

Traditional Métis Transportation – Darren R. Préfontaine, Todd Paquin and Patrick Young

Module Objective: In this module, the students will be informed about various forms of transportation developed and used by the Métis. These means of transportation were used both on the land and on water. The students will also learn that these forms of transportation, especially canoes, Red River Carts and York Boats were indispensable in opening up the continent.

Water Transportation

Since Canada is such a vast country containing a great many geographical obstacles as the Canadian Shield, and the Western Cordillera, it was only natural that European explorers would use the country's west-to-east flowing water systems to traverse the continent. The fur trade would not have occurred without the use of water routes and that very dependable First Nations innovation: the birch bark canoe. The Métis learned early from their First Nations and French-Canadian ancestors to be very adept at traveling long hard arduous hours a long western and northern water ways. Other modes of water transportation that were used by the Métis included York boats.

Canoes

The first system of transportation used during the fur trade was the canoe, an ingenious inland water vehicle that Canada's First Nations have used since time immemorial. Originally perfected from hollowed-out logs, these sleek, adaptable and versatile forms of transportation were indispensable to the fur trade, but also to the opening up of the continent. Alexander Mackenzie and Peter Pond and a myriad other fur trade explorers would never have been able to cover the vast expenses they did without canoes (and their First Nations guides). The birch bark canoe proved indispensable in the traffic of trade goods and furs between the European traders and the First Nations and Métis trappers.

Lightweight and crafted entirely from indigenous materials, the vessels were surprisingly durable, maneuverable, and portable over the land connections between water routes.

Birch bark canoes were the most popular form of water transportation in what is now Canada prior to the arrival of Europeans. Birch bark canoes are quite lightweight and could be carried quite easily over portages by a small number of individuals, depending on the size of the craft. Because they were constructed from natural materials, the canoes could be repaired on the move if not seriously damaged. The First Nations who lived in the woodlands were heavily dependent on birch bark canoes for movement, especially when hunting, fishing, trapping and trading. People could, of course, set nets for fishing from their canoes as well as hunt from them. Ducks and other waterfowl could be dispatched from a canoe and picked up when they dropped into the water, and moose could be hunted while wading in shallows without having to track them in the bush. People in canoes also harvested wild rice, effectively.

The construction of the birch bark canoes involved both men and women. Bark, of course, had to be gathered and men often made trips to good stands of birch trees, which could be quite a distance from a post or a settlement. If people were not attached to a post, they would make their spring encampments in areas where birch stands were readily accessible. Women gathered spruce or tamarack roots, called wattappe, which were processed into the cords used to stitch the bark shingles together. Pitch, derived from the sap of coniferous trees, was used to seal the seams of the canoes and make them waterproof. The frames of the canoe were made from willow branches, which had been soaked in water to make it easier to manipulate and bend into the proper shapes. If two

people were making a canoe, it would take approximately two weeks to complete the task.

The growing Metis population furnished the trade companies with a large labour force to work the inland water routes with, and they were adept at using the canoe to cross the large expanses of land between posts and trappers. The canoe could carry cargo into the country and return with furs but were not large enough to transport adequate provisions for its occupants on long journeys. As a result, the trade companies built strings of supply posts across Canada to provide the traders with provisions.

Typical sizes of birch bark canoes used for water transport in the fur trade along relatively rock-free routes were 11 to 13 metres (36 feet) long. These craft weighed 273 kilograms (600 pounds) or more and were carried by at least four men. The *canot de maître* or "Masters Canoe" were usually 11 to 13 metres long, often weighed 275 kilograms, and could carry ten crewmembers and cargo. It was used by the North West Company (NWC) to move furs and trade goods to Fort William from Montréal. By contrast, the smaller *canot du nord* or "North Canoe", which was used in more northerly and rocky routes, was about 8 metres long and weighed 135 kilograms.

These vessels were considerably larger than the canoes used by Métis in their subsistence activities. However, the posts employed Aboriginal expertise in constructing these larger versions of the original birch bark vessels. While eventually supplanted by the larger and much sturdier York Boats, the birch bark canoe played an important role in the fur trade and in the exploration of Canada. It is interesting to note, however, that the York boat replaced the birch bark

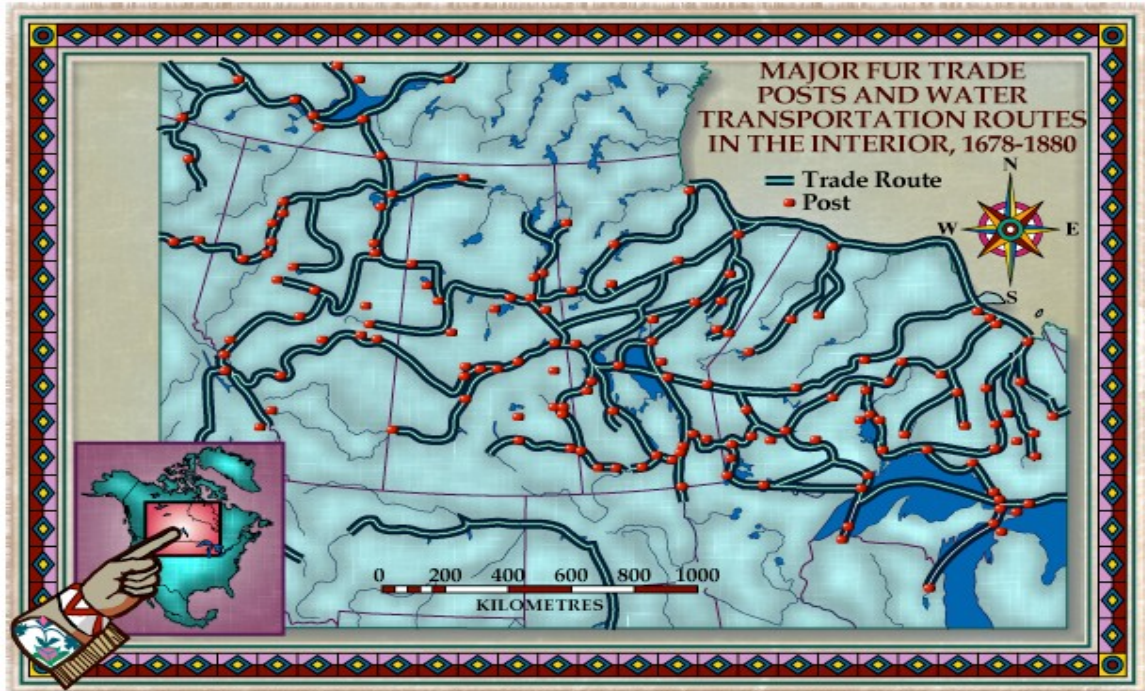
freight canoes in the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), not the NWC. Even though the prototypes of the York boats were being put to use prior to the consolidation of the two trade companies, the NWC did not abandon its use of the large canoes in its operations.

York Boats

When people think of watercraft used in the historical fur trade, they usually think of birch bark or freight canoes. However, York boats – large shallow rectangular sailing vessels – were the transportation mainstay of the fur trade after the 1821 merger of the HBC and the Northwest Company. Between 1826 and 1835, Orcadian (from the Orkneys off of Scotland) and Métis craftsmen, working for the HBC, developed the sturdy York boat for the inland trading system. Although it seems Métis chief trader William Sinclair should receive much of the credit for its development. The need for such a vehicle, though, had been identified and a prototype had been experimented with late in the eighteenth century by explorers and writers such as Samuel Hearne, Robert M. Ballantyne, and Philip Turnor when the HBC was establishing posts inland.

York boats seemed ideal for the river and lake systems of the Hudson Bay Drainage Basin, the MacKenzie River System and the Lake Athabasca System. In shape it resembled a whaling boat (long, broad and shallow) and was steered with a rudder by a steersman who sat on a platform at the stern. These boats navigated many terrifying rapids, carried heavier loads, and survived more punishment than canoes. These boats were launched at the ice break-up in the spring and remained in service until the freeze-up in the fall. However, the York boat's life span was limited to three or four years.

The York boat was truly a massive craft, easily accommodating up to twelve men and cargo, and had to be rowed, not paddled. Ranging in size from nine to thirteen metres in length, over two metres in width, and about one metre in depth, York boats carried approximately 3,200 kilograms of cargo and were rowed by six metre-long oars. These long, broad boats were steered with a stern-mounted rudder, and could navigate with the assistance of a mast and sail – a useful innovation on “windy” Lake Winnipeg or Lake Athabasca. The size of each boat varied according to the route it was to traverse. For instance, a vessel built in 1884 for navigation of the Athabasca and Mackenzie Rivers was 32 feet (9.75 metres) long and could carry 112 hundred weight (5.5 tons). The cost for a boat of this size was \$120 to \$140, with the builder furnishing the lumber, while the buyer furnished the pitch, iron, etc. Vessels generally ranged in size from 20 to 40 feet (6.1 to 12.2 metres) in length, seven to eight feet (2.133 to 2.43 metres) in width and three to four feet (91.44 to 122 centimetres) in depth. The boats were capable of carrying, more or less, about 3,200 kilograms (! 7,000 pounds), and were rowed with oars about 20 feet (6.1 metres) long.



Prior to the dominance of steamers after 1859, more than 200 York boats and 1200 men – mostly Métis – were traversing western and northern waterways. Two or three boats made up a transportation brigade. The manager of the trading store contracted out men’s services for the trip. They received half their pay up front to help support their families while they were away. The men carried a minimum of personal items, while the Company provided kettles, frying pans, tools and ropes. Because of the emphasis on the trade goods, personal items had to be compromised due to limited space in the boats. The goods, which were being transported, were not always “necessities”. Officers and their wives and daughters, on occasion, received pianos and carriages, while live bison calves were transported from Norway House to York Factory on at least one occasion.

York boat crews usually traveled within specific HBC districts. Nonetheless, the various crews occasionally met. For instance, in anticipation of supply and

trading ships arriving from Great Britain, an annual summer rendezvous of York boat crews occurred at York Factory and other HBC warehouses on Hudson Bay. Smaller inland fur trade posts sent freighters in York boats to meet ships on the western shores of Hudson Bay. After celebrating, and strengthening kinship and commercial bounds, the freighters exchanged furs and country produce for trading goods and supplies before returning inland.

A crew was generally made up of a steersman, a bowsman (who fended off rocks with a large pole and guided the boat through fast water), and eight rowers. These employees worked continuously, rowing, portaging, and carrying goods on trips commonly longer than one thousand miles, such as the annual trip from Portage La Loche to York Factory and back. Trips to and from York Factory and Red River were conducted twice a year in the middle to late nineteenth century and were made for the purpose of bringing goods to Red River, which had arrived at York Factory via HBC ships. The first York boats left around the beginning of June.

The boatmen were commonly men who were indebted to the posts and were working their debt off by engaging in a trip to York Factory. Many men trained for work as boaters or tripmen when they were boys old enough to carry packs around the trade posts. In this way, the posts were ensured with a supply of men from which to draw upon for packing cargo and boating. Both Métis men and women worked extensively as backpackers, portaging and carrying goods to and from York boats. By looping straps around their foreheads and shoulders to support a load on their backs, packers could carry one or several 40-kilogram parcels in single file columns over the trails. Some men carried loads in excess of 80 to 160 kilograms at a time. The packers had to have strong necks and backs

in order to support this weight and had to avoid tripping over rocks or tree roots. Packers were expected to traverse portages at a rate of more than a kilometre in ten minutes, with a short rest between marches.

Stops along a water transport route were for meals and sleeping, and fishing and hunting. These latter two activities were common means of keeping supplied with fresh food without having to transport any. Camp spots were level sheltered places upon which tents could be erected. If passengers were accompanying the brigades, men would have to serve them their meals, wash dishes and set up their tents, though they were paid better for these services. After a trip, which commonly lasted several weeks, the men were paid and the merchandise for the next winter's supply was loaded up to be transported. A feast and a dance were held for the men at the end of a trip to celebrate their hard work, and the fact that they had simply survived an often-dangerous journey! Though the work was arduous and long, many people recounted those days as very fulfilling and dear to them.

Portaging a York boat was necessary when changing water routes, or when faced with dangerous rapids. Unfortunately, because of their size and weight, which was much greater than a canoe, portaging a York boat was an onerous task. Portaging was done in two stages: one for moving the boat and the other for moving cargo. Unlike canoes, a York boat could not be carried on the backs of its crew. Instead, when moving a York boat inland, Métis boatmen had to cut a swath about three metres wide through the bush, using felled trees as rollers. An alternative to portaging a York boat past dangerous rapids was tracking. Using ropes and harnesses, the men walked on shore and pulled the boat through the water until they bypassed the treacherous stretch. If there were

little or no shoreline, the men would wade chest-deep in freezing water. This too could prove dangerous and many drowned attempting this activity.

Operations to build York boats typically commenced in July or August. A boat builder and assistant, along with ten or twenty men, traveled to a suitable stand of spruce or tamarack trees to chop down enough wood to make the required number of boats. A full time boat builder employed at Lower Fort Garry in 1865 made an annual wage ranging from £35 to £40. Some of the wages that temporary employees at Lower Fort Garry received in 1868-1869 are as follows:

Work	Per	Payment
Boat repair/carpentry	Day	3 Shillings 6 pence to 4 shillings
Making oars	1 oar	6 Pence
Skiff building	Day	3 Shillings 6 pence to 4 shillings

Master York boat builders earned £ 30 a year, one of the highest wages paid to a non-commissioned officer.

The workers cut the felled trees into 6 to 13 metre lengths for the different sections of the York boat. They lashed the logs into a raft, which was poled back to the trading post with the aid of a sail. Once at the post, men cut the logs into planks using a whip saw. The two-man whip saw teams could produce an average of 15 to 25 planks a day. The boat builder and his assistant then fashioned the planks, keel, ribs, and other pieces. Once built, the boat was caulked by rubbing a mixture of oakum, boiled pitch, and tar over its exterior surface. The mixture was burned over and rubbed smooth. To make the craft watertight, it was submerged and left to soak for three days so that the wood and caulking swelled. It took 20 to 30 days to construct a York boat. In 1884, York boat builders in and around what is now Lac La Biche, Alberta charged

\$120.00 to \$140.00 per boat. The buyer had to supply the pitch, iron, and other necessary materials.

Land Transportation

In their early history, the Métis were closely tied to the water transportation systems of the fur trade. However, with the merger of the two rival fur-trading companies (the NWC and the HBC) in 1821, many Métis became unemployed. In order to make a living, many of these Métis became increasingly nomadic and began hunting bison and trading with Americans. As a result, the Métis became very adept at using various modes of land transportation including Red River carts. Methods of land transportation were very different than water transport since they were generally more regional, and often ran north-south rather west-east as the water systems. Land transportation such as Red River carts were very useful and practical on the southern prairie, where there were few navigable water systems.

The Métis Red River Carts.

One of the intrinsic symbols of Métis nationhood is the Red River cart. In fact, the logo for the Métis Nation of Alberta has a Red River carts on it. The Red River cart has become, like the fur trade sash, a passionate and powerful symbol of Métis nationhood in Western Canada. These noisy but versatile carts crisscrossed what are now the Prairie Provinces, Ontario, North Dakota, Montana and Minnesota. Among First Nations and Euro-North Americans the carts became identified with the Métis. In fact, "Plains First Nations" sign language for the Métis literally meant "half-wagon, half-man!"

While the inspiration for the Red River cart came from European carting traditions, the materials used were indigenous to the Plains and its construction was distinctly Métis. Although there were no standard measurements for a Red River cart, it typically had a box measuring two metres in length, one metre in height, and approximately 84 centimetres in width. Its axles were two metres long, its wheels one to two metres in diameter, and its shafts, measuring four metres each, ran from the box to the horse or ox. Its hubs were usually made from elm, wheel rims from ash or oak, and the axle from maple. All the carts' wooden pieces were fashioned together by sinew and rope. When the carts broke down, all that was needed for their repair was a bluff of trees, an axe, saw, screw auger, and draw knife. Even the nails on a Métis-made Red River cart were wooden, unlike the metal nails used by the fur trade companies. Red River carts made a terrible squealing noise when moving because their wooden axles and wheels could not be effectively lubricated. A First Nations' legend maintains that the bison deserted the Plains because they wanted to escape from the carts' hideous noise!

The first carts were quite small. Larger, better-constructed carts made their way onto the transportation scene around the start of the nineteenth century, possibly by 1803, when improved wheels were being manufactured. These larger, spoked wheels were dished, or curved inward, and provided greater stability and handling for the carts.

For the Métis, the Red River cart was an all purpose utility vehicle and a makeshift home. Métis families used the Red River carts to move their possessions while migrating or resource harvesting. The carts also provided migrating Métis with temporary living quarters and shelter from the elements. Women fashioned decorated covers for the carts from bison hides or canvas,

which were supported by an arched frame of cut saplings. When disassembled, Red River carts also became temporary rafts for water crossings. Once its wheels were removed and reattached under the box and its bottom was enclosed in a buffalo hide tarp, the cart and its cargo could be rafted across rivers and streams. In the winter, the Red River cart's passenger box, when placed on runners, served as a temporary horse-drawn sleigh.

The Red River cart was also used as defensive mechanism when the Métis were threatened. When the Métis had frequent battles over control of the bison hunting grounds with the Sioux in the 1840s and 1850s, they often formed compact defensive circles with their Red River Carts when they met Sioux war parties. Inside the circle, women, children, and animals could hide safely, while men, old and young, would man the defences. At the Battle of Grand Coteau in 1851, the Métis dug trenches and rifle pits around their defensive circle of Red River carts and won a resounding victory against the Dakota Sioux. Henceforth, the Sioux, impressed by Métis courage and martial skill, never made war with the Métis again. Some even fought with the Métis during the 1885 Resistance. The Boers, Dutch farmers in South Africa, used a similar tactic against the Zulus and the British.

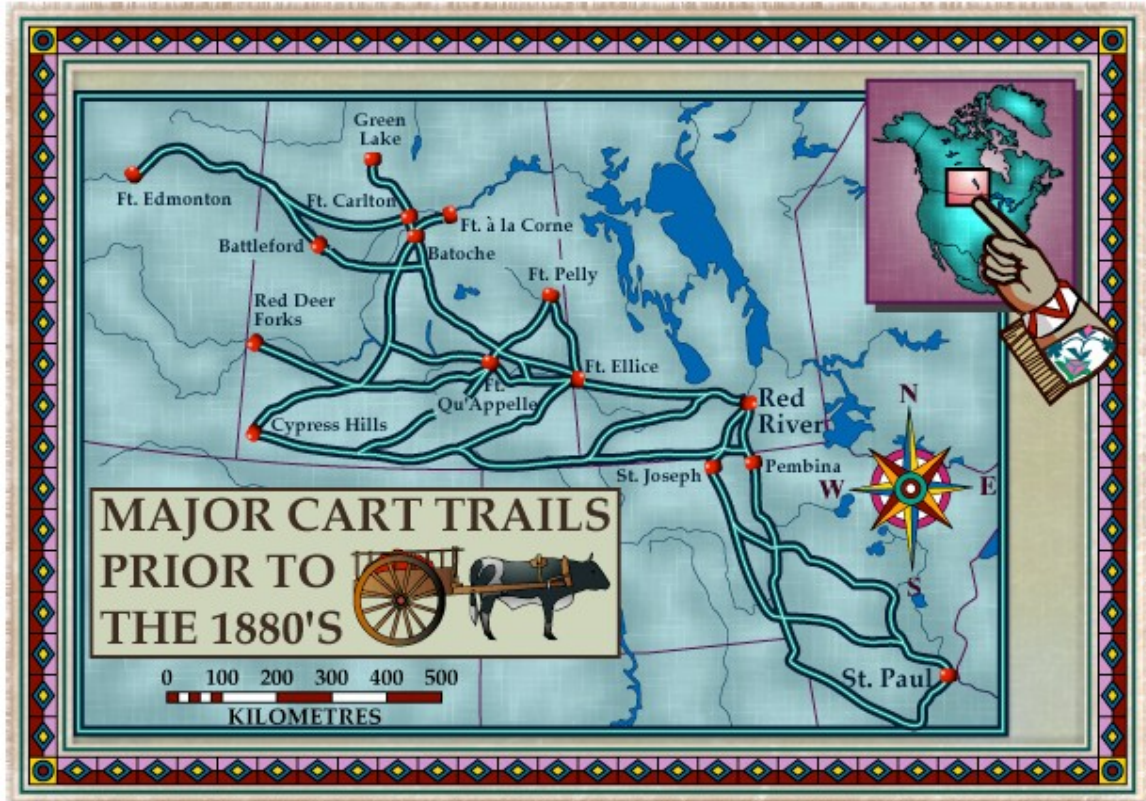
Red River carts revolutionized the way trade goods were transported in the western interior of North America before the advent of railways and automobiles. A horse-powered Red River cart could transport the same amount of cargo as four packhorses. Horse drawn Red River carts were able to carry more than 200 kilograms at a rate of up to 80 kilometres a day. The same carts pulled by oxen could carry almost 500 kilograms at a rate of about 30 kilometres a day. By tying several carts together, one person could control a team of oxen

and carts and usually avoid getting stuck in mud, a common problem for individual carts. These innovations decreased freighting costs, while increasing the amount of goods transported. Red River carts hauled such goods as pemmican, buffalo hides, furs, moccasins, decorated tanned skin clothes, sugar, tobacco, tea, powder, shot, bullets, point blankets, cloth, vermilion, axes, knives, files, copper kettles, guns and alcohol.

As the Métis became free traders in the 1830s and 1840s, Red River carts eventually superseded York boats in the volume of freight hauled. By 1869, approximately 2,500 carts left the Red River Settlement for St. Paul, Minnesota, outside of the jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company. Cart trails established by Métis freighters connected trading centres and posts, a vital development in flood prone areas such as the Missouri, Red and Assiniboine river basins. The most important Red River cart trails connected the Red River settlement to what's now Pembina, North Dakota, and St. Paul, Minnesota. Other trails paralleled settlement along the Assiniboine River from Portage La Prairie and then Fort Ellice. At this point, the trail divided into two, with one branch going to Fort Pelly in the north while the other moved westward to Fort Qu'Appelle, in present-day Saskatchewan. This western branch then split with one segment tracing its way to the Cypress Hills while the other segment going to Batoche, Fort Carleton, Battleford, and the vicinity of Edmonton.

Carts were also used to transport goods into the forest. Prior to the building of the railways in the early twentieth century in northeastern Alberta, cart transportation actually superseded watercraft use. For instance, in 1889, all the goods received at Lac La Biche arrived overland via freighters from Calgary. The cost for shipping materials along this route was \$5.50 for first class freight, \$5.24

for second-class freight and \$4.90 for third class freight. Carts transported goods from St. Paul Minnesota to Lac La Biche then York boats hauled the cargo down the Athabasca River.



With the coming of transcontinental railways in the late nineteenth century, opportunities to haul freight on Red River carts greatly diminished. However, even as European homesteaders entered the Prairie West, the Métis used Red River carts to haul wood, seneca root, buffalo bones and other raw materials to market. Throughout western North America, many museums and local heritage centres have samples of Red River Carts on display. In places such as the Métis Farm, in Lebret, Saskatchewan, the Métis still make Red River carts to better connect with the lives of their ancestors.

Other modes of Land Transportation: Snowshoes, Dogs and Horses

Prior to using the more familiar Red River carts, the Métis also used snowshoes, dogs and horses for transportation. Snowshoes were used in places where horses could not travel such as the boreal forest in wintertime. Snowshoe travel among the Métis was definitely a carry-over from their First Nations foremothers' cultures. Snowshoes greatly eased movement in the wintertime and were invaluable to trappers and traders traveling overland. Made of lightweight materials and covering a large oval or circular surface area, these wonderfully engineered items allowed the wearer to walk upon several feet of snow. In their most simple form, snowshoes are circular hoops of wood with netting and a boot binding inside. The more expertly crafted items are remarkable in their craftsmanship and durability.

Snowshoe frames were fashioned from saplings, which were peeled and boiled to allow the maker to shape them. An important feature of good snowshoes was to maintain an even grain around the frame, which gave the frame resilience and a long life. Birch wood is a favourite because of its toughness, lightness and workability. Weaving wet rawhide, or babiche, inside the wooden frame, made the webbing. When it dried, the rawhide became very taut. Beaver and caribou hide are the best materials to use as a weaving babiche because they do not stretch much after being attached to a frame, even when wet. Moose hide, though of lower quality than beaver or caribou hide, is widely used in the western Sub-Arctic.

Men typically built the frames of snowshoes, preparing, shaping and binding the saplings. It was part of the woman's role to prepare line for and knit the men's

snowshoes that he wore for traveling the trapline and hunting in the winter. However, many men were practiced in all the skills required to make snowshoes. It was an essential skill to have if one was on the trapline or hunting particularly if an old pair broke or an unseasonable snowstorm caught a person unawares.

The First Nations used dogs as beasts of burden since time immemorial. The Métis also realized the usefulness of the animals in transporting people and goods in remote locales. Dogs were used to pack equipment when men went hunting, carrying blankets and food on their backs while the hunters marched on snowshoes. When breaking a camp, people would attach travois to the backs of their dogs to transport the items people did not have enough hands to carry. Teams of dogs also pulled carioles. The Métis decorated their carioles by painting them and decorated the dog harnesses, blankets and packsaddles with tassels, the bushy tails of fur animals and bells. Dogs also pulled larger sleighs called jumpers, which could be used for transporting goods as well as for traveling in. Toboggans were used by people to carry items in the winter and from time to time dog teams were attached to the toboggans.

A team of between 8 and 15 dogs was required to pull loaded sleds, and they could travel for hours without rest. Dogs were a relatively cheap form of transportation. They were fed from scraps from kills, the owners could eat them in an emergency and they were self-propagating with puppies replacing the dogs, which could no longer pull sleds. In the north, between Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan, dog teams were the primary means of transporting mail for decades as well as being an important means of conveying the spoils of hunting and trapping, moving camps and aiding in the subsistence economy of Métis families in hauling commercial goods. However, with the advent of

snowmobiles, the railroad and airplane, many communities abandoned the habitual use of dog teams

Horsemanship and the use of the horse in transportation was a defining trait of the Plains Métis who made their living as bison hunters and post-provisioners. They were riders par excellence, able to ride at full gallop through a stampeding herd of bison while shooting and reloading muzzle-loading guns. The Plains Métis were the dominant horsemen of the Prairies in the middle nineteenth century, unrivalled in their use of the horse and gun. This lifestyle carried on longest amongst those Métis who had undergone acculturation into Plains Indians groups, often long after other Métis had given up the bison hunting lifestyle. On the Plains of North America, most of the horses used by Indigenous horse people came from Spanish America, in what is now Mexico. However, some Métis horses may have come from Lower Canada, which produced the distinctively short but sturdy Cheval canadien or the "Canadian Horse" a descendant of the very same war ponies used by Norman Knights to conquer England in 1066.

Aside from using fleet-footed horses for hunting and travel, packhorses were commonly employed in the overland movement of camps and supplies and to pull Red River carts. Horses also pulled carioles, cutters and toboggans in the winter. The cariole, a small sled made from tanned buffalo hides, was trimmed with ribbons, bells and paintings and was used primarily for pleasure. The runners were constructed from birch, as was the cariole frame. In the winter, the Métis took the wheels off their Red River carts and the horses pulled the passenger box of the cart over the snow.

Questions and Activities:

- 1) What were some of the boats used in the fur trade? What purpose did each vehicle serve? What sort of natural materials were these boats made from? How do you think these boats would match up against today's fibreglass crafts?
- 2) Go to a museum or surf the World Wide Web and find an example of an old fur trade canoe or York boat. Then study how it is made. Make notes and a few sketches or take photographs and borrow books from your school and public library. Draft your own design and collect the necessary raw materials to make your own scale model. Popcycle sticks and other pieces of processed wood or plastic may be used, however, birch bark, willow and other softwood branches and twigs would provide you with a more authentic model. Stain and then apply varnish to your scale model. For sails, use a nice piece of cloth. This is a fairly labour intensive project. After doing this, you will appreciate the efforts of Métis and other Aboriginal crafts people to construct authentic canoes and York boats.
- 3) Why did the York boat eventually replace the canoe as the primary vehicle of the fur trade? What vehicles eventually replaced the York boat as Rupert's Land's main transportation source?
- 4) With raw materials and processed wood products and plastics design a Red River cart based on examples in your local museum, the World Wide Web or in books.
- 5) Why was the Red River cart such a practical vehicle? In what ways were they used by the Métis?
- 6) What industry was the Red River cart used for? Why were Red River carts so popular? The historic Métis had the ability to adapt and change to cultural and economic activities. After the fall of the great fur trade some time after 1840 what trade did they participate in which they extensively used Red River carts? What were some of the goods, which would have likely been carried, in a typical Red River cart? How big could Red River cart brigades get? Were they like the "Wagon Trains" from the American West?
- 7) Why has the Red River cart become such an emotional symbol for Métis nationhood? As gens de libre or "Free People", in what ways did the Métis use their Red River carts to defy others?
- 8) What was similar about the Red River Cart and fur trade routes used by the Métis? What was the extent of these routes? Did these overlap? Are these transcontinental transportation systems similar to highways and railways? Draw maps of each of these transportation systems and compare them. By engaging in this activity, you will see that the fur trade really did open up the western half of Canada.
- 9) What innovations in transportation made the Red River cart obsolete?
- 10) In what conditions could a dog sled be used? What advantages were there in running a dog team compared to a team of oxen pulling Red River carts? Were there any disadvantages, which you could think of?

11) How did a Métis boat builder construct canoes and other watercraft? What materials were used? When did construction of York boats usually begin? Make a list of items used to construct a York boat and make an outline of the various stages in making a York boat

13) List the various kinds of vehicles that the Métis traditionally used. Why were these vehicles used? In the past why was water transportation favoured over land?

14) Why were snowshoes such a valuable means of transportation? How are they made and what are the best items to use in their construction? Go to a museum and find a pair of snowshoes. What kinds of materials were used in their construction? What kinds of materials could a modern pair of snowshoes be made of? If you are lucky enough, buy a pair of snowshoes at a garage sale. When winter comes try them out, snowshoeing is a fun winter activity, which expend a great deal of energy.

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