p>Marie Josephe PAQUIN (1749-1782) m. Theodore BEANDET-dit-DUCHAINE</p> <p>Marie Anne PAQUIN (1751-?) m. J. FAFARD-dit-LONVAL</p> <p>Joseph Toussaint PAQUIN (1752-1824) m. Marie V. ENOUILLE LANOIX (1761-1813)</p> <p>Marie Louise PAQUIN (1754-1844) m. Pierre SAVOIE (1752-?)</p> <p>Marie Genevieve PAQUIN (1756-1812) m. J. LESIEUR DUCHESNE</p> <p>Jean-Baptiste PAQUIN (1758-1842) m₁ Marguerite LANDRY m₂ Marguerite PEPIN (1762-1834) m₃ Charlotte LESIEUR (1793-1871)</p> |
| <p>m₂ Marie Josephte MARTINEAU (1726–1768)</p> | <p>Pierre PAQUIN (1768–1768)</p> |
| <p>m₃ Marie M. DUBORD FONTAINE (1751–1820) <i>Note: not included 6 children who died young</i></p> | <p>Josette Marie Josephe PAQUIN (1771–1821) m. Pierre Collin LALIBERTE</p> <p>Joseph Cuthbert PAQUIN (1773-?) m. Pelagie MOREAU</p> <p>Marie Anne PAQUIN (1774-?) m. Joseph PLANTE</p> <p>Louis Jean Baptiste PAQUIN (1778-1867) m. Catherine DUFRESNE (1777-?)</p> <p>Jean-Baptiste PAQUIN (1779-1849) m. Helene LIGNE-LENIER (1802-?)</p> <p>Charlotte Marie Charles PAQUIN (1784-?) m. Jacques LEDAIN BELLEVILLE</p> |

Generation 6 – Louis Paquin

Louis PAQUIN (1747–1812)

m. Genevieve Marie LESIEGE (1752-1814)

Pierre PAQUIN (1773-1848)

m. Marie Archange LARIVIERE

Genevieve Marie PAQUIN (1774-1849)

m. Francois Gilbert CONTOIS

Madeleine Marie PAQUIN (1776-1845)

m. Louis CHEVRETTE

Toussaint PAQUIN (1777-1843)

m. Marie-Anne BASTIEN (1803-1872)

Joseph PAQUIN (1778-1828)

m₁ a Cree woman, name unknown

m₂ Marie-Rose GILBERT (1791-?)

Louis PAQUIN (1780-?)

Theotiste PAQUIN (1784-1864)

m. Francois VALOIS

Etienne PAQUIN (1786-1860)

m. Marie-Pelagie BARIL (1789-?)

Louis PAQUIN (1789-1843)

m. Angele Marie Baril BARRY (1793-1874)

Generation 7 – Joseph Paquin

Joseph PAQUIN (1778–1828)
m₁ Marguerite (ca1780–ca1809)

Joseph PAQUIN-DIT-POCHA (1800–1896)
m₁ Josephite DESCOTEAUX (?-ca1830)
m₂ Marie Lapointe (1813–1895)

m₂ Marie Rose GILBERT-DIT-COMTOIS (1792-?)

Norbert PAQUIN (ca1814-?)
m. Leocadie DUBORD

Pierre PAQUIN (ca1816-?)
m. Sophie JUSSAUME

Marie-Rosalie PAQUIN (ca1818- ?)
m. Hercules BRISSETTE

Nazaire-Joseph PAQUIN (1819-1901)
m. Josephine LEMERISE

Hermeline PAQUIN (1819-?)

Prosper Joseph PAQUIN (1824-1896)
m₁ Placide MAILLOUX
m₂ Marie-Desanges-Solange GAGNON

Onesime-Oliver PAQUIN (1826-1909)
m. Sarah J. SMITH

Generation 8 – Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Joseph PAQUIN-dit-POCHA (1800–1896) m₁ Josephthe DESCOLEAUX (?-ca1830)</p> | <p>Marie PAQUIN (1829-aft.1879) m. Michel ALLARY (1829-?)</p> |
| <p>m₂ Marie LAPOINTE (1813–1895)</p> | <p>Joseph POCHA (1833–1916) m. Matilda HODGSON (1834-1888)</p> <p>John POCHA (1835-1916) m. Harriet Ann SPENCE (1838-1916)</p> <p>Margaret POCHA (1837-1914) m. James TATE (1831-aft 1901)</p> <p>Fanny POCHA (1840-?) m. Thomas ANDERSON Jr. (1833-?)</p> <p>William POCHA (1841-1927) m. Maria ANDERSON (1848-)</p> <p>Charles POCHA (1843-1916) m₁ Mary Ann TATE (1847-bef 1891) m₂ Elizabeth Kips (1842-1921)</p> <p>Gilbert POCHA (1845-1918) m. Margaret Alice COOK (1851-?)</p> <p>Ann POCHA (1846-1916) m. Robert ADAMS (1848-1918)</p> <p>Henry/Henri POCHA (1848-aft 1888)</p> <p>Thomas POCHA (1850-1875) m. Rosalie FLAMMAND (1850-?)</p> <p>George POCHA (1852-1931) m. Eliza Ann WORK (1858-1894)</p> <p>Catherine POCHA (1856-?)</p> <p>Elizabeth ‘Betsy’ POCHA (1859-1920) m. William FOULDS (1857-1934)</p> |



Joseph Pocha (1833-1916)
(photo – Teresa Watne Danzer)



George Pocha (1852-1933), Eliza Work & family
(photo – a member of Ancestry.ca)

Appendix B – Family Trees of Generation 9

Joseph Paquin-dit-Pocha and his ancestors are common to all Pocha families on the Canadian prairies, but with generation nine the Pocha lines diverged. From the perspective of my great-grandmother, Florence May Pocha, the people in this appendix were her aunts, uncles, and cousins. Additional information about each person and their more recent descendants can be found on Ancestry.ca (Paquin-dit-Pocha family tree).

| | |
|---|--|
| Marie PAQUIN (1829-aft.1879) m. Michel ALLARY (1829-?) | Daniel ALLARY (1847-?) m. Marguerite Houle Susanne ALLARY (1850-?) m. Moyse DELORME Magdeleine ALLARY (ca 1854-?) m. Amable ST. GERMAIN Pierre ALLARY (1856-?) |
|---|--|

Marie Paquin was born in the Red River Settlement in 1829, the daughter of Joseph and his first wife, Josephite Descoleaux.²¹¹ Her mother died when she was three and her father remarried to Marie Lapointe.

In about 1846, Marie married Michel Allary (Allaire) and moved to Grantown (St. Francis Xavier). Allary was the grandson of a man of the same name from Trois Rivieres who had been with David Thompson on the Columbia River at the same time as Marie's grandfather.²¹²

Marie applied for Métis Scrip in 1879, but her whereabouts after that are unknown.

²¹¹ Metis Scrip – Marie Paquin

²¹² Coues, p. 776, footnote 42

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Joseph POCHA (1833–1916) m. Matilda HODGSON (1834-1888)</p> | <p>John James POCHA (1860–1941) m. Marie PRIMEAU</p> <p>Joseph Herman POCHA (1862-1948) m. Elizabeth Ann ADAMS (1867-1947)</p> <p>Charlotte POCHA (1864-?) m. George FINLAY</p> <p>William Charles POCHA (1866-1953) m. Sarah Elizabeth LOGAN (1871-1948)</p> <p>Maria POCHA (1867-?)</p> <p>Charles Thomas POCHA (1869-1929) m. Eliza Paul (1879-1968)</p> <p>Marguerite POCHA (1872-?)</p> <p>Mary M. POCHA (1876-?)</p> |
|--|--|

Joseph Pocha was born 9 March 1833 in the Red River Settlement and baptized on 14 April at St. Boniface Catholic Church.²¹³

Joseph married Matilda Hodgson, the daughter of John Hodgson and Charlotte Yorkston²¹⁴. Hodgson, the son of an HBC officer of the same name from London (and an unknown Cree woman) had grown up at Fort Albany on James Bay. When Hodgson Sr moved the family to Lower Canada, John Jr stayed at Albany where he worked with the cooper (barrel maker). At thirty-three, the HBC sent John in a crew to assist John Franklin on his second Arctic expedition (1825-1827), but he left after the first leg of the journey. John married Charlotte upon his return to the colony.²¹⁵

Joseph and Matilda lived in High Bluff during the 1870 Red River Resistance, but he was not involved as were his father and two brothers who were jailed for a month by Louis Riel. The family moved to the Prince Albert area by 1880 where five years later, another rebellion occurred, and they had to seek refuge in Prince Albert for almost two months.

His son, Charles Thomas, moved to Montana in 1886 and raised a family there.²¹⁶
Matilda died in 1888; Joseph died in 1916.

²¹³ Baptismal record, St. Boniface

²¹⁴ Metis Scrip Affidavit 1876 – John Hodgson

²¹⁵ HBCA Biographical Sheets – Hodgson, John

²¹⁶ US Immigration Records

| | |
|---|--|
| John POCHA (1835-1916) m. Harriet Ann SPENCE (1838-1916) | Harriet POCHA (1857-1947) m. Alexander WHITFORD (1841-1906) |
| | Mary POCHA (1862-?) |
| | William POCHA (1864-?) |
| | John POCHA (1869-?) m. Harriet ANDERSON (1867-1934) |

John Pocha was born in 1835 in the Red River Settlement. In about 1856, he married Harriet Spence, the daughter of John and Charlotte Spence who farmed at Portage la Prairie.²¹⁷

John and Harriet lived in High Bluff with their four children during the 1870 Red River Resistance. He was jailed by Louis Riel, along with his father, brother William, and brother-in-law Robert Adams, for joining the Portage la Prairie militia which opposed the provisional government.

The family moved to Red Deer Hill/Lindsay in 1878 at the same time as his parents and two brothers. During the 1885 North-west Rebellion, he remained neutral and moved his family into Prince Albert where most farmers took refuge. John lived in the area until his death 16 Jan 1916.

²¹⁷ 1870 Manitoba Census – There are three men of the same name, but only on John Spence lived near to the Pocha family in High Bluff. Therefore, it's likely that John and Charlotte were Harriet's parents and Magnus Spence was her grandfather. Magnus was from Birsay in the Orkney Islands and worked for the HBC as a labourer, canoeman, and interpreter for thirty-eight years (1783-1821). Although he didn't achieve a high rank, it was noted that 'a better servant is not in the Company's employ particularly in the station he fills'. While stationed in the Fort Edmonton area, he learned Blackfoot in addition to Cree which he had mastered while working at small posts near York Factory. His wife is not mentioned in company records, but she was likely Cree.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Margaret POCHA (1837-1914) m. James TATE (1831-Aft. 1901)</p> | <p>Joseph William TATE (1861-1916)</p> <p>Mary M. TATE (1864-Bef. 1881)</p> <p>James TATE (1865-1922)</p> <p>Fanny TATE (1867-1919) m₁ John CUSITOR (1857-1927) m₂ Allan MCDONALD (1873-?)</p> <p>Gilbert TATE (1869-?)</p> <p>John TATE (1870-?)</p> <p>Caroline 'Carrie' TATE (1872-1924) m. Archie WALKER (1874-1948)</p> |
|--|--|

Margaret Pocha was born 1 Nov 1837 in the Red River Settlement. She married James Tate (Tait)²¹⁸ on 24 Sept 1857 at St. John's Anglican Church. Her husband was the son of William Tate and Mary Bear who farmed in Kildonan where they had a family of about ten children.²¹⁹ James' grandfather of the same name was an HBC trader and interpreter from Orphir, a small parish on mainland Orkney. He worked at York Factory and inland for thirty-four years (1778-1812), returning to Stromness where he resided until his death. 'A better servant cannot be' noted an HBC clerk.²²⁰ James and Margaret farmed in Poplar Point (immediately east of High Bluff) where four of his siblings also lived.

Although Margaret's parents and most of her siblings moved to the Prince Albert area between 1878-1882, she and James remained in Portage la Prairie. She died there 21 Feb 1914.

²¹⁸ 1870 Manitoba Census – James Tait (69), Margaret (65), Gilbert (32), John (30)

²¹⁹ Metis Scrip Affidavit. Mary Bear was from the Bear tribe of Cumberland House, whose chief was White Bear.

²²⁰ HBCA Biographical Sheets – Tate, James

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Fanny POCHA (1840-Aft. 1891) m. Thomas ANDERSON Jr. (1833-Bef.1891)</p> | <p>Henry ANDERSON (1857-?) (<i>stepson</i>)</p> <p>Caleb ANDERSON (1860-?)</p> <p>Charles ANDERSON (1861-?) m. Flora ROSSETT (1864-?)</p> <p>Joshua ANDERSON (1863-?)</p> <p>Elizabeth 'Betsy' ANDERSON (1867-?) m. Archie AMIOTTE (1858-?)</p> <p>Mary Ann ANDERSON (1868-?) m. William PARENTEAU (1870-?)</p> <p>Walter James ANDERSON (1875 -?)</p> <p>Rachel ANDERSON (1878-?)</p> <p>John George ANDERSON (1880-?)</p> |
|--|---|

Fanny Pocha was born 28 November 1840 in the Red River Settlement. She married widower Thomas Anderson Jr²²¹, who had a son by his first wife, and they had eight children. Thomas was born 18 Feb 1833 at St. Andrew's, the son of Thomas Anderson Sr and Catherine Landry

Fanny, Thomas and the six children lived in Portage la Prairie during the 1870 Red River Resistance and the 1979 Métis Scrip Commission.²²² By 1881, they were living in the Prince Albert area where both of their parents also had homesteads.²²³

In 1891, Fanny was listed in the census as a widow, living with her three youngest children.²²⁴

²²¹ Thomas Anderson Jr. was the grandson of James Anderson, an HBC tailor from the Orkney Islands and Mary Demoran, a Cree or Saulteaux.

²²² 1870 Manitoba Census; 1879 Metis Scrip

²²³ 1881 Census – Thomas Anderson (75) & Catherine (70) are listed along with Fanny, Thomas, and the children.

²²⁴ 1891 Census

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>William 'Billy' POCHA (1842-1927) m. Maria ANDERSON (1848-?)</p> | <p>Harriet POCHA (1868-1870)</p> <p>Jane Mary POCHA (1869-?)</p> <p>Edwin POCHA (1872-1929) m. Isabel 'Belle' VANESS (1878-1949)</p> <p>Matilda 'Dollie' POCHA (1874-1921) m. Charles VIVIER (1869-1900)</p> <p>Marguerite POCHA (1876-1876)</p> <p>George POCHA (1877-1877)</p> <p>Eliza Ann POCHA (1879-1936) m. George TAYLOR (1864-1940)</p> <p>Henry Lawrence 'Harry' POCHA (1881-1974)</p> <p>John Michael POCHA (1883-1883)</p> <p>Laura Madelaine POCHA (1885-1909) m. Nathan TAYLOR (1871-1968)</p> |
|---|--|

William Pocha was born 30 December 1842 in the Red River Settlement. The family moved to High Bluff when he was seventeen. In 1867, he married Maria Anderson, sister to Thomas Anderson Jr. who had married William's sister, Fanny. Maria was the granddaughter of James Anderson, an HBC tailor from the Orkney Islands.²²⁵

During the 1870 Red River Resistance, William was jailed by Louis Riel, along with his brother John, father, and brother-in-law.

He left High Bluff in about 1873 with his family and lived in the Victoria Settlement of Alberta until 1878 when they moved to Lindsay District. He farmed on SW6-47-27-W2, a few miles north of present-day Macdowall, SK. In 1885, he was a member of the first school board for the Lindsay Schoolhouse.

William was involved in the 1885 North-west Rebellion, told in detail earlier in this book. By 1889, he had moved the family to a new homestead at Rimbey, Alberta (Red Deer), SW2-40-27-W4 near his son Edward. He applied for Métis Scrip in 1900 in Calgary.

William died 3 April 1927 at Pendryl, Alberta (Buck Lake), about 50 km NE of Rimbey.

²²⁵ HBCA Biographical Sheets – Anderson, James

| | |
|--|--|
| Charles POCHA (1843-1916) m ₁ Mari Ann TATE (1847-Bef. 1891) | Maria POCHA (1868-?) George Brandon POCHA (1869-1916) m. Florence HODGSON (1887-?) Robert James POCHA (1875-1911) m. Alice BANNERMAN (1873-1941) |
| m ₂ Elizabeth Kips ANDERSON (1842-1921) | Sarah POCHA (1897-?) & 5 children by her first husband |

Charles Pocha was born 27 August 1843 at the Red River Settlement.²²⁶ The family moved to High Bluff in about 1860. He married Mari Ann Tate, the daughter of Joseph Tate.²²⁷ They had two young children during the 1870 Red River Resistance when Charles' father, two brothers, and a brother-in-law were jailed by Louis Riel for their involvement in the Portage la Prairie militia which opposed Riel.

In 1880, Charles, Mari Ann and their three children joined the family who had already moved to the Lindsay/Red Deer Hill area (now Macdowall, SK). By 1888, his parents and seven siblings were living there.²²⁸

Mari Ann died before 1891 when census records show that Charles had remarried. His second wife, Elizabeth Kips, was the widow of Robert Anderson with whom she had five children.²²⁹ Charles and Elizabeth had a daughter, Sarah.²³⁰

By 1906, Charles (63), Elizabeth (64), and Sarah (9) were living with his son, George. Charles died in 1916 at 72, predeceased by both sons.²³¹

²²⁶ Canada, Find a Grave Index

²²⁷ 1870 Manitoba Census. The Tate/Tait families of the Northwest originated in Orkney, but the parentage of Joseph Tate could not be confirmed.

²²⁸ 1888 McPhillips Directory, p. 78

²²⁹ Robert Anderson was the son of John, and grandson of James Anderson. He was a cousin of siblings Maria and Thomas Anderson Jr, who also married into the Pocha family.

²³⁰ 1906 Census

²³¹ Canada, Find a Grave Index

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| <p>Gilbert POCHA (1845-1918) m. Margaret Alice COOK (1851-?)</p> | <p>Gilbert Jr. POCHA (1872-1945) m. Martha Ellen FOULDS (1883-1919)</p> <p>Lydia POCHA (1874-1931) m. Robert PEEBLES (1862-1938)</p> <p>Roderick James POCHA (1876-1916)</p> <p>Samuel I. POCHA (1877-?)</p> <p>John George POCHA (1879-1912) m. Mary – (1885-?)</p> <p>Richard Duncan POCHA (1881-1883)</p> <p>Joseph Duncan POCHA (1883-1883)</p> <p>Mary Alice POCHA (1885-?)</p> <p>Augustus Adolphus POCHA (1887-1943) m. Ellen ADAMS (1888-1945)</p> <p>Ann E. POCHA (1889-?)</p> <p>Susan Margaret POCHA (1891-1962) m. Charles Herbert BIRD (1888-1945)</p> |
|--|---|

Gilbert Pocha was born in March 1845 at the Red River Settlement. The family moved to High Bluff in about 1860. He was living at home during the 1870 Red River Resistance, along with four younger siblings.²³²

In about 1873, Gilbert married Margaret Cook, granddaughter to William Hemmings Cook²³³. Margaret's father, Samuel, married Isabella Gaddy with whom he had one child, and then Susannah Short with whom he had nine children.²³⁴

Gilbert, Margaret and four children moved to the Lindsay/Red Deer Hill area in 1878 with the first group of Pocha families, including his parents. By 1888, he owned a homestead at SE 7-47-27-W2.²³⁵ The family was living in the same place at the time of the 1891 census and the 1901 census. Gilbert died 27 November 1918 and was buried at St. Paul's Lindsay Anglican Church.

²³² 1870 Manitoba Census

²³³ Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Cook, Wm Hemmings. He was the chief factor at York Factory between 1809-1815 when the first settlers arrived for Selkirk's colony at Red River. After 33 years with the HBC, he retired to the Red River Settlement with his large family – ten children by 3-4 indigenous wives.

²³⁴ Gibson, Law, Life and Government at Red River. Samuel Cook sat on six juries between 1847-1854, the most prominent being the trial of Foss vs Pelly.

²³⁵ 1888 McPhillips Directory, p. 78

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| <p>Ann POCHA (1846-1916) m. Robert ADAMS (1848-1918)</p> | <p>Catherine ADAMS (1869-1898) m. Henry KIRKNESS (1863-1940)</p> <p>Robert William ADAMS (1872-1958) m. Mabel J. CORRIGAL (1883-1956)</p> <p>Albert George ADAMS (1874-1875)</p> <p>Agnes ADAMS (1876-1899) m. Henry Charles POCHA (1878-1923)</p> <p>Charles Thomas ADAMS (1878-1935) m. Mary Margaret FIDLER (1878-1970)</p> <p>James George ADAMS (1881-1965) m. Alice (Bannerman) POCHA (1873-1941)</p> <p>Joseph Alexander ADAMS (1883-1941) m. Emma Jesse POCHA (1892-1925)</p> <p>Horace Lawrence ADAMS (1885-1948) m. Aglentine O. HODGSON (1889-1936)</p> <p>Flora Mabel ADAMS (1887-1939) m. Alexander Peter FIDLER (1880-1965)</p> <p>Jemima ADAMS (1890-1954) m. John William TANNER (1885-1951)</p> <p>Edith Ann ADAMS (1891-1978) m. Stanley MCAULEY (1885-1971)</p> |
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Ann Pocha was born about 1846 in the Red River Settlement. Her family moved to High Bluff where she met and married Robert Adams, son of George Adams and Ann Heywood. George Adams, the son of a rope maker on the docks in London, was one of the original Selkirk Settlers that founded the Red River Settlement.

In 1870, Robert was jailed by Louis Riel along with Ann's father and two of her brothers. The couple had an infant daughter at the time. In 1882, they moved to the Prince Albert area along with Robert's widowed mother who lived with them. He owned a sawing outfit that was used to make the lumber for St. Paul's Lindsay Church. The first 'Kirkpatrick' post office was in his home, which was large enough to be used as a local dance hall.

Ann died in 1916 at age 64; Robert in 1918 at age 69.²³⁶

²³⁶ Redhead et al, The Descendants of George Adams & Ann Heywood, p. 277

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|--|---|
| Thomas POCHA (1850-1875) m. Rosalie FLAMMAND (1850-?) | Henry George POCHA (1869-?) Thomas William POCHA (1869-?) Flora POCHA (1872-?) m. Albert SMITH |
|--|---|

Thomas Pocha was born in 1850 in the Red River Settlement. He was about ten when the family moved to High Bluff.

Thomas married Rosalie Flammand, the daughter of Joseph Flammand and Nanette Bousquet²³⁷. Her brothers were tripmen for the HBC, taking cargo by canoe from Red River to York Factory in time for the annual supply ship and returning with imports from Britain. In 1867, the water levels were low due to a drought and parts of the rivers were more treacherous than usual. The tripmen refused to complete the journey that year from Norway House to York Factory, so they were taken to court and had to repay some of their wages.²³⁸

Thomas died 7 Feb 1875 at High Bluff at the age of twenty-three.

²³⁷ Sprague & Frye, table 1, #1572; Glenbow Archives – Joseph Flammand (1770-ca1792) and a Cree native (fl.1792). These were her grandparents.

²³⁸ Gibson, Law, Life and Government at Red River

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| <p>George POCHA (1852-1931) m. Eliza Ann WORK (1858-1894)</p> | <p>Barbara Ann 'Maud' POCHA (1875-1932) m₁ James Franklin CORRIGAL (1878-?) m₂ Hugh BANNERMAN (1867-1948)</p> <p>Henry Charles POCHA (1878-1923) m₁ Agnes ADAMS (1876-1899) m₂ Louisa Rosina FOULDS (1879-1919)</p> <p>Frances Jane POCHA (1882-1977) m. James George ADAMS (1870-1956)</p> <p>Florence May POCHA (1885-1964) m. Thomas Henry ADAMS (1880-1967)</p> <p>Sarah Eveline POCHA (1889-?)</p> <p>Emma J. POCHA (1892-1925) m. Joseph Alexander ADAMS (1883-1941)</p> |
|---|--|

George Pocha was born 13 October 1852 in the Red River Settlement, the youngest of eight boys. The family moved to High Bluff when he was six

In 1875, he married Eliza Ann Work, daughter of William Work and Barbara Halcro who were both of Cree-Orcadian ancestry²³⁹. Barbara's father was blacksmith Thomas Halcro (1781-1844) from Stromness, Orkney.

In 1882, George and Eliza moved to the Lindsay District where his parents and siblings had recently relocated. During the 1885 North-west Rebellion, his family sought refuge in Prince Albert because they wanted to remain neutral. By 1888, he had a homestead at NE 36-46-01-W3²⁴⁰. He and Eliza had six children. She died at age 41 when the youngest was two years old. George lived in the Lindsay district until his death in 1931 at age 79.

²³⁹ William's parents were Alexander Work (1785-1850) and Isabella (1786-1846), a Cree woman. Work was born on Rousay, a small hilly island off the north coast of the main Orkney Island. He was described in various HBC journals as 5'9" with 'fair hair and smooth, fair complexion' and was 'a steady good servant'.²³⁹ By 1814, he was a steersman in canoes at Fort Severn on Hudson Bay. When the HBC and NWC merged in 1821, he moved to the Red River colony.

²⁴⁰ 1888 McPhillips Directory, p. 78

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| Elizabeth 'Betsy' POCHA (1859-1920) m. William FOULDS (1857-1934) | Mary Ann FOULDS (1881-1956) m. Timothy MCCARTHY (1865-1927) Martha Ellen FOULDS (1883-1919) m. Gilbert Jr. POCHA (1872-1945) George William FOULDS (1885-1916) |
|--|--|

Betsy Pocha was born in July 1859 and was an infant when the family moved to High Bluff. She was eleven during the 1870 Red River Resistance when her father and two brothers were jailed by Louis Riel.

She moved to Lindsay District in 1878 with her parents. On 27 August 1879, she married William Foulds, the son of John Foulds Jr and Ann 'Nancy' Adams. William's grandfather, John Sr of Mansfield, Nottingham, England, had joined the HBC as a labourer in 1821 along with his brother, Samuel. After only four years, John Sr left the HBC and moved to the Red River Colony.²⁴¹ He married Mary Fidler, the daughter of HBC surveyor, Peter Fidler, whose 34-year career included more than twenty years in charge of various outposts.²⁴²

During the 1885 North-west Rebellion, Betsy and her family took refuge in Prince Albert because the couple decided to remain neutral. By 1888, Betsy and William lived on a farm at Red Deer Hill near his parents and two brothers, each with their own homesteads.²⁴³

Betsy died at home of pneumonia on 22 May 1920.

²⁴¹ HBC Biographical Sheets – Foulds, John (Folds, Foldes)

²⁴² Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Fidler, Peter; HBCA Biographical Sheets – Fidler, Peter

²⁴³ McPhillips Directory 1888 – Red Deer Hill

Appendix C - Homesteads 1888

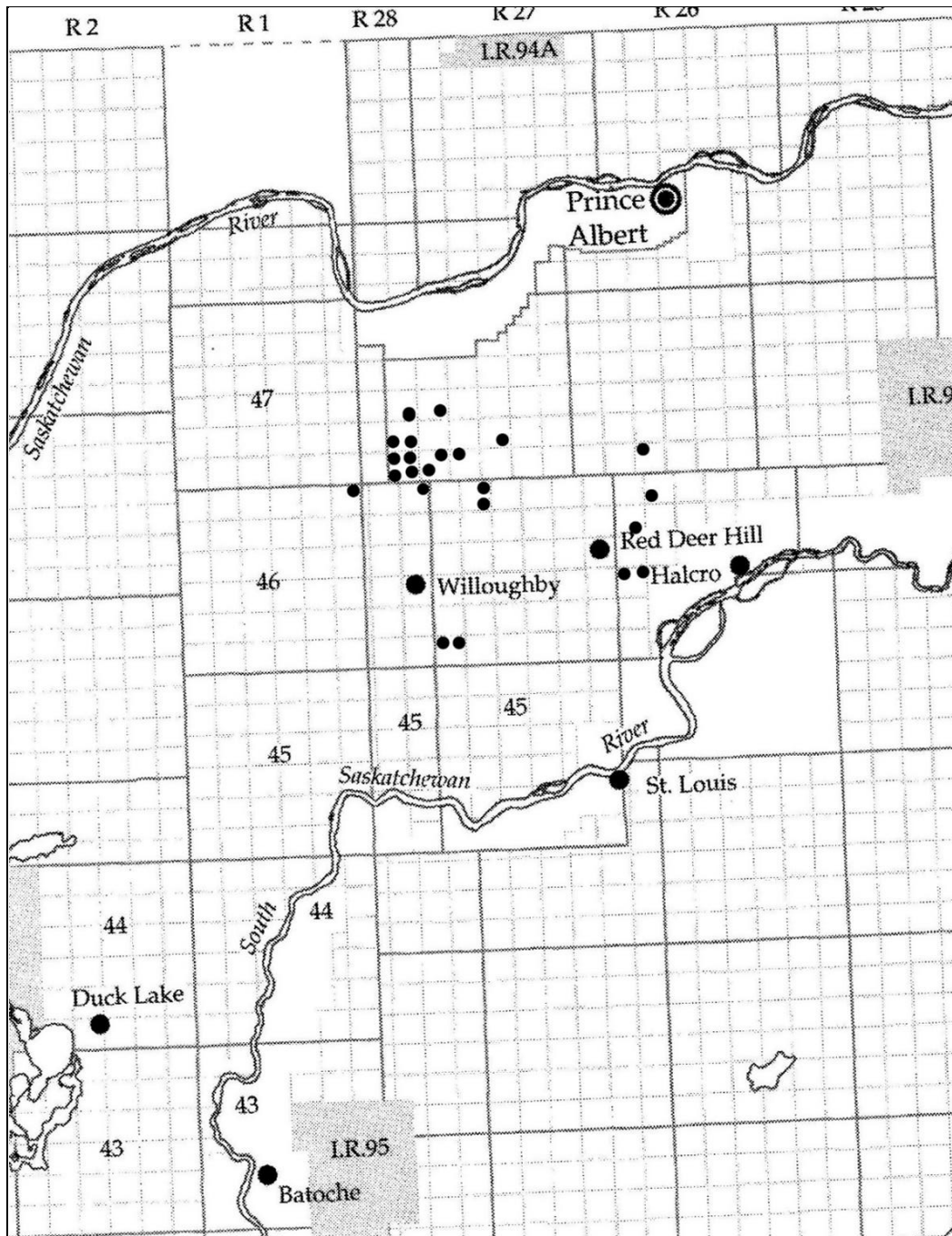
| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----|----|---------------------------|----|
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 |
| 30 | School Lands 29 | 28 | 27 | H. B. Co's Lands 26 | 25 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 18 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 |
| 7 | H. B. Co's Lands 8 | 9 | 10 | School Lands 11 | 12 |
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Township Plan

The basic building block of the agricultural grid survey was a township, six miles square, defined by township lines (N-S) and range lines (E-W). Within each township, there were 36 sections, each divided into quarters (160 acres) which was the basic size of a single homestead. For example, Joseph Pocha-dit-Paquin and Marie Lapointe lived on NW-6-47-27-W2, the northwest quarter-section of the 6th section in township 47-27, west of the second meridian. (Map – Library and Archives Canada, Land Grants of Western Canada)

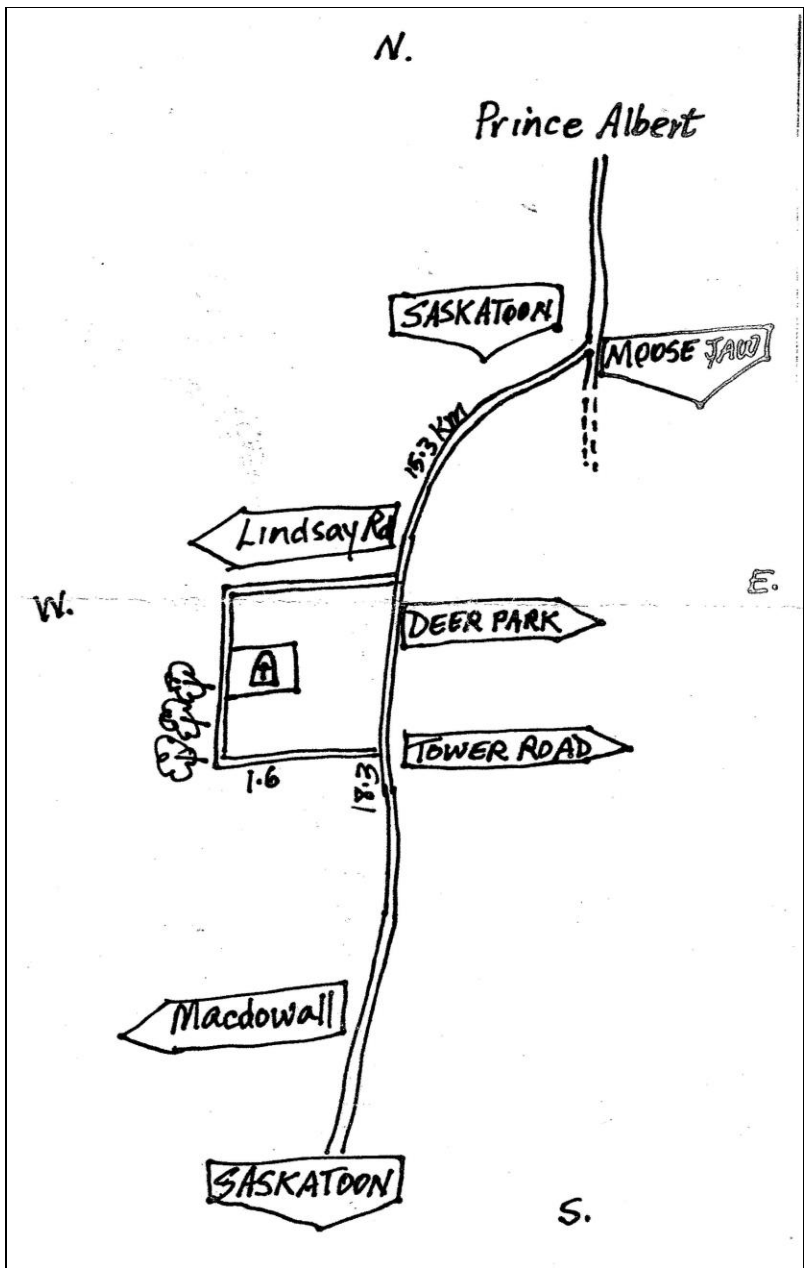
The Dominion Lands office opened in 1881 in Prince Albert. Once a person selected a quarter-section and applied for a patent, it took another three years of improvements to the land before a deed was issued. Not all land was available to settlers. Indian reserve lands, river lots of the original settlers, and the land around existing HBC posts were excluded from surveys that created the grid system of the prairies. Within a township, the even-numbered sections were for homesteads. The odd-numbered sections, except 11 and 29, were railway lands, given to companies as partial payment for building railroads. Section 8 of each township, as well as three-quarters of section 26, belonged to the HBC as part of the 1870 Deed of Surrender. Two sections (11, 29) were for schools. Road allowances from 1881 on were twenty meters wide, running N-S between all sections, but only three running E-W in each township. Over the decades, the HBC lands and the railway lands were sold to settlers.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan. History and Background: The Administration of Land in Saskatchewan. Accessed April 23, 2017; <https://www.saskarchives.com/collections/land-records/history-and-background-administration-land-saskatchewan>



Map: 1888 Homesteads of Pocha/Paquin and Adams Families

Each small dot represents one homestead. The largest cluster is in township 47, range 27, west of the 2d meridian. Willoughby is now called Macdowall, SK. (Map adapted from Patrick Douand, *The Western Métis – Profile of a People*, p. 150; Library & Archives Canada V1/502)



Directions to St. Paul's Lindsay Anglican Graveyard

From Saskatoon, take Highway #11 toward Prince Albert. Between Saskatoon and Macdowall, it's 112 km; from Macdowall to Tower Road, 15 km. (map – hand drawn by Verna Redhead)

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