

# **REPORT ON THE RED SKY MÉTIS INDEPENDENT NATION**

**(THE HISTORICAL ANCESTRAL INDIGENOUS MÉTIS FIRST FAMILIES OF  
UPPER CANADA)**

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**INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF WORK**

The following paper examines the history of the Red Sky Métis Independent Nation (RSMIN) in the Lake Superior area. Although many sources have been researched, this report does not purport to be an exhaustive examination or analysis of the topic. Due to time constraints, the author concentrated her efforts on what she considered to be some of the major sources of information to outline the following issues:

- (a) the historical underpinnings for the RSMIN claim to Métis harvesting rights (i.e. hunting, fishing, and trapping);
- (b) the factual - and at least in a preliminary way - the legal reasons why RSMIN members qualify under the tests for Métis aboriginal harvesting rights set out in R. v. Powley or other legal tests applicable to the aboriginal (or treaty) harvesting rights of the RSMIN;
- (c) RSMIN's view regarding the historic and contemporary Métis community in the Robinson-Superior treaty area or other areas.

In order to address the above, the report attempts to convey evidence under the following topics:

- the existence of the Métis community prior to European control in the area,
- a description of this community,
- the background to the community's participation in the Robinson Superior Treaty,
- the way in which the Crown implemented the treaty with respect to "halfbreeds", and
- the continuity of the Métis community following the establishment of European control.

Wherever information was available, the author has also extracted evidence related to Métis harvesting activities.

For the purposes of this paper, some primary research was done (some Hudson's Bay Company records, records of the Department of Indian Affairs, records from the Ontario Archives, and Census of Canada records) and numerous secondary sources were consulted, both published and unpublished. Furthermore, the author has relied upon her own report written in 1998 entitled "Robinson Treaty Métis - Historical Report", especially for information regarding the Métis participation in the Robinson Superior Treaty and the implementation of the treaty by the federal government.

The RSMIN exists today as the modern emanation and evolution of a portion of the traditional and distinctive Métis community resident in the Lake Superior region of Ontario prior to the assertion of Crown control over the region, and the distinctive Métis community that existed at the time of the making of the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

In its decision in R. v. Powley (September 19, 2003), the Supreme Court of Canada held that there was an existing distinctive community of Métis that had a recognizable group identity separate from their Indian and European forebears in the Upper Great Lakes region at the time when Europeans achieved political and legal control in that area and further, that the respondents Steve and Roddy Powley, as present-day members of that community, possess an aboriginal right, protected by s. 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, to hunt for food in that region.

The RSMIN intervened in the Powley case at the Supreme Court of Canada level to make submissions in support of their aboriginal and treaty harvesting rights. Those submissions were that the RSMIN is a Métis community that has evolved from that same historic Métis community in the Upper Great Lakes region, and their members thus possesses all of the aboriginal rights of the Métis community in that region, and in addition to those aboriginal rights have treaty rights obtained by entering into the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

The Supreme Court of Canada in Powley stated that the fact that the Powleys' ancestors became status Indians under the Robinson-Superior Treaty and in fact resided on Indian reserves for a period of time does not negate Métis identity (at paragraph 35). By the same reasoning, participation by Métis in the Robinson-Superior Treaty and recognition of treaty harvesting rights should not deny the members of RSMIN their Métis aboriginal rights, in addition to treaty protection of those rights.

In 1850, the Lake Superior Métis were engaged in numerous traditional harvesting activities described in this report. These activities are now, after Powley, protected as Métis rights under s. 35 the Constitution Act, 1982, and in the case of the RSMIN, additionally by the express terms of the Robinson Superior Treaty:

...to allow the said chiefs and their tribes the full and free privilege to hunt over the territory now ceded by them, and to fish in the waters thereof as they have heretofore been in the habit of doing, ...

While the legal parameters of Métis harvesting rights have yet to be outlined by the courts, and no court decisions have yet dealt with Métis treaty harvesting rights, there is very good reason to believe that the Red Sky Métis enjoy both aboriginal and treaty harvesting rights throughout their traditional territory. Accordingly, they request an opportunity to negotiate a harvesting agreement with the Province of Ontario.

The purpose of the present paper is to provide the historical context and evidence supporting the RSMIN's assertion that they possess harvesting rights within the Robinson-Superior Treaty area by pointing to their continued occupancy and use of the area.

According to the Supreme Court of Canada in Powley, a Métis community is defined as a group of Métis with a distinctive collective identity, living together in the same geographic area and sharing a common way of life. The Métis are distinctive peoples who “developed their own customs, way of life and recognizable group identity separate from their Indian or Inuit and European forebears.”<sup>1</sup> This unique Métis identity is partly derived from the fact that they had special skills and qualities which made them indispensable members of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal economic partnerships. For example, they acted as interpreters, diplomats, guides, couriers, freighters, traders, and suppliers in these partnerships.<sup>2</sup> As well, the Métis developed a cohesive group identity separate from that of their First Nation or European ancestors. This distinctive identity expresses itself in the unique culture and way of life established by the Métis people.

The following section of the report will outline the evolution of the Métis community in the Lake Superior area from its beginnings up to the Robinson-Superior Treaty.

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<sup>1</sup> Supreme Court of Canada, R. v. Powley, 2003, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, vol. 4, chapter 5: “Métis Perspectives,” 1996, vol. 4, pp. 199-200.



**PART 1: HISTORIC INDIGENOUS Métis COMMUNITY****A. General History of the Métis in the Lake Superior Area (North Shore)*****The Eighteenth Century***

Trade between Europeans and First Nations was the basis for early contact between the Ojibway (Anishnaabeg) of the Upper Great Lakes and French traders, who visited Sault Ste. Marie to exchange their European items for furs as early as 1640.<sup>3</sup> In an interview with a Métis resident on Lake Superior in the 1850s, Georg Kohl related what his informant had said: "...The savage loved the Frenchman, and accepted the French religion and the French trade; and the French 'black coats' took good care of the Indian, and lived with him in his wigwam. And the savage went hunting for the Frenchman, and so he hunted the game for him a long, long time, and both lived together in peace and friendship."<sup>4</sup>

As Jacqueline Peterson points out, "Intermarriage went hand-in-glove with the trade in skins and furs from the first decades of discovery. ..." <sup>5</sup> Historian Arthur Ray indicates that intermarriages between early French traders and their aboriginal customers occurred as a continuation of a tradition of linking two cultures (beforehand, two aboriginal cultures, such as the Huron and the Ojibway) in order to maintain a trade relationship. Through intermarriage, the traders would develop family ties with the extended families of their wives and the band/tribe to which they belonged. Ray writes that these intermarriages likely began in the Upper Great Lakes region in the late 1650s.<sup>6</sup> Ray further points out that such marriages led to the development of a Métis population.<sup>7</sup> The children of such marriages would usually be instructed in both the French language and their mother tongue.

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<sup>3</sup> Bishop, Charles A. "The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade: An Historical and Ecological Study," in *Cultures and Communities: A Series of Monographs Native Peoples*, Sally M. Weaver, ed. Toronto: Hold, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, Limited. pp. 8-9

<sup>4</sup> Kohl, Johann Georg. *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among The Lake Superior Ojibway*. Translated by Robert E. Bieder. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985, pp. 370-371

<sup>5</sup> Peterson, Jacqueline. "Prelude to Red River: A Social Portrait of the Great Lakes Métis," p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History of the Robinson Treaties Area before 1860," dated March 17, 1998 [prepared for R. v. Powley], p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Ray, Arthur J. "An Economic History...", p. 15.

French trading posts in the Great Lakes area garrisoned after 1714 included Kaministiquia on the northwest shore of Lake Superior, established in 1717; and Fort Nipigon, in operation between 1727 and 1750, on the north shore of Lake Nipigon.<sup>8</sup> Today it is known that the original families of the RSMIN lived at and around these two posts, as well as others.

Peterson provides a description of the characteristics of these trading communities, like Fort Kaministiquia or Fort Nipigon, on the Upper Great Lakes during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

All Great Lakes trading communities founded between 1702 and 1815 shared two characteristics. First, such towns were occupationally monolithic, their residents dependent almost exclusively upon a single industry - the fur trade. ...voyageurs and merchants alike - drew upon a local subsistence base rather than on European imports, not only in terms of foodstuffs, but in terms of clothing, tools, utensils and building materials, all of which, if not manufactured to suit Indian tastes and sold as trade goods, were borrowed or adapted from neighbouring tribal populations. Second, such towns grew as a result of and were increasingly dominated by the offspring of Canadian trade employees and Indian women who, having reached their majority, were intermarrying among themselves and rearing successive generations of Métis. In both instances, these communities did not represent an extension of French, and later British colonial culture, but were rather "adaptation[s] to the Upper Great Lakes environment."<sup>9</sup>

The Métis living at these forts, then, depended almost entirely upon hunting, trapping and fishing for their subsistence. Additionally Peterson elaborates:

[Métis] Villages of this type usually housed as few as one and as many as four or five traders, their native wives and children, plus voyageurs, engages (fur trade employees), and, if the trader was wealthy, slaves or domestic servants. The sites selected most often skirted the wintering ground of a hunting band with whom a marital alliance had been forged.

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<sup>8</sup> Peterson, Jacqueline, "Many roads to Red River: Métis genesis in the Great Lakes region, 1680-1815," in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, J. Peterson and J. S. H. Brown, eds. Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1985, p. 45.

<sup>9</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads...", p. 41. Quotation is from Lyle M. Stone, *Fort Michilimackinac 1715-1781: An Archaeological Perspective on the Revolutionary Frontier*, Publications of the Museum (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, 1974), 355.

Traders' wives in these intimate encampments were likely to be close relatives - sisters or nieces - of the local band leader rather than outsiders.

...

Population rarely exceeded one hundred people, most of whom were transient engages hired for the winter hunting season. Since the purpose of these communities was to engross the traffic of a hunting band occupying a limited region with limited wildlife resources, urban concentration or extensive cultivation was senseless. As it was, depletion of game reserves caused by overhunting fueled a persistent native search for underexploited grounds and the continual migration of traders toward richer fur fields. To the extent that Indian hunters and white traders consciously attempted to "manage" the resources of a particular region, trading posts could be expected to rotate seasonally among several locations. Ultimately, however, the most intense activity shifted to the north and west, and as this occurred new trading hamlets sprang into existence.

By 1815, tangible evidence of a 150-year-long alliance between men of the fur trade and native women was everywhere in abundance. Throughout the upper Great Lakes region, towns and villages populated by a people of mixed heritage illustrated the vitality of the intermarriage compact. ...<sup>10</sup>

Peterson also explains that there was an established system for the way in which the intermarriages worked: "...Métis sons were more likely, at least for the first marriage, to wed native women, rather than Métis in order to reinforce kin ties and to propagate sons with easy access to the local bands. Conversely, Métis daughters generally married other Métis or, if members of the elite, incoming Euroamericans... The result was a growing core population of Métis at the fur trade settlements."<sup>11</sup> By 1820, according to Peterson, Métis identity had become regionalized rather than place-specific because of the close ties with the tribes.<sup>12</sup>

Nonetheless, as pointed out in the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, "Ancestry is only one component of Métis identity. Cultural factors are significant; a people exists because of a common culture. When someone thinks of themselves as Métis, it is because they identify with the culture of a Métis people; and when a Métis people accepts someone as a member, it is because that person is considered to share in its culture."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads...", pp. 61-62.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>13</sup> RCAP Report, 1996, vol. 4, chapter 5, p. 201.



Peterson further expounds on the fact that Métis identity did not centre solely on their occupational status:

One of the primary reasons that Great Lakes Métis were able to construct a separate identity was their monopolization of the middle occupational rungs of the fur trading system. ... functioning primarily as traders, voyageurs and clerks who journeyed to and lived among their native clients.

...However, the core denominator of Métis identity was not participation in the fur trading network per se, but the Métis' intermediary stance between Indian and European societies. Thus, while tied to the "occupation," Métis magnified their symbolic role by service as portage and ferry tenders, mail carriers, guides, interpreters, negotiators, barge and oarmen, officers and spies in the Indian service, as well as tribal business agents and employees

of missions and Indian agencies. In each case, they functioned not only as human carriers linking Indians and Europeans, but as buffers behind which the ethnic boundaries of antagonistic cultures remained relatively secure.<sup>14</sup>

This new Métis identity was reflected in all areas of their lives:

The living arrangements, material culture and occupations of Métis set them apart from both their Indian kin and neighbors [sic] and from European society to the east. The establishment of permanent villages and towns, geographically separate and visually distinct from adjacent band villages, was a critical hallmark of Métis development (Corp n.d., Reminiscences). ...

The physical layout of Métis villages was vaguely reminiscent of earlier French string settlements fronting the St. Lawrence, settlements which themselves had been adaptations to a fur trading economy rather than replications of European agricultural village patterns. Lacking a core, rectangular grid structure, and in many cases verifiable land titles, Métis towns rambled along the shoreline of inland rivers and lakes, seemingly without design.

...  
Like Métis architecture, which blended Algonkian construction techniques and materials with Norman design and comfort, the clothing, cuisine, amusements, transportation, medical practices, language, belief and custom of Great Lakes Métis borrowed and adapted as freely from native culture as they did from European cultural tradition. ... Métis voyageurs were visually identifiable as much by their blue pantaloons, capot and fiddle, as by their leggings, red finger-woven sash, moccasins, hair feathers and tatoos.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads...", pp. 54-55.

<sup>15</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads...", pp. 50-52, 53.

Similarly, "Métis cultures grew out of ways of life dictated by the resource industry roles of the early Métis. For those who served the fur trade, the birth of the unique Métis language, Michif, was a consequence of using both French and Indian languages. The need to travel inspired mobile art forms: song, dance, fiddle music, decorative clothing. ..."16

After the British defeat of the French in 1763, a new group of English-speaking traders took over the fur trade in place of the French. They recruited workers from the Montreal area. These various traders would later join to create the North West Company, in 1776. The system of intermarriage with First Nations continued. Ray points out:

Significantly, substantial numbers of NWC servants married local Native women à la façon du pays. Eventually many retired or deserted in the country. ...HBC record keepers identified those who did so as 'freemen'. This means that most freemen were Métis, or had fathered Métis families. Freemen engaged in a variety of economic activities. Typically they combined small-scale farming, hunting, trapping and fishing with seasonal wage labour. Some also operated as independent fur traders. ...17

As seen above, "half-breeds" and "freemen" were often interchangeable terms. The voyageurs often comprised "half-breeds" as well. There were two different groups of voyageurs: licensed voyageurs from Montreal and homegrown voyageurs - Métis from the back settlements. The "freemen" conducted their own independent trade or joined with a local independent trader, and their territory ranged from Sault Ste. Marie to Red River.<sup>18</sup>

### ***The Nineteenth Century***

Goodier provides an account of the development of rival fur trading posts on the north shore of Lake Superior in the early nineteenth century. The resultant increase in the number of trading posts would have meant increased employment opportunities for the Métis voyageurs and entrepreneurs:

A number of fur-trading interests preceded the Hudson's Bay Company to Lake Superior country. Posts had been maintained by Montreal-based firms since the early eighteenth century. Finally, in 1804, the rival XY and North West companies merged and vigorously sought to undermine Hudson's Bay Company interest in western Canada. The British firm countered by creating posts between Lake Superior and Lake Athabasca in close proximity to those already established by the North West Company. The small establishment of Pointe de Meuron challenged the monopoly of the North West Company post near the mouth of the Kaministiquia River. From 1797 to 1803 and again from 1816 to

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<sup>16</sup> RCAP Report, 1996, vol. 4, chapter 5, p. 202.

<sup>17</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads...", p. 49.

1821, Hudson's Bay Company employees resided a short distance from the fort at Michipicoten. The amalgamation of the two companies in 1821 brought the North West Company post under Hudson's Bay Company jurisdiction. In addition to the major posts of Michipicoten House, Pic Post, Fort William, and Fort Sault Ste. Marie, seasonal outposts were maintained at the Agawa River, on Batchawana Bay, and at Red Rock. This last outpost generally sought supplies of whitefish from Nipigon Bay and was further supported by a post on the northwestern shore of Lake Nipigon. ...<sup>19</sup>

**Fort William had been constructed by the North West Company between 1802 and 1804, on the north side of the mouth of the Kaministiquia River.<sup>20</sup> At that time, Métis settlements had been forming around the fur trading settlements of the Great Lakes for over one hundred years. By the early nineteenth century, Arthur Ray reports that there were over fifty of these communities.<sup>21</sup> One of these communities was that of the forebears of the RSMIN in the Fort William and Port Arthur area.**

Jacqueline Peterson outlines the beginning of recognition of a distinct **Métis** community in the Great Lakes area around 1815, which "distinctiveness was fully apparent to outsiders, if not to themselves."<sup>22</sup> Peterson specifies how the Métis were distinct from their European and First Nation ancestors during this period:

These people were neither adjunct relative-members of tribal villages nor the standard bearers of European civilization in the wilderness. Increasingly, they stood apart or, more precisely, in between. By the end of the last struggle for empire in 1815, their towns, which were visually, ethnically and culturally distinct from neighbouring Indian villages and "white towns" along the eastern seaboard, stretched from Detroit and Michilimackinac at the east to the Red River at the northwest.<sup>23</sup>

**A description of the North West Company's Fort William attempts to estimate the number of permanent residents there and describes the make-up of the community around the turn of the nineteenth century:**

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<sup>19</sup> Goodier, J. L., "The Nineteenth Century Fisheries of the Hudson's Bay Company Trading Posts on Lake Superior: A Biogeographical Study," in The Canadian Geographer, P. J. Smith, ed., vol. 27 (4), Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984, p. 342.

<sup>20</sup> Campbell, G. The Final Adventure: Old Fort William. Thunder Bay: Guide Printing and Publishing, 1980, pp. 7-8.

<sup>21</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 47.

<sup>22</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads ...", pp. 38-39.

<sup>23</sup> Peterson, J., "Many roads...", p. 41



**Actual numbers of those employed by the North West Company during the winter, ranged up to about 25. However, most of them had married native or Métis women, so these - plus any children - might also be seen around the premises. In addition, a small settlement of "free" Canadians lived across the river. These were ex-voyageurs, who lived with their native families after their North West Company contracts had expired. They provided any extra labour needed around the fort, so all told, there was a modest little settlement at Fort William.**

...  
**The farm, too, was inhabited all year round. Its occupants were French Canadian labourers, who lived in the cottages with their Indian or Métis wives and families. Indeed, it is believed that some of these people could well have become the first permanent settlers of the Thunder Bay region.<sup>24</sup>**

Some ancestors of the RSMIN lived in this settlement across from Fort William. To counter the threat of the North West Company, the Hudson's Bay Company had to expand its operations into the interior from James Bay and Hudson's Bay; but to do so, they had to recruit more workers. According to Ray, by the early nineteenth century, "the Métis became a major component of the [Hudson's Bay] company's seasonal and full-time labour force..."<sup>25</sup>

Arthur Ray details the effects this expansion of the fur trade companies would have on the local aboriginal (including Métis) population:

The Métis benefited the most from this development [expanded employment opportunities through the expansion of fur trade companies] by gaining access to a wide variety of permanent skilled and unskilled jobs. 'Indians,' on the other hand, found employment mostly as seasonal (chiefly summer) workers, or obtained short-term contracts as provisions suppliers (hunting or fishing). The primary reason for this discriminatory hiring practice was that full-time employment drew Indian men out of the 'bush' and away from hunting and trapping. The HBC recognized that a strong hunting and trapping labour force was, after all, the driving force of the industry.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> See Campbell, G. The Final Adventure..., pp. 11-12.

<sup>25</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 19.

<sup>26</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 19.

The types of economic activities in which the Métis engaged for the fur trade, besides trapping furs for sale, included acting as guides, interpreters, hunters, traders, freighters, and crew members on vessels that plied the Great Lakes. Some Métis were expert boat-builders, a trade in high demand in the fur and fish trade business.<sup>27</sup> Louis Denis De Laronde, for example, built the first sailing vessel on Lake Superior of 25 tons burden.<sup>28</sup> Some Métis operated independent trading stations and competed against the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>29</sup> As stated in the report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples:

The special qualities and skills of the Métis population made them indispensable members of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal economic partnerships, and that association contributed to the shaping of their cultures. Using their knowledge of European and Aboriginal languages, their family connections and their wilderness skills, they helped to extend non-Aboriginal contacts deep into the North American interior. As interpreters, diplomats, guides, couriers, freighters, traders and suppliers, the early Métis people contributed massively to European penetration of North America.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to their participation in the fur trade, the Métis and First Nations people historically conducted the bulk of the fishing activities in the area of the Great Lakes.<sup>31</sup> These fisheries supplied the trading posts, as well as the subsistence needs of the Métis and First Nations.

After the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies merged in 1821, there was a sharp economic decline in the north shore of Lake Superior district. Because there was now a monopoly of the fur trade, there was no longer a need for numerous fur trade posts. Elizabeth Arthur writes of the Métis reaction: "Out of the contrast between past and present arose more dangerous delusions on the part of a number of young men, sons of

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<sup>27</sup> Lytwyn, Dr. Victor P. "Historical Report on the Métis Community at Sault Ste. Marie," 27 March 1998, pp. 5-6.

<sup>28</sup> Bowen, Dana Thomas. Memories of the Lakes, p. 15.

<sup>29</sup> Lytwyn, 1998, pp. 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> RCAP report, 1996, vol. 4, pp. 199-200.

<sup>31</sup> "Report of William Gibbard, Fishery Overseer for the Division of Lakes Huron and Superior for 1859, 31 December 1859," in Annual Report of the Superintendent of Fisheries for Upper Canada, for the year 1859, *Sessional Papers of Canada*, no. 12, 1860.

Nor'westers by Indian mothers. They felt themselves doubly dispossessed. A number of them received an excellent education; some of them had sought posts in the Hudson's Bay Company in which their fathers served, and had been refused. They assumed that the reason was their Indian ancestry. ...<sup>32</sup>

Nonetheless, Arthur Ray reports that **by the mid-eighteenth century, "the Métis accounted for nearly seventy percent of the company's [HBC] labour force in the Lake Huron, Lake Superior, and Sault Ste. Marie districts. The bulk of these Métis recruits came from Indian Country, mostly the local area."**<sup>33</sup> He adds, "Although the HBC thus depended heavily on the local Métis for its labour needs, alternative opportunities became increasingly available to these workers as the pace of economic development accelerated in the region with the expansion of the mining and lumber frontiers. ..."<sup>34</sup>

In his testimony for the Powley case, Dr. Victor Lytwyn examined pre-Conferation Indian-Crown relations on the Great Lakes in detail. Among other things, he discussed in great detail the policy of the distribution of presents by the British Crown at Manitowaning. He indicated that it was in the 1820s and 1830s at these distributions that the government began to distinguish between the Métis and First Nation populations. In order to cut back on costs, the British Crown at this point decided that the Métis and American aboriginal people would no longer be entitled to receive presents.<sup>35</sup> In this way, the government was recognizing the distinctness of the greater Métis **community on the Great Lakes.**

In the 1850s, Georg Kohl visited the aboriginal settlements in the Great Lakes, primarily to document their ethnology. In his writings, Kohl included descriptions of the Métis he had come across. Among other things, he discussed the importance of handicrafts and music to Métis culture in great detail. According to historian Arthur Ray, Kohl's observations have been substantiated by a study on present-day Métis music; that is, that it "is rooted in French Canadian 'chansons de timbre', American music tools, and Aboriginal narrative traditions." The author of a Masters Thesis on the subject, Annette Chretien, "emphasizes that music remains a key part of the oral cultural traditions of Métis people because it serves to transmit historical knowledge publicly and sustain a

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<sup>32</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. xxxvii.

<sup>33</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 45.

<sup>34</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 45.

<sup>35</sup> S.C.C. R. v. Powley, 1998, transcripts: Lytwyn, vol. 3, pp. 33-34



sense of community through the practice of 'naming.' The latter tradition involves identifying places and individuals to document those who are accepted as being members of the Métis community."<sup>36</sup>

Kohl wrote the following account about the Métis' distinctive music:

I grant that the old French Voyageurs brought many a pretty song from France into these remote countries, and you may hear on the Upper Mississippi, and in the bays and wild rivers of Lake Superior, even at the present day, an old chanson sung two hundred years ago in Normandy, but now forgotten there. But I am not speaking of that class of songs. ... I here allude especially to the songs composed on the spot which are characteristic of the land and its inhabitants, as the people paint in them their daily adventures themselves, and the surrounding nature....

The Voyageurs accompany and embroider with song nearly everything they do - their fishery, their heavy trudging at the oar, their social meetings at the camp fire; and many a jest, many a comic incident, many a moving strain... **there** serves to dispel ennui. ...

Generally they designate their own most peculiar songs as "chansons de Voyageur," and exclude from them songs they have derived from France and elsewhere.

....

As the Voyageurs...rarely travel otherwise than in canoes, the great majority of their songs are calculated for the paddling work for which they are specially intended to accompany and enliven. ...<sup>37</sup>

Additionally, Kohl made reference to "Canadian" or Métis voyageurs (boatmen, sternmen, HBC labourers), fishermen and artisans.<sup>38</sup> He noted the nicknames given to the Métis, such as Chicot, Bois brulés and Bois grillé, and to the duality of their roots, noting that one individual had both his French coat of arms and his Ojibway totem on his ring.<sup>39</sup> Thus, in Ray's view, Kohl "makes it clear that the Métis...truly were a people

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<sup>36</sup> Ray, A.J., p. 58.

<sup>37</sup> Kohl, pp. 254-255.

<sup>38</sup> See Ray, A.J., pp. 57-59.

<sup>39</sup> See Ray, A.J., p. 57.

of mixed racial ancestry, who had established a cultural identity based on their rich multi-cultural heritage.”<sup>40</sup>

The ease with which the missionaries were integrated into the Thunder Bay area in the 1850s is likely due to the large Métis population, who were, like the missionaries, Catholic and French-speaking. Elizabeth Arthur provides a synopsis of the arrival of the (French) Catholic missionaries: “It was from the United States also that the first missionaries moved into Thunder Bay. ...Two French-born Jesuit priests, Father Pierre Choné and Father Nicolas Frémot, along with Brother de Pooter...arrived at Pigeon River in the spring of 1848. Later they decided upon a different site and built the Mission of the Immaculate Conception at Fort William.”<sup>41</sup>

**In 1853, the Métis and Whites at Port Arthur had been invited by the Jesuits to settle along the Kaministiquia River, opposite the Fort William Mission, “where they gave rise to the village of Westfort”.<sup>42</sup> The town plot of Westfort was surveyed in 1860 by Thomas Wallis Herrick.<sup>43</sup> There was a varied population living there in 1870, “much of it Aboriginal or French-Canadian.”<sup>44</sup>**

During this time period, due to the depletion of fur-bearing animals, the fur trade in the Great Lakes was becoming less and less important. Because of this, some Métis began to migrate northwest, toward Red River and Minnesota. Peterson indicates that “...Most of those who remained slipped into impoverished anonymity. ...The majority, however, fled to the sanctuary of native kin, or pulled up stakes and migrated to former trading stations and new town sites close to a reservation or band village where their mediational and transportation skills could be employed for a few decades more.”<sup>45</sup> The ancestors of the RSMIN, for the most part, chose to reside with their “native kin” on or adjacent to reserves, and some moved into towns.

The foregoing section has sought to ascertain that there was a distinctive **Métis** community on the north shore of Lake Superior in the eighteenth and nineteenth

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<sup>40</sup> Ray, A.J., p. 61.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. xxix.

<sup>42</sup> Tronrud, T. J. and A. E. Epp, eds. Thunder Bay: From Rivalry to Unity. Thunder Bay: The Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, Inc., 1995, p. 181.

<sup>43</sup> Tronrud and Epp, p. 181.

<sup>44</sup> Tronrud and Epp, p. 181.

<sup>45</sup> Peterson, J., “Many roads...,” pp. 59, 61.

centuries. These people of mixed ancestry had developed their own customs, traditions and way of life by about 1815, prior to the entrenchment of European control over their traditional territory. These customs and traditions were borrowed from the two cultures, but were adapted to suit the particular way of life led by the **Métis** people. They held a unique position in the economy of the area as both a link and a buffer between the contrasting First Nation and European cultures. At the same time, the **Métis of the upper Great Lakes** developed their own culture, as evidenced through music and crafts, among other things, unique to them. The RSMIN were part of this developing **Métis** culture. They lived around specific fur trade posts (such as Fort Kaministiquia/Fort William, Fort Michipicoten and Fort Nipigon) and their families were linked with each other, as well as with those of their aboriginal customers. Their way of life dictated the use of the environment (animals, fish, water, land) for subsistence and trade purposes. Thus, the RSMIN, or a forerunner to it, had a recognizable group **Métis** identity separate from its First Nation or European forbears by the mid-nineteenth century, which had stemmed from early contact with the French in the mid-seventeenth century and which developed over time.

#### **B. Identification of some of the Red Sky Métis Families**

From the beginning of the nineteenth century<sup>46</sup>, and following the making of the Robinson Treaties in 1850, a community of people of Métis heritage have lived in the Thunder Bay area, the main town of which was then known as Prince Arthur's Landing (later Port Arthur). Their settlement at Fort William on the Kaministiquia River is recognized as one of the two first Métis settlements in Canada.<sup>47</sup>

A cemetery known as the Fort William Burying Ground, located on the banks of the Kaministiquia River, contained the remains of the ancestors of some **Métis** families, including Baptiste Deschamps, interred there in 1834 and the "Boucher child", who was buried in 1837.<sup>48</sup> The fact that the remains of Métis families were buried at Fort William indicates their continuous presence in the area. Additionally, the Red Sky Métis Independent Nation's office sits on the same land today.

The history of Métis families in the Lake Superior district can be obtained from pieces of information derived from records of the fur trade dating from the early nineteenth century. A "List of [HBC] Employees in Lake Superior District, 1829," for example, provides the names of Louis Bouchard, Pierre Camargie, Thomas Cadiont, Hyacinthe

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<sup>46</sup> See Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District...., p. xlv. See also Arthur, E. "The de Larondes of Lake Nipigon," in Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society Papers and Records, Vol. IX 1981. Pp. 31-48.

<sup>47</sup> Lorimer, The Birth of the Métis Nation. p. 28.

<sup>48</sup> "A forgotten cemetery," by Art Gunnell, in The Chronicle-Journal, Sunday, January 30, 2005.

Davilleau, Baptiste Deschamps, Joseph Dubois, Antoine Dutremble, Oliver Desautel, Joseph Fontaine...Jean Baptiste La Vallee, Jean Amable McKay, and John Robertson.<sup>49</sup> The Bouchard and Deschamps names are ancestors of the RSMIN. Elizabeth Arthur provides an overview of some of the Métis families associated with the area:

It is among the Bouchard, Laronde, Collin, and Deschamps families that one finds the longest established residents of a particular location. The Collins were in the Fort William area from the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>50</sup> Louis Larond's name appeared on a list of North West Company clerks before 1821, and he was retained, with some reluctance, usually in the Long Lac region, for more than forty years. He died at Sault Ste Marie in 1868, and two of his sons continued in the local fur trade.<sup>51</sup> A daughter had married one of the Deschamps family, whose history in the area was almost as long, extending at least as far back as the 1820s. The Nipigon post journals record the continued presence of Louis Bouchard, and of his descendants. Boucher and one of his brothers-in-law were working at Nipigon House in the spring of 1834; four years later Bouchard and one other workman, under the supervision of a clerk, constituted the summer staff at the post. One Louison Bouchard was working at the same post in the tenure of Chief Trader Robert Crawford in 1870,<sup>52</sup> while Nicholas Bouchard was in charge of one of the flying posts of the district in 1875, as was Charles Laronde (G 7).

It was the fur trade that explained the continuing presence of these families in the Thunder Bay District ...<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, Arthur notes that the Ojibway led a nomadic life due to the requirements of the fur trade, but they maintained an association with the general Lake Superior area. At least one Métis family, however, had permanently settled at a fur trade post in the early 1800s. Elizabeth Arthur states that "The only early reference that has been found to an Indian family identifying itself with one post is that of the Fainiant family of Fort William who had "been brought up from their infancy at the Fort," but even they were to be found, sometimes reluctantly, at the Pic and Nipigon."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. 62.

<sup>50</sup> Author's quotation: *The Question of the Terminus of the Branch of the Pacific Railway North Shore of Lake Superior* (Toronto, 1874), pp. 12-13, deposition of Michel Collin.

<sup>51</sup> Author's quotation: P.A.C. H.B. Co. Records, B-162-a, Pic Post Journal, 1830-1, Swanston to Keith, Aug. 25, 1830; B-129-b, Michipicoten Correspondence Book, Keith to Swanston, Sept. 18, 1830; B-134-c, Montreal Correspondence Inward, Laronde to Hopkins, Nipigon, June 16, 1867, Crawford to Clouston, Nipigon, Sept. 8, 1868; B-149-a, Nipigon Post Journal, Jan. 15, 1871.

<sup>52</sup> Author's quotation: *Ibid.*, B-149-a, Nipigon Post Journals, April 30, 1834; June 16, 1838; Dec. 18, 1870.

<sup>53</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, pp. xlv-xlv.

<sup>54</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, pp. xliii-xlv.

In a letter dated January 5, 1828, fur trader D. McIntosh at the Pic also refers to Faignant:

...He also writes me that Fanyant<sup>55</sup> told him last Fall that he would never again go to the Long Portage under any conditions, much less his brother... What can a person do with such vagabonds - displease them in the least and they will join our opponents, treat them ever so well, they cannot be depended upon when so near an opposition. It is my own humble opinion that it is bad policy to employ Indians as voyageurs in this quarter. ...<sup>56</sup>

The Faignant name would appear on the first Robinson Superior Treaty paylists and would be identified as "half-breeds".

Arthur continues: "Many of the workmen the Hudson's Bay Company employed fitted into the same pattern as the Fainiant family - Louis Bouchard of Fort William, who married Charlotte Fainiant (C 5), the Collin family of Fort William, the innumerable McKay's, and so on. Some of these men had come from Scotland or Lower Canada; some were half-breeds; almost all married Indian girls. ..."<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, there is mention of the Bouchard family at the Lake Nipigon post in 1828, being later married by Catholic priest.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, Arthur writes that "Michel Collin claimed in an affidavit sworn in 1874 that he had been born at Fort William in 1799. Like his father, Antoine, he served the North West Company and then the Hudson's Bay Company as a canoe-maker. Later, Michel Collin acted as an interpreter, and at one time was in charge of the L'Original post."<sup>59</sup> Other references to Collin occur in a letter dated 1845 from the Chief Trader at Fort William: "Michel Collin, assisted by John Finlayson, preparing the wood for five additional North Canoes..."<sup>60</sup>

**Louis Denis de Laronde, for example, was a Métis fur trader in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's outposts at Batchewana Bay,<sup>61</sup> Lake Nipigon and Lake Nipissing, among others. Iain Hastie's map of de Laronde's postings with the Hudson's Bay Company in Northwestern Ontario, between 1821 and 1888, show postings as far north as Cat Lake and Osnaburgh, then to Lake Nipigon Post, Poplar Lodge, Red Rock, Fort William, Long Lake, Pic and Michipicoten.<sup>62</sup> Obviously, the Métis men also had to travel from post to post,**

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<sup>55</sup> Author's footnote: "The Fanyant (or Fainiant) family appear in the many of the records. One of the brothers, Jacques, was still employed on Outfit 1835, although continuing to complain and threatening to leave the service."

<sup>56</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. 60.

<sup>57</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. xlv.

<sup>58</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. xlvii.

<sup>59</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. 63.

<sup>60</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. 68.

<sup>61</sup> Lytwyn report, 1998, pp. 2-3.

<sup>62</sup> "Postings of de Laronde's with the Hudson's Bay Company in Northwestern Ontario, 1821-1888 Map by Iain Hastie, Lakehead University" provided by RSMIN



as their work demanded. In 1852, for example, Jesuit priest Fremiot reported at Lake Nipigon that "It is a Catholic who at the moment is in charge of the post. He is Louis Denis de Laronde, a Canadian by birth, whose father came from France. His daughters - who speak Indian far better than French or English but understand both languages - are a great help in singing the hymns. ..." <sup>63</sup> **Many of the Métis men remained for long periods of time at one post, where their families were inevitably raised, and whose children intermarried.** <sup>64</sup> For example, Louis De Laronde, son of Louis Denis, married a Boucher girl sometime around the beginning of the nineteenth century (he was born in 1788). Similarly, Joseph Boucher married Annette Deschamps (Amelie) around the late 1830s or early 1840s. Furthermore, Joseph Bouchard, one of Louis Bouchard's sons, married Angelique Laronde, the daughter of Henry De Laronde. His daughter, Louisa Bouchard, married a "halfbreed" from Sault Ste. Marie. Another son, Nicholas, married a "halfbreed woman" from Michipicoten by the last name of Soulier. **Pierrish Deschamps, who would later become the Chief of the Red Rock Band, married Louise Laronde, daughter of Louis Denis. Michel Deschamps, Pierrish's son, married a Desmoulins from the Pic Band. As well as marriage among themselves, the Métis solidified their ties to their neighbouring tribes through intermarriage with the Anishnaabeg, often with the leaders of the bands.** Alexander Laronde, another of Louis Denis' sons, for example, married the daughter of a Nipigon Chief, Windjob. As well, Joseph Deschamps, born in 1830, married Louise Peau du Chat, daughter of Chief Joseph Peau du Chat, signatory to the Robinson-Superior Treaty. They were married on January 7, 1852, and they had 8 children. <sup>65</sup> Similarly, Louis Bouchard married the sister of Chief Manitoshainse of Lake Nipigon, signatory to the Robinson-Superior Treaty. Charley Laronde, son of Louis Denis, also married into the Lake Nipigon Band.

The Collin, Bouchard and Laronde names would also be among those listed as "half-breeds" on the first paylists for the Robinson Superior Treaty and these are among the ancestors of the RSMIN.

From this section of the report, one can see that the RSMIN families were born and raised in the what would become the area encompassed by the Robinson-Superior Treaty. Some of these families can trace their beginnings back as far as the 1700s. The fact that their names occurred on the Robinson-Superior Treaty paylists indicates their presence in the area at the time of the treaty.

The next section of the present paper will begin to outline what use these **Métis** families would make of their traditional territory prior to their entry into the Robinson-Superior Treaty.

## **PART 2: MÉTIS HARVESTING ACTIVITIES IN THE ROBINSON SUPERIOR AREA**

**The Métis living in district north of Lake Superior in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led a life that depended on the fur trade. As such, they had to be experienced**

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<sup>63</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. 76.

<sup>64</sup> Arthur, E., pp. xlv-xlv.

<sup>65</sup> Family tree of Roy De LaRonde, provided by RSMIN.

fishers, hunters and trappers, not only to profit from the fur trade, but also for basic subsistence.

### Fishing

The Métis living along the shore of Lake Superior, adjacent to the fur trade posts, depended greatly on the fisheries of the area, during all months of the year. Arthur Ray points out that "...the shoreline areas of Lake Huron and Lake Superior differed from lands in the interior in that the fisheries traditionally were the mainstays of the Native economies. Intense hunting and trapping during the half-century before 1821 made local Métis, Indians and fur traders even more reliant on their Great Lakes fisheries for subsistence and commerce."<sup>66</sup>

The importance of the fisheries to the inhabitants of the Upper Great Lakes is illustrated by Goodier in a paper entitled "The Nineteenth Century Fisheries of the Hudson's Bay Company Trading Posts on Lake Superior: A Biogeographical Study". According to Goodier, the Hudson's Bay Company had several fish stations along the upper Lake Superior.<sup>67</sup> At one of these stations at Fort William, where an established Métis community existed, Goodier describes the fishing activities:

During winter fishing, "fishermen set trout lines along the west end of Pie Island or ranged them northward toward the Welcome Islands. Nevertheless, some Indian families chose to abandon the fort for the bay's north end and its apparently superior fishing localities. Those remaining about the post tended to spear trout with only meagre success. ... Other Indian camps existed at Black Bay and McNab Point (Point Brule), but probably none depended on a steady supply of fish."<sup>68</sup>

According to Goodier, there was competition for fish between the fur trade company and its aboriginal partners, including the Métis: "Fishermen regularly crossed to the Welcome Islands, fishing grounds enjoyed for their proximity to the fort and their relative importance (especially for suckers) in the lean winter months. One such instance is recorded in the post Journal for 26 December 1831: 'Visinau went to Welcome Islands in order to mark out the usual places where the company sets nets under the ice, before the freemen and Indians take possession of the best stands.'"<sup>69</sup> The Visinau name is connected to the Métis community of Lake Superior.

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<sup>66</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 34.

<sup>67</sup> Goodier, p. 345.

<sup>68</sup> Goodier, p. 349.

<sup>69</sup> Goodier, p. 349.

Another important fishing station was at the Kaministiquia River: "In general, the Kaministikwia River abounded 'with all kinds of fish, peculiar to the country, such as sturgeon, whitefish, perch, pike, pickerel, suckers and a few catfish.' ..." <sup>70</sup> A letter from 1863, authored by a Hudson's Bay Company official, indicates that

Fort William is to a large extent supported on fish, the fisheries at the mouth of the river Kaministaquoiah being very productive. Any surplus beyond our own wants is salted and sent to market. I understand about sixty barrels of whitefish have been forwarded to the Sault Ste. Marie for sale this season. We formerly had a large fishery for export, but the business proved unprofitable, not from the want of good management on the spot, but from the uncertainty of the market, and great fluctuations in the demand. ... <sup>71</sup>

As discussed in the present report, a Métis village cropped up at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River in the 1850s. No doubt, these people were instrumental in the fishing industry.

Additionally, there was a longer and more prolific fishing season at Michipicoten Bay. <sup>72</sup>

After 1839, the fishing industry expanded further and further into the interior. <sup>73</sup> **At all the interior trading posts, such as Lake Nipigon, Métis families were present.**

### **Hunting and Trapping**

Arthur Ray has written "...Given...the peaceful relations that prevailed between the bands and the Métis, it is reasonable to conclude that the extended and overlapping kinship networks provided individuals access to most of the inland territory ... ." <sup>74</sup> Activities conducted by the Métis in these inland territories would concentrate on the hunting and trapping of animals, including fur-bearers like beavers and muskrats, and non-fur-bearers like caribou, for their meat and by-products. As Ray states, "...it was a long-established tradition of HBC servants and their dependents to engage in subsistence and commercial hunting and trapping activities. Furthermore, when servants retired, they continued these practices." <sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Goodier, p. 350.

<sup>71</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 103.

<sup>72</sup> Goodier, p. 352.

<sup>73</sup> Goodier, p. 355.

<sup>74</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 54.

<sup>75</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 41.

Arthur Ray has conducted much research into the records of the Hudson's Bay Company and has the following to say, "Unfortunately, very few of the 'freemen' and retired servants maintained accounts with the HBC that survive. One example is that [of] Toussaint Boucher (Table 11). He was a Métis who had served the HBC in the capacities of boatman and fisherman in the Lake Superior district and was paid annuities as a 'half-breed' at Fort Michipicoten in the 1850s. His account activity is typical of those [sic] of a trapper. ..."76

In his 1998 report concerning the Métis of the Sault Ste. Marie area, Dr. Victor Lytwyn wrote the following description of the harvesting activities pursued by these Métis:

The Métis way of life at Sault Ste. Marie included a diversified subsistence and economy. It included harvesting and processing maple sugar, gathering wild plants for food and medicinal purposes, and trapping furs for clothing and sale.

...

The seasonal cycle of the Sault Ste. Marie Métis was punctuated by the availability of natural resources and employment opportunities. In the mid-19th century, the Métis way of life incorporated many resource harvesting activities. These activities, especially hunting and trapping, were done within traditional territories located within the hinterland of Sault Ste. Marie. The Métis engaged in these activities for generations and, on the eve of the 1850 treaties, hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering were integral activities to the Métis community at Sault Ste. Marie.<sup>77</sup>

These statements apply equally to the Métis of the Lake Superior area (Fort William, Prince Arthur's Landing, Lake Nipigon, Michipicoten).

In 1894, E. B. Borron, Stipendiary Magistrate for the Ontario provincial government, provided a synopsis of the way of life of "half-breeds" in the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, he compares their way of life with that of the 'semi-civilized' Indians. The pertinent sections of Borron's report are excerpted below, as they serve to indicate the extent to which these Métis depended on the land to live:

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<sup>76</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", pp. 41-42.

<sup>77</sup> Lytwyn report, 1998, pp. 5-6.

**- HOW THE HALF-BREEDS LIVED -**

...Briefly stated, the Half-breeds at that period (1850) did not dwell in wig-wams or huts--like the Indians--but in houses.

They did not have hunting-grounds like the Indians--to which they had an exclusive right, and upon which, they and their families resided the greater part of the year. X They were not entirely dependent, for food and other necessities of life, on the game, fish and fur-bearing animals in the territory, as the Indians were.

The Half-breeds-- like their French-Canadian Fathers--many of whom were still living in 1850--not only resided in houses, but had land cleared and fenced upon which, they grew potatoes, corn and other crops. Some of them even had horses and cattle [sic-punctuation] Their fathers had been with few exceptions-- employes [sic] of the Hudson Bay Company, in the various capacities of voyageurs, boat-builders, canoe-builders, blacksmiths, servants and traders; and their half-breed sons continued, in many instances, to be employed in like manner, by the Hudson's Bay Co. and others, who needed their services.

[Marginalia at bottom of page: "X To C[rees?] - there were some exceptions, but they were comparatively very [illegible word]" ]

When voyaging with explorers-- sportsmen and tourists, they usually received from seventy-five cents to a dollar a day and rations. ... [re. Sault Ste. Marie area]

There in a few weeks they generally sought and salted down in barrels a quantity of fish amply sufficient for the consumption of their families, during the entire winter--and frequently had a surplus for sale. When winter closed in such of them as needed or cared for work, found ample employment chopping and hauling cord wood for domestic use, and to supply fuel for the steam boats, during the following summer. Almost every family re[ti?]red to "the Sugar Bushes" in the month of March--and made large quantities of maple sugar--not unfrequently I believe as much as some five hundred to a thousand pounds were made by a single family. This was far more than was needed for their own use, and the greater portion of it was sold to traders.

Of course, these Half-breeds fished and hunted, and even trapped occasionally--as white men would do under like circumstances, and

said like surroundings. In a country where there were no butcher shops few of us--irrespective of that natural love of sport common to our race, as well as theirs-- but would have hunted and fished, when fish and game were in access and at all plentiful. Nor if valuable fur-bearing animals, such as the black fox were thought to be around, within any reasonable distance of our house--could many of us have resisted the temptation to set out traps to catch them. This too the half-breeds frequently did, some of them going back several days' journey on snow shoes into the interior for that purpose, and remaining away from their homes for a few days or even weeks. But they rarely or ever took their families with them. And it was not their sole dependence--as it was in the case of the Indians who lived a normal or tribal life--as a means of obtaining food and other necessities of life.



It may be said that all the French Half-breeds in the territory--and a very large majority of the half-breeds are of French-Canadian origin--professed then, as they do now, the Catholic faith; and with comparatively very few exceptions they still bear the surnames of their fathers and grandfathers. This may be seen on reference to the Pay-lists particularly those of the Garden River, Batchewana, Fort William and Michipicoten Bands in which large numbers of half-breeds are included; a fact which of itself constitutes "presumptive evidence" that they are not Indians. As a class, they are docile and though fond of change, fairly industrious. The Catholic Missionaries are respected and possess great influence over them. This influence has always been exerted to persuade them to choose a settled mode of life in preference to that of the Indian. [Marginalia: "Refer to the PayLists"]

In this, they had been so successful that in the year 1850--so far as known to me--very few half-breeds lived entirely the tribal or normal life of the Indians.

- SEMI-CIVILIZED INDIANS -

There have been from a period anterior to the Robinson Treaties what the Reverend Fathers Hannipeaux and Ferrard call semi-civilized Indians living not only on Manitoulin Island--but on the surrendered territory embraced in these treaties. These Christian and semi-civilized Indians had abandoned in a great measure, not only their old superstitions and practices, but their former (tribal) mode of life.

They had adopted and were pursuing a mode of life similar, in all important respects, to that of the half-breeds so fully described in this report. They lived in houses [sic-punctuation] cultivated small patches of land, sometimes called gardens, and resided where they could subsist otherwise than by hunting, trapping and fishing only--and at the same time, where they could enjoy the benefits of the teachings and ministrations of their Missionaries, and the blessings of civilization.

The majority of these semi-civilized Indians had "settled" --so to speak at Garden River, Sault St. Marie and Fort William--where also for like reasons most of the Half-breeds resided. As no "reservations" had been set apart for the Indians on the North

Shores (main-land) of either Lake Huron or Lake Superior at that time -- it cannot with propriety be said "that the Half-breeds were living on the reservations with the Indians when the Robinson Treaties were made." And still less -- that the half-breeds belong to their bands, and were leading "their tribal life." It might with much greater propriety be contended that the Indians were living with the half-breeds and adopting their comparatively civilized mode of life. Though much more numerous now and residing generally on the reservations set apart for the several Bands in 1850--these semi-civilized Indians bore at the time referred to a small proportion to the total number of Indians included in the treaties--and the life led by them was not the normal or tribal life of the Indians generally.

..<sup>78</sup>

Borron, therefore, was of the opinion that because many of the "Half-breeds" around Lake Superior had established themselves in a more permanent pattern of settlement by 1850, living at the trading posts, they were not using the resources of the area to the same extent as the "tribal Indians". The Métis were, however, employed in the fur trade and their occupations necessitated much travel. The fact that the Métis were dependent to a large extent on the fish, animals and plants in the area, however, for both commercial and subsistence purposes, cannot be dismissed.

With the decline in the fur trade in the Great Lakes area in the mid-nineteenth century, both the Ojibway and the Métis lost much of their traditional land base. Nonetheless, the Métis "continued to live in the region and gain their livelihood from the resources of the land and waters." This information can be extracted from the censuses of 1881 and 1901, which indicate that the Métis continued to live in much the same way as they had before 1850. The occupations listed for the people known to be Métis of the area in the 1881 census include interpreter, labourer, hunter, carpenter, voyageur, HBC officer, and canoe maker. An interesting aspect of the names on the 1881 census is that their racial identity was first written as "Halfbreeds" and then, in the majority of cases, crossed out and marked as "French".<sup>79</sup> On the 1901 census, most of the Red Sky Métis forbears are included in the listing for "Ojibeway Indians - Lake Superior" and no occupations are indicated. Of the racial origin of the people known to be Métis, the census data indicates that they were, in the majority of cases, "Ojibeway F.B." and in some cases,

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<sup>78</sup> Report dated October 27, 1894, by E. B. Borron, Stipendiary Magistrate and Commissioner, Toronto, PAO F1027-1-2, MU 1465, File 27/32/8(2), MS 1780

<sup>79</sup> See Appendix A for a partial transcript of the 1881 Census of Canada.

"Ojibeway S.B." It is not known at this time what these initials denote. All of them were Catholic.<sup>80</sup>

An attempted explanation at the differentiation between the term "Halfbreed" has been provided by Don and Scott Whiteside: e predominantly English in origin. When the racially distinct half-breed Indians were the product of English-Indian liaisons, they were referred to as half-breeds. When the half-breed Indians were the product of French-Indian liaisons, however, they were referred to as either French half-breeds or Métis. It is hypothesized that the colonial administrators who were also Protestant, felt more comfortable with half-breed Indians who also tended to be Protestants than with the Métis Catholic, spoke French and seen by the census data, therefore, "The Métis continued to exercise their traditional resource harvesting rights after the 1850 Treaty. They were involved in the commercial fishery as well as the commercial fur trade. In addition, wild food resources continued to be a major part of their livelihood."<sup>81</sup>

In addition to fishing, hunting and trapping, the Métis also cultivated plants, raised domestic farm animals and grew hay. They "were portrayed [by Borron] as more entrepreneurial than the Indians. Borron pointed out that they sold fish, hay, cordwood, maple sugar, and furs. Thus, hunting and fishing were part of a diversified way of life that was based on traditional resource harvesting activities..."<sup>82</sup>

### **PART 3: THE ROBINSON-SUPERIOR TREATY: THE CREATION OF 'STATUS MÉTIS'**

#### ***A. Negotiation and Signing of the Robinson-Superior Treaty***

On August 4, 1849, A. Vidal, Deputy Provincial Surveyor, and T. Anderson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, were appointed by Order-in-Council "to investigate and ascertain the expectations of the Indians with a view to the final action of the Government upon the same and to proceed at as early a period as possible this year to Lakes Huron and Superior to meet the Indians on their grounds and report fully upon their claims to the executive Government ..."<sup>83</sup> They "were transported and guided by a Métis and Ojibway crew from Sault Ste. Marie. They included: Francois Mezai, Louis Piquette, Peter Bell, Pierre

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<sup>80</sup> See Appendix B for a partial transcript of the 1901 Census.

<sup>81</sup> Lytwyn report, 1998, p. 32

<sup>82</sup> Lytwyn report, 1998, p. 35

<sup>83</sup> Order-in-Council dated August 4, 1849, signed by [Murphy?], Clerk, Executive Council, to Commissioner of Crown Lands, NAC RG 10, Vol. 266, pp. 163118-163120, Reel C-12652

**Croschier, Louis** Corbirr, Paw-kauke, Waw-be-ma-ma and Waw-saung-gais.” The Corbiere name is associated with forbears of the RSMIN. At different places along the route, the Sault Métis met with other Métis communities. For example, at Michipicoten, Anderson wrote: “Our men gave a ball to their half-breed brethren and enjoyed themselves first rate.”<sup>84</sup>

**N. Fremiot**, of the Jesuit Fathers, wrote a letter to his superiors on October 18, 1849, reporting on the meeting held at Fort William with Commissioners Anderson and Vidal. Part of his letter pertains to the Métis who were present at the meeting. He writes “25. The meeting began with a roll call from the list prepared the evening before by Mr. Mackenzie. The half-breeds were passed by in silence, for they have

not the right to speak at such gatherings. Is this wise? Do some people fear that they, better informed that [sic] the Indians themselves, might be in a better position to defend their rights?”<sup>85</sup>

Vidal and Anderson’s report outlined the potential “difficulty” of the Métis claims:

Another subject which may involve a difficulty is that of determining how far the Half breeds are to be regarded as having a claim to share in the remuneration awarded to the Indians, and (as they can scarcely be altogether excluded without injustice to some) where and how the distinction should be made between them: - many of theses are so closely connected with some of the bands, and being generally better informed exercise such an influence over them, that it may be found scarcely possible to make a separation, especially as a great number have been already recognized as Indians, as to have presents issued to them by the Government at the annual distribution at Manitowaning.<sup>86</sup>

On January 7, 1850, J. Anderson of Lake Nipigon, wrote Superintendent Anderson a letter providing information regarding the aboriginal population living at Lake Nipigon. In his letter, J. Anderson reported that there were **“a half breed and his wife both born on Lake Superior - suppose the above Indians have been included in the Censuses of their respective tribes...”**<sup>87</sup> From this correspondence, it appears that the “half-breeds” living on Lake Nipigon

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<sup>84</sup> Lytwyn report, 1998, pp. 14-15. Source of quote: “Diary of Thomas Gummingsall Anderson, a Visiting Supt. of Indian Affairs, Coburg. 5 September 1849, typescript copy in Archives of Ontario, Miscellaneous Manuscript: 22.”

<sup>85</sup> Translation of letter dated October 18, 1849, from N. Fremiot, Jesuit Fathers, to superiors, Cadieux, L. Lettres des Nouvelles Missions du Canada, 1843-1852. Montreal: Les Editions Bellarmin, 1973. 593-597

<sup>86</sup> “Report of Commissioners A. Vidal & T. Anderson on a visit to Indians. North Shores Lakes Huron & Superior for purpose of investigating their claims to territory bordering those Lakes, 5 December 1849,” NAC RG 10, Vol. 266, pp. 163121-163155, Reel C-12652.

<sup>87</sup> Letter dated January 7, 1850, from J. Anderson, Lake Nipigon, to T. G. Anderson, Superintendent,

were considered 'part of the tribe'. A census taken at Lake Nipigon on June 1, 1850, prior to the Robinson Treaties, includes the name of the LaGuarde family, one half-breed woman, and also lists 17 Indian and halfbreed servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. Additionally, an interesting note appears on the census. It reads "Indians marked thus [have?] a right to share in the proceeds of the sale of the Fort William Lands, on the Grounds of being descended from Indians of the Grand Portage - or on the [part?] of their wives being descendants of those Indians."<sup>88</sup>

John Swanston, Postmaster at the Michipicoten Post of the Hudson's Bay Company, wrote to Governor Simpson just prior to the treaty, on August 21, 1850, as follows:

...I am not certain whether the Government will acknowledge the rights and claims of the half breeds, to a share of the payments to be made for the lands about to be ceded by the Indians of Lake Superior, but I would hope they would, as many of them have much juster [sic] claims then [sic] the Indians, they having been born and brought up on these lands, which is not the case with many of the Indians....<sup>89</sup>

**At the time of the treaty, it appears from Hudson's Bay Company records that the Métis in the Lake Superior district were concentrated at Fort William and Michipicoten.**<sup>90</sup> Arthur Ray composed a list of Hudson's Bay Company officers, clerks and servants for the Huron and Superior Districts for 1850. The list comprises many names associated with the Red Sky Métis community, including Louis Laronde, a clerk, Henry Ackibie, a retiree, Pierre Badayac/Laplante, a labourer, Louis Bouchard, milieu, Joseph Boucher, canoe builder, Toussaint Boucher, fisherman, Baptiste Collin, fisherman, Michel Collin, retiree, William Corbeau, milieu, Pierre Deschamp, bowsman, Izidore Dumulon, milieu, John Finlayson, cooper, Michel Lambert, retiree, Antoine Souliere, bowsman, and Francois Vizena, bowsman. Under "Freemen & Petty Accounts" are listed Jean Baptiste Collin, Michel Collin, Michel Deschamps, Jacques Faignant, Jean Baptiste Faignant, and Jean Baptiste Vizena.<sup>91</sup> As seen in Ray's compilation of "Half-Breed' Annuity Payments at Fort Michipicoten, 1850-56," Toussaint Boucher, Joseph Collin, Pierre Deschamps, Joseph Deschamps, Louis Denis De Laronde, Pierre [La]Plante, Joseph Deschamps, Louis Bouchard and Isadore Dumoulon were all paid at Michipicoten during the period, while Henry Akubie, Joseph Boucher, Michel Collin Sr., Michel Collin Jr., Corbeau, Michel Deschamps, Joseph Deschamp

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NAC RG 10, Vol. 266 , pp. 163156-163159, Reel C-12652

<sup>88</sup> Letter dated June 1, 1850, from unidentified author, NAC RG 10, Vol. 9501, Reel C-7167, pp. 154-160.

<sup>89</sup> PAM HBCA D.5/28, fos. 465-66, Reel 3M92

<sup>90</sup> Ray, A.J., "An Economic History...", p. 47.

<sup>91</sup> Ray, A.J., 1998, Table 14.

Isadore Dumoulon, Jean Baptiste Faigneault, John Finlayson, Michel Lambert, Charles Louis, Jean Baptiste Vizona and Francois Vizona were all paid at Fort William in 1850.<sup>92</sup>

**Treaty No. 60, known as the Robinson-Superior Treaty was signed on September 7, 1850, by W. B. Robinson, and Joseph Peau de Chat, John Ininway, Mishe-muckqua, Totomenai, Chiefs, and J. Wasseba, Ahmutchewagaton, M. Shebageshick, Manitoshanise, and Chigenaus, Principal Men, "Ojibway Indians".**

The Robinson Treaty provided that "...the further perpetual annuity of five hundred pounds, the same to be paid and delivered to the said Chiefs and their Tribes at a convenient season of each summer, not later than the first day of August, at the Honorable the Hudson's Bay Company Posts of Michipicoton [sic] and Fort William." With regard to hunting and fishing activities, the treaty stated that the Queen would "allow the Chiefs and their tribes the full and free privilege to hunt over the territory now ceded by them and fish in the waters thereof as they have hitherto been in the habit of doing, saving and excepting only such portions of the said territory as may from time to time be sold or leased to individuals or companies of individuals, and occupied by them with the consent of the Provincial Government."

The reserves set aside under the Robinson Treaty are described as follows:

Schedule of Reservations made by the above named and subscribing Chiefs and Principal Men:-First.- Joseph Peau de Chat and his tribe, the reserve to commence about two miles from Fort William (inland) on the right bank of the River Kiministiquia; thence westerly six miles parallel to the shores of the lake; thence northerly five miles; thence easterly to the right bank of the said river, so as not to interfere with any acquired rights of the Honorable [sic] the Hudson's Bay Company.Second.- Four miles square at Gros Cap, being a valley near the Honorable [sic] Hudson's Bay Company's post of Michipicoton for Totomenai and his tribe.Third.- Four miles square on Gull River, near Lake Nipigon, on both sides of said river, for the Chief Mishemuckqua.<sup>93</sup>

Robinson's official report makes mention of "halfbreeds" with regard to population, as well as regarding a request from the Chiefs at Sault Ste. Marie for land for the Métis. The Commissioner appears to make a distinction between the "halfbreeds" who were

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<sup>92</sup> Ray, A.J., 1998, Table 16.

<sup>93</sup> Treaty No. 60 dated September 7, 1850, signed by W. B. Robinson, and J. Peau de Chat, J. Ininway, Mishe-muckqua, Totomenai, Chiefs, and J. Wasseba, Ahmutchewagaton, M. Shebageshick, Manitoshanise, and Chigenaus, Principal Men, Ojibway Indians, NAC RG 10 Vol. 1844, IT 147, Reel T-9938



included in the treaties, and those who were not and for whom the Chiefs at Sault Ste. Marie requested grants of land:

...[I] was fortunate enough to get a very correct census, particularly of Lake Superior. I found this information very useful at the council, as it enabled me successfully to contradict the assertion (made by those who were inciting the chiefs to resist my offers) that there were on Lake Superior alone, eight thousand Indians. The number on that lake, including eighty-four half-breeds, is only twelve hundred and forty--and on Lake Huron, about fourteen hundred and twenty-two, including probably two-hundred half-breeds; and when I paid the Indians they acknowledged they knew of no other families than those on my list.

...

As the half-breeds at Sault Ste. Marie and other places may seek to be recognized by the Government in future payments, it may be well that I should state here the answer that I gave to their demands on the present occasion. I told them I came to treat with the chiefs who were present, that the money would be paid to them--and their receipt was sufficient for me--that when in their possession they might give as much or as little to that class of claimants as they pleased. ...<sup>94</sup>

With regard to the participation of the "half-breeds" in the Robinson Treaties, Don and Scott Whiteside write that it was not a sign that a particular interest group monopolized the lobbying power of the Indians. Instead it is evidence of the reliance which the tribes placed upon their half-breed members to articulate their grievances to the authorities in a manner which insured that the grievance would be clearly understood by the Indian department and the best interests of the Indian people would be protected.<sup>95</sup>

The Robinson Treaties were ratified by an Order in Council dated November 12, 1850.<sup>96</sup>

### ***B. Implementation and Administration of the Robinson-Superior Treaty***

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<sup>94</sup> Report dated September 24, 1850, from W. B. Robinson to R. Bruce, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, NAC RG 10, Vol. 191, Nos. 5401-5500, No. 5451. Reel C-11513

<sup>95</sup> Whiteside, Don and Scott D. Whiteside, "Indian in Upper Canada from 1846 through 1885, with special reference to half-breed Indians and the development of political associations. The Circle is broken." Aboriginal Institute of Canada, prepared for the Aboriginal Title Research Group, Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association, 1979, p. 8.

<sup>96</sup> Order in Council dated November 12, 1850, by Clerk, Executive Council, Province of Canada, to Provincial Secretary, NAC RG 10, Vol. 191, Nos. 5401-5500, Pp. 111695, Reel C-11513

Immediately following the signing of the Robinson Treaties, the Hudson's Bay Company was put in charge of paying the annuities provided under the treaties.<sup>97</sup> The postmaster at Michipicoten was instructed to obtain receipts from each head of family.<sup>98</sup>

At Fort William, the "halfbreeds" were listed separately on the treaty annuity paylists for 1850, 1851 and 1852. They comprised 61 people in 1850 and 1851, and 56 people in 1852.<sup>99</sup> The paylists included the names of Akibie, Boucher, Collin, Corbeau, Deschamps, Dumoulon, Faigneant, Finlayson, Lambert, Louis and Vizina [see Appendix A].

The Department of Indian Affairs payroll from 1852 adds the names of Plante, Crow and Keotassin, and increases the "halfbreed" population to 77.<sup>100</sup> By 1855, the "halfbreeds" were grouped with the "Indians" on the Fort William payroll (still kept in the Michipicoten Account Books), and by then comprised 66 individuals.<sup>101</sup>

Similarly, the "halfbreeds" at Michipicoten were listed separately on the paylists compiled by the Hudson's Bay Company, and totalled 86 people for 1850 and 1851, and 91 for 1852.<sup>102</sup> The family names listed included Begg, Bouchard, Boucher, Chastellain, Collin, Deschamps, Dubois, Heron, Keotasine, Samplier, Delaronde, Perdrix Blanche, Moriseau, Mizzobec, Nitawapin, Robertson, Saunders, Scheller, Soulier, Swanson, Swanston, Taylor, Tundess, Turner, Watakiya, and Skandagance [see Appendix A]. In 1853, the "halfbreed" family names of Plante, LaGuard, Tait, Kutsoy, and Kakuponekais were added.<sup>103</sup> Later the names of Widge, Meekeesipinaise, Meenoojishisk, Shabokey, and Cassl were added as "halfbreeds".<sup>104</sup>

The payroll for the Long Lake Band for 1853 does not list "halfbreeds" separately, but the families names of Michel and Legarde are included.<sup>105</sup>

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See letter dated April 19, 1851, from W. B. Robinson to R. Bruce, NAC RG 10 Vol. 187, Nos. 5001-5100, Pp. 169386-169389, Reel C-11512; and letter dated June 16, 1851, from D. Finlayson, Hudson's Bay Company, Lachine, to R. Bruce, NAC RG 10, Vol. 189, Nos. 5201-5300, Pp. 110219-110221, No. 5209, Reel C-11512

<sup>98</sup>

Letter dated June 30, 1851, from G. Simpson, Governor, Hudson's Bay Company, Lachine, to J. Swanston, Postmaster, Michipicoten, PAM HBCA D.4/43, fos. 110b-111, Reel 3M14

<sup>99</sup>

Paylist dated August 3, 1852 [circa], by F. Ermatinger, Hudson's Bay Company, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 5-6d

<sup>100</sup>

Paylist dated August 3, 1852, by F. Ermatinger, Hudson's Bay Company, Fort William, NAC RG 10, Vol. 9497, Reel C-7167, [p. 26]

<sup>101</sup>

Paylist dated August 31, 1855 [circa], by F. Ermatinger, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 25d-26d

<sup>102</sup>

Paylist dated September 30, 1852 [circa], by J. Mackenzie, Hudson's Bay Company, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 2-2d

<sup>103</sup>

Paylist dated September 30, 1853 [circa], by J. Mackenzie, Hudson's Bay Company, Michipicoten, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 2-2d

<sup>104</sup>

Paylist dated September 30, 1856 [circa], by J. Mackenzie, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 30d-31

The “halfbreeds” at Lake Nipigon were identified separately in 1855 as comprising two families, totalling 11 people.<sup>106</sup>

The post at Pic River began to maintain its own paylists in 1856. These were again kept in the Account Books of the Michipicoten Post. On the treaty paylists, the names of “Halfbreeds” were listed, including J. Bte. Morain (3), Sabourin (7), and Louison (2), making a total of 12 people.<sup>107</sup> In all cases, the paylists indicate that the number of halfbreeds” being paid treaty annuities between 1850 and 1859 was steadily increasing. The 1858 Pennefather Report lists 52 persons “of mixed descent” in the Michipicoten Band, proving the continued presence of the Métis in the area.

Beginning in 1867, at Confederation, Department of Indian Affairs officials began to pay the Robinson Treaty annuities at Fort William, rather than having the Hudson’s Bay Company perform this work.<sup>108</sup> By that time, the fur trade in the Great Lakes area had seen a major decline.

Beginning in 1874, E. B. Borron, M.P. for Sault Ste. Marie, began to agitate for an increase in the annuities paid under the Robinson Treaties. He referred to the provision in the treaties that allowed for an increase to four dollars per capita once the revenues to the Province from the lands it had acquired under the treaties were sufficient to allow such an increase.<sup>109</sup> Specifically, Borron requested that “the Indians and Half-breeds” in the district be paid the increased amount.<sup>110</sup> Borron’s request for an increase in the Robinson Treaty annuities would trigger a large and long-lasting dispute between the Ontario and Canadian governments with regard to which level of government was ultimately responsible for the increased cost of these annuities, seeing as Ontario had benefited from the surrender and sale of the lands covered by the treaties, but Canada was responsible for Indians.

In 1880, the Indians and Halfbreeds from Pic River, including a Halfbreed Chief, petitioned the Governor General for a reserve. The petition indicates that Band

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<sup>105</sup> Paylist dated September 30, 1853 [circa], by Hudson's Bay Company Postmaster, Long Lake, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 12-12d

<sup>106</sup> Paylist dated August 31, 1855, by L. D. De La Ronde, Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Nipigon, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 27d-28d. De Laronde himself was a “halfbreed”, however, his family was listed on the Fort William paylists.

<sup>107</sup> Paylist dated September 30, 1856 [circa], by Postmaster, Hudson's Bay Company, Pic River, PAM HBCA B129/d/7, fos. 31d-32

<sup>108</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lix.

<sup>109</sup> Letter dated November 28, 1874, from E. B. Borron, M.P., Sault Ste. Marie, House of Commons, to D. Laird, Minister, Department of the Interior, NAC RG 10, Vol. 1963, File 5045-1, Reel C-12777

<sup>110</sup> Letter dated April 1, 1875, from E. B. Borron to D. Laird, NAC RG 10, Vol. 1963, File 5045-1, Reel C-12777

members had settled near the mouth of the river and that some had begun cultivation there. The petition also states that the rest of the Band intended on settling there, as the closest reserve as provided under the Robinson Superior Treaty was one hundred miles away. The petitioners added that they had not been represented at the treaty because their Chief had withdrawn into the interior.<sup>111</sup> Names appearing on the petition included halfbreed Chief John Anenyo, as well as John Finlayson, Isidore Desmoulins, Samuel Desmoulins, Edward Sabourin, Thomas Desmoulins, David Desmoulins, Widow Sabourin, and Duncan Desmoulins, among others. No response to this petition by the government was located.

According to both the Michipicoten and Lake Nipigon Bands' paylists, by 1889 'halfbreeds' continued to be listed and paid but were no longer identified as such.<sup>112</sup>

Finally, in 1891, arbitration between the Ontario, Quebec and Canadian governments was proposed to look into the issue of which government was responsible for the increased annuities, and to what extent. E. B. Borron had been appointed by the Province to look into the payments of annuities under the Robinson Treaties.<sup>113</sup>

Borron inquired into the names on the Robinson Treaty paylists throughout 1892 and reported on the "half-breed" and "non-treaty" population of each band. Parts of his report read:

...  
**Commencing with the Band at Fort William Lake Superior, of which Mr. James Donelly is Agent. I find - that the total number of persons in receipt of Annuity Money (as per Pay List for 1890) was 350 - Of whom not fewer than 147 are Half-breeds and 14 others Non-treaty Indians.....3d. We now come to Red Rock Band at or near the mouth of Nipigon River - in regard of which I find - That the number of persons in receipt of Annuity money is 205. Of whom, 72 would appear to be Half-breeds ...4th. Following down the Lake we have the Pays Plat Band. This Band numbers in the Pay List 55 persons of whom 6 appear to be Half-breeds...5th. The next Band is the Pic River Band - In reference to which I find that out of 279 persons in receipt of Annuities - 61 are said to be Half-breeds ...6th. We now come to Long Lake Band. In regard of**

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<sup>111</sup> Petition dated June 23, 1880, signed by Chief, Second Chief, HB Chief and people, Pic River, to Governor General in Council, NAC RG 10, Vol. 2137, File 27806, Reel C-11166

<sup>112</sup> Paylist dated August 1889, by W. Van Abbott, Indian Agent, Michipicoten, NAC RG 10, Vol. 9501, Reel C-7167, pp. 78-83

<sup>113</sup> Letter dated May 26, 1891, from E. B. Borron, Stipendiary Magistrate, to Oliver Mowat, Attorney General, Ontario, PAO F1027-1-2, MU 1465, Box 27, Item 27/32/08 (1)

**which I find - that the number of persons in receipt of Annuities is not less than 345. Of this number ...32 are believed to be Half-breeds ...7 We now come to the Michipicoton River Band of which Mr. William Van Abbott is Agent. The number of Annuitants in this Band is 327. Of whom I find - that 100 are Half-breeds .....<sup>114</sup>**

In February of 1895, the Board of Arbitrators granted their award concerning the responsibility of each level of government for the increased annuities under the Robinson Treaties. In their award, the Board defined who would be entitled to annuities:

**I. --Burden of Proof. This Board, in respect of the burden of proof, doth order and direct that the rule hereinafter set forth be followed: With reference to the period before the Union: The individuals whose names appear on the lists paid before the Union shall be taken into account in computing any increased annuity that should have been paid....<sup>115</sup>**

The above section of the report outlined the Métis participation in the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850, and began to identify the specific RSMIN families who were included in the Robinson Treaties. At this point in the research, it is difficult to say whether the Métis families acted as a cohesive group, or were made up of individual heads of families. The author has further outlined the fact that the RSMIN ancestors continued to occupy territory in the Robinson-Superior Treaty area into the twentieth century and that the Canadian and provincial governments recognized them as separate people, distinct from the First Nations, but still entitled to treaty benefits. The way in which the Government of Canada implemented the provisions of the Robinson-Superior Treaty serves to further illustrate that the RSMIN were ever-present in the area and were, in fact, an integral part of the aboriginal community.

#### **PART 4: GENERAL HISTORY: THE POST-TREATY PERIOD**

As will be seen in the following section, the way of life of the RSMIN changed in the period after the Robinson-Superior Treaty. In some areas, specifically those closer to the lake and the centres of the new economic activities, the change in economy led to a more drastic change for the Métis in terms of their source of livelihood, as well as their

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<sup>114</sup> Letter dated October 11, 1892, from E. B. Borron, Stipendiary Magistrate, Toronto, to O. Mowat, Attorney General, Toronto, PAO F1027-1-2, MU 1465, Box 27, Item 27/32/08

<sup>115</sup> Award of Board of Arbitrators dated February 14, 1895, AO F 1027, MU 1509, Item 71/15, "Awards of the Arbitrators (1900)"

living conditions and their ability to pride themselves on their unique identity. Towards the interior, such as around Lake Nipigon, the changes for the Métis were less dramatic because of their relative protection from the ravages of 'civilization'. These Métis were more likely to continue working in their former fur trade-supported roles, such as guides, interpreters, freighters, etc. As well, they maintained their stance as go-betweens in First Nation-European relations and often acted as the voice of the First Nation people in relations with governmental authorities. Whatever their employment, the ancestors of the RSMIN maintained a presence in the Robinson-Superior area throughout the late nineteenth century that continued into the twentieth century.

Following the Robinson Treaties, the district which the treaties had encompassed began to open up to economic opportunities other than the fur trade. Elizabeth Arthur writes "The opening of the American canal at Sault Ste Marie in 1855 transformed Lake Superior travel, and belatedly, brought the commercial revolution of the mid-nineteenth century to Thunder Bay. During the next decade came the surveyors and the prospectors. ..."116

In addition to mining activities in the 1840s and 1850s, and as a direct result of the needs of these mining companies, the building of roads and railways in the Lake Superior district began to be contemplated. Certain individuals with political influence led the way for the new transportation routes, and the opening up of the district to immigrants. Three survey expeditions went through the Thunder Bay district in 1857 and 1858. The Chief Surveyor of one of the expeditions was Simon Dawson, who would later go on to suggest the building of a road and a railway to Winnipeg. His chainman on the second expedition was Lindsay Russell, and Russell "reported the discovery of a practical location for a road, beginning several miles north of the Hudson's Bay Company fort [Fort William] and proceeding to Dog Lake (D 7). This suggestion, which Dawson accepted at the time, became the *raison d'être* for the creation of a tiny hamlet at the beginning of the route - the future city of Port Arthur.... In any case, the demands of east-west transit were beginning to conflict with the desires of the first settlers."117

His brother, William McDonnell Dawson, was responsible for the incorporation of the North West Transportation and Land Company, and became its president. One of the conditions for the new company was that it would complete one hundred miles of railway between Lake Superior and Red River within five years of the passage of the bill in Parliament.<sup>118</sup> The company only ended up beginning the road to Dog Lake and encountered many difficulties.<sup>119</sup>

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116 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. l.

117 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lii.

118 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. liii.

119 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. liii.



During the same time, timber in the area was sought after by commercial interests: "Casimir Gzowski and his partner, David Macpherson, already holders of timber licences for about a dozen pieces of property at the eastern end of Lake Superior,<sup>120</sup> applied for one hundred square miles on the banks of the Kaministiquia (D 2)... But Gzowski apparently ignored the fact that a large part of the property he described belonged to the Fort William Indians according to the Robinson Treaty of 1850. The Crown Lands Department did not grant the licences requested, and none of the surveys conducted in these years gave much indication of timber wealth. ..."<sup>121</sup>

As well, land in the area began to be purchased in the 1860s. Many of the purchasers of these grants, often of hundreds of acres each, were absentee landowners, often businessmen from Toronto.<sup>122</sup> On the other side of Lake Superior, there was a boom of settlement occurring in the 1850s and 1860s. This increase in settlement meant more competition for the Hudson's Bay Company. Transportation options increased in the area with the opening up of a railway on the U.S. side to transport goods eastward.<sup>123</sup>

Meanwhile, the fur trade was declining with "the influx of strangers and adventurers". Nipigon House, for example, was reported to be "in a ruinous state".<sup>124</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company employees (the majority of whom were Métis) and Chief Traders turned to other activities, such as mining, to supplement their incomes or as a means of alternative employment.<sup>125</sup> The influence of the company did not diminish with the fur trade - two of the most prominent HBC men became justices of the peace in Port Arthur.<sup>126</sup>

More mineral discoveries occurred in 1864-67<sup>127</sup>, with the activities of the McKellar family from Michigan. Shortly thereafter, in the 1870s, mining activities increased with various discoveries of silver.

All of these new economic activities had a major impact on the way of life and occupations of the Métis in the district. In many cases, they partook of employment in

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<sup>120</sup> Author's quotation: P.A.O., Crown Lands Papers, Applications for Timber Licences, May 20, 1857, application by Gzowski et al. for renewal of limits #9, 10, 21, 22, 39, and 40 on Michipicoten River, #20 at Goulais Point, #5, 6, 37, 38 at Whitefish River

<sup>121</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. liii.

<sup>122</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. liv.

<sup>123</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lvi.

<sup>124</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lvi.

<sup>125</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lvii.

<sup>126</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lvii.

<sup>127</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, pp. lviii-lix.

the new industries. With the combination of the decline in the fur trade and the fishing industries at the time, and the taking up of lands by settlers and companies, they were left with little choice. For example, an 1875 description of a Jesuit priest's travels to Fort William commented: "...What shall I say of the country? Would it be too much to call it a wolfish country, owing to its climate and a land of adventurers - Indians, half-breeds, whites toiling in the gold, silver, and copper mines? ..."128

The influx of settlers brought with it another great impact on the aboriginal way of life. In 1871, Father du Ranquet in Thunder Bay reported on the spread of measles among the aboriginal population: "Very few whites have been attacked; but it would seem as if no Indian or half-breed were to be permitted to escape. Fr. Chone, here at the mission where the greater number of deaths has occurred, is extremely fatigued. ..."129

1875 marked the beginning of [CPR] railway construction in Thunder Bay, on the left bank of the Kaministiquia River, about four miles from its mouth.<sup>130</sup> Construction proceeded slowly and excessive costs were blamed.<sup>131</sup> By 1881, a railway route to the west from Fort William/Port Arthur was approved by the federal government and the Canadian Pacific Railway began its work. The railway was completed to the Rocky Mountains by 1883.<sup>132</sup> The first train arrived in Thunder Bay in 1882.<sup>133</sup> No doubt, Métis people worked in the railway camps. Along with the railway, came great increases in the types of economics driving the area. Elizabeth Arthur summarizes as follows:

What was happening in the early 1880s was the creation of an early mid-Canada corridor through Thunder Bay, the consequent stimulation of the growth of towns where the railway decided they would be appropriate, individual settlements thus committed to the prosperity of the railway and the subsidiary industries to which it gave rise. At the same time, there was a vast increase in the significance of the transient rather than the settler. The old dichotomy of fur trade days was thus continued by the decisions of the C.P.R. and the federal government.

Yet the emergence of any stable community in Thunder Bay once the railway line was in existence seemed to depend on the development of other aspects of the local economy - mining, lumbering, and farming - as well as the growth

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128 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 181.  
129 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 175.  
130 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 124.  
131 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 126.  
132 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lxvii.  
133 Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 129.

of municipal institutions, in all of which the role of the provincial government would be of prime significance.<sup>134</sup>

Potential settlers were encouraged to move through Thunder Bay to settle the west.

By that time, the mining activities in the area had come almost to a standstill. E. B. Borron reported in 1877: "...The Indians, especially in the neighborhood [sic], are likely to be very badly off this winter. ... from the fact of there being hardly any exploring or mining going on, either upon the north or south shores of Lakes Huron or Superior."<sup>135</sup> Borron also reported on the state of the fur trade at the time:

It might naturally enough occur to you that all the able-bodied Indians might hunt or trap, but furred animals and game are very scarce now anywhere within reasonable distance of this place [Sault Ste. Marie], and quite a number of our best Indians of the younger generation hardly know how to trap and hunt as their forefathers did. They live by fishing, voyaging, and lumbering, or chopping cordwood, and generally grow a few potatoes. The fishing has turned out badly this fall, especially in the Rapids here at Sault Ste. Marie. ...<sup>136</sup>

By the end of the 1880s, there was a collapse of world silver prices<sup>137</sup> and as a result, mining activities in the Thunder Bay area virtually ceased. As such, many Métis must have lost their source of income at the time.

Although some small-scale timber operations had occurred in the 1870s, timber berths were only surveyed in quantity in 1890 and the first sale of a timber limit in Thunder Bay occurred in 1892.<sup>138</sup>

All of these new economic activities, especially mining and the railway and road construction, provided much employment to the Métis living in the area. According to

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<sup>134</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lxx.

<sup>135</sup> Letter dated November 23, 1877, from E. B. Borron, M.P., to D. Mills, Minister, Department of the Interior, printed in "Return (127) to an Address of the House of Commons, dated 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1879; For copies of all correspondence between the Government of the Dominion and the Government of Ontario, in reference to the arrears due to the Indians or due to the Dominion on account of Indian Land claims on Lakes Huron and Superior, under the Treaties by which they relinquished their Territorial rights, together with copies of the Treaties, and all reports and documents bearing thereon. By Command, J. C. Aikins, Secretary of State... 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1879," INAC Claims and Historical Research Centre

<sup>136</sup> Letter dated November 23, 1877, from E. B. Borron, M.P., to D. Mills, Minister, Department of the Interior, printed in "Return (127) to an Address of the House of Commons, dated 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1879; ..." INAC Claims and Historical Research Centre

<sup>137</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lxxv.

<sup>138</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lxxvii.

1881 Census information, the RSMIN ancestors held jobs as labourers, carpenters, hunters, voyageurs, interpreters, and Hudson's Bay Company officers at Nipigon<sup>139</sup> and ship builders, canoe makers and mostly labourers at Kaministiquia.<sup>140</sup>

However, as the area was opened up, land was taken up by settlers and commercial interests. It appears that most of the Métis chose to reside on reserves with the Indian Bands of the area.<sup>141</sup>

As a result of the new economic opportunities of the area, land values also increased. This is evidenced in a section of Elizabeth Arthur's book. She writes that: "The unhappiness on the Fort William Reserve was closely linked with rising land values, and with the issue of licences to cut timber [in the early 1880s]. The Indian Affairs Department came to the conclusion that injustice had been done on both these counts. ..."142 The injustice had occurred from the sale of surrendered lands on the Fort William Reserve at a value less than the land in the area in general was being sold.

The aboriginal people were keenly feeling the encroachment of settlers. In this period, the First Nation people were making complaints on limitations of their hunting activities during closed seasons.<sup>143</sup> They were also requesting schools on their reserves, as many of their members were moving into nearby towns and villages to work.<sup>144</sup> The Indian Agent was instructed to discourage them from residing in Port Arthur and to induce them to return to their settlements.<sup>145</sup>

Also in the 1880s, a new Indian Agent was appointed to Port Arthur, the headquarters of the area Indian Agency. The advantages to hiring this new agent, Donnelly, included that "he was a Roman Catholic and fluent in both French and English..."<sup>146</sup> The advantage to being fluent in French and English was the capability of dealing with all the aboriginal people, including the Métis. The 1901 Census of Canada includes data on languages spoken and the literacy level of the "Ojibeway Indians - Lake Superior,"

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<sup>139</sup> NAC RG31 1881 Census of Canada, Algoma District, Ontario, Nipigon, District 182, Subdistrict bb, Reel C-13282

<sup>140</sup> NAC RG31 1881 Census of Canada, Algoma District, Ontario, Kaministiquia, District 182, Subdistrict ee, Reel C-13282

<sup>141</sup> See Appendix B of present report. The 1881 Census of Canada indicates that many of the Métis names can be found under the lists for Nipigon or Fort William/Kaministiquia. Unfortunately, time did not permit the author to investigate the sections of the census for Michipicoten or the Pic.

<sup>142</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lxxxv.

<sup>143</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lxxxv.

<sup>144</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lxxxvi.

<sup>145</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lxxxvi.

<sup>146</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. lxxxvii. Source in text: "P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, v. 289, Dawson to Vankoughnet, Jan. 10, 1883."

under which virtually all of the RSMIN Métis families were listed. As the census shows, many of the Métis were quite educated, being literate in French and English by 1901, and most of their children were as well. Some of the wives spoke only Ojibway.<sup>147</sup>

Despite the relative profitability of the area around them, First Nations people experienced "continued strife on the reservations on the fringes of settlement with little of the compensating economic advances being experienced within those settlements themselves."<sup>148</sup>

Through the 1880s, the Métis continued to be employed in some of the same occupations at which they had historically excelled. In a letter from 1884, for example, authored by Indian Agent Donnelly of the Port Arthur Indian Agency, Mr. De Laronde is referred to as the Hudson's Bay Company's agent at Lake Nipigon. In the same letter, which describes the actions taken by Donnelly to complete the Robinson Treaty annuity payments in his agency, he writes "...at request of the Military Secretary asked me to get some of the Indian voyageurs [or?] of the same band for [my?] expedition..."<sup>149</sup> In a different letter of the same date, Donnelly explained some of the expenses he incurred for the treaty annuity payments, one of which were the services of a Métis interpreter from Port Arthur.

The Riel Rebellions of 1885 likely provided the impetus for the Métis families in Ontario to associate themselves closely with their aboriginal kin (one of the ways they did this was by staying on the reserves). After the rebellions, the public opinion in Ontario was against Métis rights.<sup>150</sup> As Whiteside and Whiteside report, "...it is safe to assume that after the Riel Rebellion of 1885, the fear and hostility towards the Métis became more pronounced and spread into Ontario."<sup>151</sup> As such, by living in the towns, the Métis would have exposed themselves to potentially dangerous reactions from the general public. In other words, it was safer to be "an Indian" than a Métis in the 1880s. The Métis would have downplayed the unique features of their own culture, or such cultural practices would have "gone underground" so to speak.

Although the majority of the RSMIN forebears resided on the Indian Reserves in the Lake Superior area, the census information for 1881 and 1901 shows that some of the Métis families did not. Of these people, Whiteside and Whiteside write, "The Half-breed Indians who, for one reason or another did not live in the settlements or reserves in

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<sup>147</sup> See Appendix C of present report.

<sup>148</sup> Arthur, E., ed. *Thunder Bay District...*, p. lxxxvii.

<sup>149</sup> Letter dated September 19, 1884, from J. P. Donnelly, Indian Agent, Port Arthur, to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, NAC RG10, Vol. 2273, File 54,605

<sup>150</sup> Lytwyn report, 1998, p. 33

<sup>151</sup> Whiteside and Whiteside, p. 12.

Ontario and were not connected to the Band Council in some way are difficult to locate or find evidence of cohesive group action. One would guess that in southern Ontario most of these half-breed Indians were assimilated into the European world. In Northern Ontario, however, it is possible that they maintained some affiliation with their tribe by residing close to the boundaries of the reserves. ...<sup>152</sup> Those Métis families who lived off-reserve lived in towns like Prince Arthur, which was not far from the Fort William Reserve. The two individuals identified to date in the 1881 Census who lived in Prince Arthur were both widows.

However, in the case of the majority of the Robinson Superior Métis, they resided on Indian reserves and took an active part in Band Councils. For example, the Chief at Fort William in 1887 was Thomas Boucher<sup>153</sup>, and the Chief of the Lake Nipigon Band in 1899 was Pierre/Pierrish Deschamps.<sup>154</sup> Both of these individuals were prominent Métis.

At the time, not all of the reserves provided by the Robinson Superior Treaty had even been surveyed. It was not until 1887, for example, that the Indian Reserves at Lake Nipigon were surveyed. It appears that in one case at least, that of the reserve at Red Rock, the reserve was surveyed for mostly a population of Métis or "civilized Indian" people:

In addition to the above reserves on the Big Lake, another reserve was last season surveyed by Mr. A. L. Russell, for the band of Chippeways belonging to Red Rock and Lake Helen<sup>155</sup>. This reserve is on the west bank of the Nipigon River near its inlet to Lake Helen, where the Chief Pierre Deschamps and other civilized Indians have made comfortable homes and well cultivated gardens. Here also reside the most experienced and trusty voyageurs and guides to the numerous fishing places of note. Among the best known of the guides I may mention Pierre Bonnetcarie, Jose Bouchard, John Watt, Alexe La Ronde and Dennis Deschamps.<sup>156</sup>

In conclusion, between the Robinson Treaties in 1850 and the turn of the century, the RSMIN forebears adapted themselves to the changing economy of the areas in which they lived. In the interior, they were employed in much the same way as they had been prior to the treaty: as voyageurs, interpreters, hunters, carpenters and labourers with the

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<sup>152</sup> Whiteside and Whiteside, p. 51.

<sup>153</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., p. 197.

<sup>154</sup> List dated 1899 (circa, undated) signed by Chief Pierre Deschamps, NAC RG10, Vol. 2977, File 210,517

<sup>155</sup> Lake Helen was named after Helen De Laronde.

<sup>156</sup> Arthur, E., ed. Thunder Bay District..., pp. 195-196.



Hudson's Bay Company and otherwise. On the lakeshore, they took on jobs in the new industries (railway, mining, timber, construction, etc.) as they continued to reside in their traditional territory. Because they remained within the Indian Bands for the most part, they also continued with traditional harvesting activities because employment in the new industries was often of a seasonal or part-time nature. As they were considered part of the Bands, they would have engaged themselves in hunting, trapping and fishing along with their First Nations brethren. In some instances, the RSMIN forebears took on important political positions within the Indian Bands, denoting the continued importance of their contribution as educated people who could serve as a link with the White society.

Little material has been obtained on the period dating from 1901 onward and much research remains to be done. What is known at this time is that several RSMIN members have held mining claims and miner's licenses (dating back as far as 1960), as well as trapping licenses. Pierre Deschamps, for example, registered a mining location in Booth Township in 1883 and his descendants still hold title today. As well, RSMIN members have purchased property in the Robinson-Superior Treaty area, in cities such as Thunder Bay and surrounding towns. Some of these property purchases were necessitated after the city of Thunder Bay confiscated a traditional Métis settlement in old Port Arthur.

#### **PART 5: THE CONTEMPORARY MÉTIS COMMUNITY IN THE ROBINSON-SUPERIOR TREATY TERRITORY**

The Métis presence in the Robinson Superior Treaty area is still very active. The main political body representing these people is the Red Sky Métis Independent Nation. Former Métis Chief Roy E. J. DeLaRonde indicated that "RSMIN has approximately 6,000 members distributed throughout 66 communities throughout Northwestern Ontario. The membership policy of RSMIN restricts our membership to persons who are direct descendants of the 84 "half-breeds" identified as treaty beneficiaries in the Robinson-Superior Treaty..."<sup>157</sup> The Red Sky Métis Independent Nation membership registry guidelines state the following as requirements: "All RSMIN members must be social descendants of the '84 half-breeds' mentioned in the communications of the Robinson-Superior Treaty (1850) and cannot be legally, administratively or politically recognized as 'Indian' or 'Inuit'."<sup>158</sup> Additionally, the membership guidelines provide that people who may have had Indian status in the past but can prove they are descended from one of the 84 'Half-breeds' may become a member of RSMIN if they do not

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<sup>157</sup> R. v. Powley and Powley, "Affidavit of Métis Chief Roy E.J. DeLaRonde," Court File No. 28533, p. 2.

<sup>158</sup> Red Sky Métis Independent Nation, Citizenship Registry, Resolution No. 05/2/00 dated February 5, 2000, and Resolution No. 6/94 dated April 9, 1994, "Membership Registry Guidelines".

possess Indian status. Other points in the guidelines address adoptions, marriages, divorce, and death of members and whether membership in RSMIN continues. The RSMIN members who reside within the Robinson-Superior Treaty area can enjoy full rights to services, consultation on program development, and rights to harvesting for food within the treaty area. There are different provisions for those members living outside of the treaty area.

Chief DeLaRonde also indicated that "The principal zone of responsibility for RSMIN is its membership residing within the treaty territory, although many of our members reside elsewhere. Currently contact and services are provided by on-going newsletters, voluntary circulation of information and assistance in the provision of a variety of services directed and administered by the RSMIN head office in Thunder Bay, Ontario."<sup>159</sup>

Currently, Red Sky Métis Independent Nation members reside and/or are employed in such centres as Thunder Bay, Fort William, Port Arthur, Westfort, Kakabeka Falls, Sunshine, Kashabowie, Shebandowan, Upsala, Raith, Pass Lake, Dorion, Hurket, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon, Nipigon, White River, Longlac, Geraldton Mill, Armstrong, **Red Rock, Chapleau, Wawa, Rossport, Dog Lake, Nakina, Hornepayne, South Gilles, Hymers, Murillo, Manitouwage, Hillsport, Collins, Batchawana Bay, Duberville, Carmat, Stevens, Jellicoe, Beardmore, Stanley, Nolalu, Finmark, Shabaque, Michipicoton, McKenzie, Misbanabie, Silver Islet, Montreal River, Nezan, Coldwell, Frater, Dalton, Franz, Cavers, Goudreau, Lochaish, Orient Bay, and Agawa Bay.**<sup>160</sup> (See attached map.)

Métis culture continues today in the Robinson Superior Treaty area. Former Métis Chief Roy E. J. DeLaRonde, made the following statement: "The modern organization of RSMIN takes its inspiration and focus from the traditional structure of leadership among the Red Sky Métis. The symbol of leadership regarding all concerns of public importance at a family, community or regional level was, and is, represented by the Sash. The Sash is passed to those who manifest both the interest and ability to address issues of general significance."<sup>161</sup> As well, "The self-identification and solidarity of RSMIN membership issues from the family narratives and oral histories passed from generation to generation at pivotal family and community events such as weddings, births, funerals and passing on the Sash symbolizing leadership. ..."<sup>162</sup> The annual Red

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<sup>159</sup> R. v. Powley and Powley, "Affidavit of Métis Chief Roy E.J. DeLaRonde," Court File No. 28533, p. 2.

<sup>160</sup> Donelda Delaronde, personal communication, March 25, 2005, and May 3, 2005.

<sup>161</sup> Supreme Court of Canada, R v. Powley and Powley, "Affidavit of Métis Chief Roy E.J. DeLaRonde," Court File No. 28533, pp. 1-2.

<sup>162</sup> R. v. Powley and Powley, "Affidavit of Métis Chief Roy E.J. DeLaRonde," Court File No. 28533, p. 3.

Sky Métis rendezvous is an example of one such celebration. The Pipe also remains as an important historic symbol.

The report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples states that traditional harvesting activities are one of the most important areas of contemporary Métis identity. The report states

In terms of traditional harvesting rights, the primary area of importance to many Métis is wildlife. Included here are the right to hunt game and fowl, to trap furbearing animals, and to take fish. This is important because many Métis are actively involved, to varying degrees, in these activities today. In addition, Métis also gather berries and other edible plant life, use plants and roots for medicines, use wood for cooking and warmth, and collect materials for handicrafts.<sup>163</sup>

The importance of continued harvesting activities is relevant to the Red Sky Métis Independent Nation as well. For example, the RSMIN membership guidelines provide that members who reside within the Robinson-Superior Treaty area can enjoy rights to harvesting for food within the treaty area.

At the same time, "Being Aboriginal is not inconsistent with being modern. While traditional forms of resource use - hunting, fishing and trapping - continue to be of primary economic importance to some Métis, and are central to the cultural values of all Métis, the economic survival of the Métis Nation in the modern world depends on its ability to exploit natural resources commercially, as peoples do the world over."<sup>164</sup> This statement fits in with the occupational profile of the Red Sky Métis. For example, its members are employed in such sectors as the truck driving/transportation industry, paper mills, nursing/health care, teaching, bush work, railways, airplane manufacturing, invention, daycare, high technology, mining, pipelines, farming, electricity, retail, entertainment, construction, tourism, farming, and logging.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> RCAP Report, vol. 4, chapter 5, p. 433.

<sup>164</sup> RCAP Report, vol. 4, chapter 5, p. 449.

<sup>165</sup> Donelda Delaronde, personal communication, March 25, 2005.

## CONCLUSION

The present report has set out the unique culture and history of the Métis people inhabiting the north shore of Lake Superior. A Métis people developed in this area following contact with French fur traders in the mid-1600s. It appears that at first, these people were simply integrated into their mothers' tribes. Later, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a distinct Métis community and identity began to develop in the area, following contact with more fur traders, especially those working for the North West Company who established more permanent trading posts along Lake Superior. Records indicate that the main labour force for these trading posts, especially evident after 1821 when the North West Company amalgamated with the Hudson's Bay Company, came from Métis men and their sons. These families lived at or in the immediate vicinity of the fur trading posts and outposts at Fort William, Michipicoten, Lake Nipigon, Pic River, Red Rock, Long Lake, and others.

During the 1840s, increased mining activities on Lake Superior brought the influx of businessmen, missionaries and later, on, settlers. As a result of the increased interest and encroachment in the area, the government of the Province of Canada undertook to negotiate a treaty with the Anishnaabeg claiming the territory north of Lake Superior. This can be considered as the point of establishment of European control of the area. The records indicate that the Métis people were represented at these Robinson Treaties, signed in 1850, by the Anishnaabeg Chiefs. They were paid annuities under these treaties, first by the Anishnaabeg Chiefs representing the various Indian Bands, via the Hudson's Bay Company, and later (in 1867), directly by the Government of Canada.

After the treaty, the economics of the area began to change. The fur trade was no longer the main means of employment for the Métis, although they continued to participate in it, as well as in the fisheries. As the railway was built and mines developed, Métis were introduced into the wage economy. Nonetheless, they remained in the treaty territory, moving about as their occupations necessitated. Often, they would need to supplement their income derived from guiding, trapping or fishing, with other income. With settlers and companies buying up the land along Lake Superior, the Métis appear to have moved onto Indian Reserves or, less, into the towns that were developing around them. Although they lived among their Anishnaabeg kin and often intermarried, they maintained their unique status as middlemen between the white and Anishnaabeg cultures. Several of the Métis continued to work as voyageurs or guides into at least the beginning of the twentieth century. Many of the Métis men were leaders, occupying positions as fur trade company post managers or Chiefs of Indian Bands. The impetus for this closer association with the Anishnaabeg likely came from the negative stereotyping of Métis that generally emerged as a result of the Riel Rebellion in 1885. It would have been more advantageous from a social and economic

point of view for the Métis to be associated as “Indians” or French rather than as Métis at that time. That is not to say, however, that the Métis lost their identity. They simply integrated themselves into either Anishnaabeg or White culture in order to survive, but continued their close cultural, familial and emotional ties to one another.

The Métis presence in the Robinson Superior Treaty area is still very active, with many members being represented by the Red Sky Métis Independent Nation. The members of the RSMIN all derive their identity from among the 84 “Half-breeds” who participated in the Robinson-Superior Treaty. The majority of the membership have continued to reside and work in the treaty territory and participate in the political structure and cultural celebrations of the Nation. The Métis people are adaptable people, adapting their occupations as required to earn a living; but they have consistently maintained their distinct identity as Métis.

**APPENDIX A:****1852 Paylists of the Fort William and Michipicoten Bands (transcripts) -  
Comparison of Hudson's Bay Company and Indian Affairs Records**Fort William Band, 1852 (Hudson's Bay Company Records)

		Balance 1850 & 1851	Annuity 1852	Total
Half Breeds				
Henry Akibie H	3 [crossed out] "	7 6	1 6 3	1 13 9
Joseph Boucher	9	1 2 6	3 18 9	5 1 3
Michel Collin Senr	8	1 " "	3 10 "	4 10 "
Michel Collin Jr	3	" 7 6	1 6 3	1 13 9
William Corbeau H2	3 [crossed out] "	12 6	2 3 9	2 16 3
Michel Deschamps	3	" 7 6	1 6 3	1 13 9
Joseph Deschamps H2	[crossed out] "	5 "	" 17 6	1 2 6
Isidore Dumoulon	4	" 10 "	1 15 "	2 5 "
J. Bte Faigneant	8	1 " "	3 10 "	4 10 "
John Finlayson	4	" 10 "	1 15	2 5
Michel Lambert	3	" 7 6	1 6 3	1 13 9
Charles Louis	8	1 " "	3 10 "	4 10 "
J. Bte Vizina	3	" 7 6	1 6 3	1 13 9
Francois Vizina	3	" 7 6	1 6 3	1 13 9 <sup>166</sup>

Total: 14 families, 56 people

[same families for 1850 and 1851, with populations of 61 each year]

Fort William Band, 1852 (Indian Affairs Records)

"Half Breeds

Henry Akabie	3	1	1	3	x	[illegible] paid at Michipicoten where Akabie at present resides
Joseph Boucher	9	3	18	9	x	[illegible]
Michel Collin	8	3	11	"	x	[illegible]
Michel Collin Junr	3	1	1	3	x	[illegible]
Isidore Desmoulon	4	1	15	"	x	[illegible]
J. Bte Faignean	8	3	10	"	x	[illegible]
John Finlayson	4	1	15	"	John Finlayson	[illegible]

<sup>166</sup>

PAM HBCA B.129/d/7, fos. 5-6d, "Michipicoten Account Book 1851-57"



Charles Louis	8	3	10	"	x	[illegible]
J. Bte Keotassin	"	"	"	"		Paid at
						Michipicoton
Michel Lambert	3	1	1	3	x	[illegible]
Michel Deschamps	3	1	1	3	x	Finlayson
Pierre Plante	"	"	"	"		at the Sault
J. Bte Vizina	3	1	1	3	x	[illegible]
Francois Vizina	3	1	1	3	x	[illegible]
William Crow	5	2	3	9	x	Finlayson
Joseph Deschamps	2	"	17	6	x	Finlayson
	105	45	18	9 <sup>167</sup>		

Total: 16 families, 77 people

Michipicoten Band, 1852 (Hudson's Bay Company Records)

"

	Number	Balance 1850 & 1851	Treaty 1852	Total
Amot brot forward	18	" 3	55 13 6	73 13 9
Half Breeds &c	131			
Charles Begg	4 [3 crossed out]	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9
Toussaint Boucher	3	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9
Narcisse Chastellain	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Joseph Collin	6	" 16 6	2 11 "	3 7 6
Pierre Deschamps	3	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9
Joseph Dubois	6 [7 crossed out]	" 19 3	2 19 6	3 18 9
Edward Heron	5 [4 crossed out]	" 11 "	1 14 "	2 5
J. Bte Keotasine	4 [3 crossed out]	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9
Thos Sampler	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Ls Denis Delaronde	5	" 13 9	2 2 6	2 16 3
David Perdrix Blanche	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Joseph Moriseau	4 [3 crossed out]	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9
Frans Mizzobec	6	" 16 6	2 11 "	3 7 6
David Nitawapin	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Alexr Robertson	Dead [1 crossed out]	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
William Robertson	8 [7 crossed out]	" 19 3	2 19 6	3 18 9
James Saunders	3	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9
William Schillen	6	" 16 6	2 11 "	3 7 6
Antoine Soulier	4 [3 crossed out]	" 8 3	1 5 6	1 13 9

<sup>167</sup>

NAC RG 10, Vol. 9497, Reel C-7167, [p. 26]

Frances Swanson	2	" 5 6	" 17 "	1 2 6
James Taylor	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Joseph Tundess	2	" 5 6	" 17 "	1 2 6
Philip Turner	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
John Watakiya	2 [1 crossed out]	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
John Swanston	6	" 16 6	2 11 "	3 7 6
Jane McDonalds Daughter	1	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Joe. Skandagance	2 [1 crossed out]	" 2 9	" 8 6	" 11 3
Pierre Plante	3 [4 crossed out]	" 11 "	1 12 "	2 5
	205	29 16 9	87 2 6	122 1 3 <sup>168</sup>

Total: 28 families, 91 people

[same 28 families paid in 1850 and 1851, with populations of 86 each year]

Michipicoten Band, 1852 (Indian Affairs Records)

"Half Breeds

Charles Begg	3	1 5 6	Charles Begg	paid 1st Augt 1852
Toussaint Boucher	3	1 5 6	Toussaint Boucher	Alex Robertson " "
Narcisse Chastellain	1	" 8 6	MacKenzie	" " " "
Amt transmitted to [illegible word] where this man resides				
Joseph Collin	6	2 11 "	Thomas Lam[illegible]	" 15th Septem.
		" " "	St. St Marie	" " " "
Pierre Deschamps	3	1 5 6	Pierre Deschamps	Alex Robertson " 4th August.
Joseph Dubois	7	2 19 6	Joseph Dubois	Tootomine " " "
Edward Heron	4	1 14 "	Edward Heron	" 1st " "
J. Bte Keotasine	3	1 5 6	J. Bte. Keotasine	Tootomine " 4th " "
Thos Sampler	1	" 8 6	Thomas Sampler	" 4th " "
Louis Denis Delaronde	5	2 2 6	Louise Laronde	Tootomine " 3rd " "
Amt paid Mr. Larondes Daughter at his request.				
David Perdrix Blanche	1	" 8 6	David Perdrix Blanche	Alex Robertson " 4th " "
Joseph Moriseau	3	1 5 6	Joseph Moriseau	Alex Robertson " 4th " "
Frans Mizzobec	6	2 11 "	Frans Mizzobec	Alex Robertson " " " "
David Nitawapin	1	" 8 6	David Nitawapin	Tootomine " 3rd " "
Alexr Robertson	1	" 8 6	Alexr Roberston	" 3rd Septem "
William Robertson	7	2 19 6	William Robertson	Tootomine " 4th Aug "
James Saunders	3	1 5 6	Philip Turner	" 15th Sepr "
Amt transmitted to Moose Factory f. P. Turner				

William Scheller	6	2	11	"	William Scheller	Tootomine	"	4th Aug."
Antoine Soulier	3	1	5	6	Antoine Soulier	Tootomine	"	" " " "
Frances Swanson	2	"	17	"	Philip Turner		"	15th Sepr
					Amt transmitted to Moose Facotry f. P. Turner			
John Swanston	6	2	11	"	J MacKenzie		"	" " "
					Amt paid MacKenzie at Mr Swanstons request			
James Taylor	1	"	8	6	James Taylor		"	4th Aug. "
Joseph Tundess	2	"	17	"	Joseph Tundess	Tootomine	"	" " " "
Philip Turner	1	"	8	6	Philip Turner		"	" " " "
John Watakiya	1	"	8	6	John Watakya	Tootomine	"	" " " "
Joe. Skandagance	1	"	8	6	Fr. Skandagance	Tootomine	"	5th " "
Jane McDonalds Daughter	1	"	8	6	Philip Turner		"	15th Sepr
					Amt. transmitted to Moose Factory f. P. Turner			
	205	87	2	6 <sup>169</sup>				

Total: 27 families, 82 people

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<sup>169</sup> NAC RG 10, Vol. 9497, Reel C-7167, [p. 38]

**APPENDIX B:**  
**Census of Canada for 1881, Algoma District**

The 1881 Census of Canada, Algoma District, lists the following heads of families, along with their age, religion, place of origin, and occupation<sup>170</sup>:

Nipigon

Louis Bouchard, wife Mary, 3 children. Age 80, Catholic, French, wife: Nipigon, Labourer

Louis Bouchard [Jr.], wife Nancy, 4 children. Age 50, Catholic, origin: Nipigon, labourer

Frank Bouchard, wife Filomen, 5 children. Age 48, Catholic, Nipigon, Hunter

Nicolas Bouchard, wife Mary, 10 children. Age 38, Catholic, Nipigon, Carpenter

Gilbert Bouchard, wife Mary. Age 35, Catholic, Nipigon, Hunter

Francois Lagard, wife Maryann, 3 children. Age 35, Catholic, Nipigon, Hunter

Perish Dechamps [Deschamps], Male, wife Louise [daughter of Louis Denys

DeLaRonde], 3 sons (all "indigenous", one a voyageur, one a labourer). Age 60, Indian, Nipigon, interpreter, Catholic

Mitchell Dechamps, male, 25, indigenous, voyageur, Catholic

Dines [Denys] Dechamps, male, 17, indigenous, labourer, Catholic

John Dechamps, male, 8, indigenous, Catholic

...

A. Peter Laronde, wife Therese. Age 40, Catholic, French, [Semin?], wife Indian

Henry Laronde, wife Catherine, 1 child (Angelique). Age 47, Catholic, French, H.B. officer

Paul Lagard, wife Jodet, 1 child. Age ?, both "Indian", hunter

...

Charles Larond, wife Marry, 3 children. Age 27, Catholic, french, wife Indian, labourer

...

Tindis Lagard, wife Marry, 3 children, 2 others. Age ?, Catholic, Indian, labourer

<sup>171</sup>

Prince Arthur, 1881

Louise Laronde, age 56, 3 children. Catholic, "Half Breed", widow

...

Margaret [Jemio?], age 82, Catholic, from U.S. "Half Breed", widow

<sup>172</sup>

...

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<sup>170</sup> Unfortunately, time restraints only permitted the author to research the census returns for Nipigon, Prince Arthur and Kaministiquia. Other subdistricts with potential information on the Métis population of the area which were not investigated for the present report are those of Michipicoten and the Pic.

<sup>171</sup> NAC RG31 1881 Census of Canada, Algoma District, Ontario, Nipigon, District 182, Subdistrict bb, Reel C-13282

<sup>172</sup> NAC RG31 1881 Census of Canada, Algoma District, Ontario, Prince Arthur, District 182,

Kaministiquia/Fort William, 1881

Michael Lambert, age 60, father (?) Joseph, age 100, Catholic, French, ship carpenter  
(for father, says French, and "Indian" crossed out)

...

Ellen Louttie, age 10, Samuel, age 8, and Elizabeth, age 4, "Halfbreeds"

...

Baptiste Collin, age 50, wife Mary, 4 children, (mother and sister?), Catholic, Indian,  
labourer

...

(Laurence?) Brett, age 14, two sisters, "Halfbreeds"

...

(Naneth?) La Blan, age 11, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French  
Mary J. Farrucy, age 8, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French

...

Nancy Dachamp, age 11, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French  
Matthew Dachamp, age 6, "Indian" crossed out and rewritten as French  
Nanette Michau, age 8, "Indian" crossed out and rewritten as French  
Mary Perrault, age 9, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French  
Susan Perrault, age 6, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French  
(Lucie?) Joseph, age 7, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French  
(Elise) Bergeron, age 5, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French  
Elizabeth Bergeron, age 3, "Halfbreed" crossed out and rewritten as French

...

Michelle St. John, age 25, Catholic, wife Rosalle and 2 children, halfbreed

...

Louisa Cyrette, age 40, 4 children, catholic, halfbreed, rewritten French  
David (Naticia?), age 28, wife Charlotte, 1 child, Catholic, halfbreed

....

George McVicar, age 10, Halfbreed, rewritten scotch

...

Michel Collin, age 80, Catholic, Halfbreed, rewritten Indian, Canoe maker  
Michel Collin [Jr. ?], age 25, wife Mary A, [Mother?], 2 children, Catholic, Halfbreed  
rewritten as Indian, farmer

...

Ang Deschamps, age 42, female, 4 children, catholic, halfbreed rewritten as French,  
widow, son labourer

Catherine Louis, age 23, 2 children, catholic, halfbreed rewritten as French, widow

...

Martin Ducharme, age 18, wife Harriet, 18, mother Harriet, 44, catholic, halfbreed  
crossed out as French, wife Indian, labourer

Thomas Boucher, age 28, wife Catherine, 1 child, halfbreed crossed out as French,  
catholic, labourer

...

Joseph Boucher, age 70, wife Nannett, 2 children, catholic, halfbreed crossed out as  
french, no occ., son labourer

[Ensa?] Bucher, age 48, wife Mary Ann, 2 children, Catholic, halfbreed crossed out as  
French, labourer

George [Goodith?], age 30, catholic, crossed out as French, labourer

Frank Defoe, age 26, wife Anne?, catholic, halfbreed crossed out as French, 2 others

Joseph Dechamps, age 46, wife Nancy, 3 children, Catholic, halfbreed crossed out as  
French, labourer

Simon Louie, age 40, wife Margaret, 5 children, Catholic, halfbreed crossed out as  
French, labourer

Moses Louie, age 38, 3 children, Catholic, halfbreed crossed out as French, labourer

...

Accubee, age 60, wife aged 55, 1 child, Bisan Perrault, Sarah Perrault, Accubee as  
Indian, and wife, Perrault children as halfbreeds rewritten french, all Catholic except  
wife

173

...

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<sup>173</sup> NAC RG31 1881 Census of Canada, Algoma District, Ontario, Kaministiquia, District 182,  
Subdistrict ee, Reel C-13282



## **APPENDIX C:**

### **Census of Canada for 1901, Algoma District**

**The 1901 Census of Canada, Algoma District<sup>174</sup>, lists the following heads of families, along with their age, racial background, occupation, and religion, as well as the languages spoken and/or written/read:**

**Town of Fort William:**

...

Finlayson Street, but no names from early paylists (subdistricts r1 and r2, r4, s1)

**k2: Port Arthur Outside**

Portelance, Antoine - listed as 48, French, farmer, R.C.<sup>175</sup>

**l2: Town of Port Arthur<sup>176</sup>**

Mercier, Adelare, family of 8, age 49, French, labourer, R.C.<sup>177</sup>

...

Lalonde, Ement, family of 11, age 54, French, teamster, R.C.<sup>178</sup>

...

The "Ojibewa Indians - Lake Superior" are listed separately under Indian Reserves. The 1901 census for the various Bands includes the following individuals (no occupations are listed):

**Under the Red Rock Band:**

Louise Boucher, 48, Catholic, (racial or tribal origin:) Ojibewa F.B., with 1 daughter (can speak English, but not French, cannot read or write)

Jimmy Boucher, 43, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., with wife Sophie and daughter (can speak English and French, but cannot read or write)

...

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<sup>174</sup> Unfortunately, time restraints only permitted the author to research the census returns for Nipigon, Fort William, part of Port Arthur and the "Ojibewa Indians". Other subdistricts with potential information on the Métis population of the area which were not investigated for the present report are those of Michipicoten River and Harbour, Gore Bay, Long Lake, and part of the town of Port Arthur.

<sup>175</sup> NAC RG31 1901 Census of Canada, Ontario, District 44: Algoma, subdistrict k2, p. 1, Reel T-6458

<sup>176</sup> Because the census was so large for the town of Port Arthur, research was not completed because of time restraints.

<sup>177</sup> NAC RG31 1901 Census of Canada, Ontario, District 44: Algoma, subdistrict l2, pp. 5-6, Reel T-6458

<sup>178</sup> NAC RG31 1901 Census of Canada, Ontario, District 44: Algoma, subdistrict l2, pp. 16-17, Reel T-6458

Nicholas Boucher, 50, Catholic Ojibewa F.B., with 2 sons and 1 daughter (can speak English and French, but cannot read or write, but children can)

Antoine Boucher, 35, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., with wife Josette, 2 daughters and 1 son (can speak English and French, but cannot read or write)

[Antoine?] Boucher, 31, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., with wife Louise (can speak English and French, but cannot read or write)

Thomas Boucher, 22, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B. (can speak English and French, and can read and write)

Mrs. Charles Laronde as head of family, 38, Catholic, Ojibewa, 5 daughters, 4 sons, husband Charles, 44 (indicates Charles and wife can read, write and speak English and French) - children and husband marked as Ojibewa F.B.

...

Alex Laronde, 60, Catholic, Ojibewa, F.B. wife Mary Ann, 3 sons (can read, write and speak English and French)

...

Joseph Boucher, 41, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Angelie and son (can read, write and speak English and French)

Michel Boucher, 30, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary Ann, 4 sons (can read, write and speak English and French)

...

Tenais Legarde, 80, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Catherine, 3 daughters, 3 sons (cannot read or write)

Paul Legarde, 30, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary (cannot read or write?)

Pierre Deschamps, 72, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Louise, 1 son, 1 daughter (Pierre cannot read or write, but speaks English and French, Louise and son can read, write and speak)

...

Michel Deschamps, 39, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Agnes, 1 son (Michel can read and write and speak English and French, wife can read and write and speak English)

...

Henry Laronde, 64, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., sister Catherine, adopted son Joseph Wilson (Henry and Catherine can read and write and speak English and French; Joseph cannot speak French)

...

Joe Boucher Jr., 24, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B. (Can only speak French)

Dennis Deschamps, 37, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Amelia, 2 sons, 1 daughter (he can write and speak English and French, Amelia too)

...

Frances Boucher, woman, 45, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., 1 son, 1 daughter (she can speak only French, children can write and speak English and French)

...

Under the Nipigon Band:

Ambrose Boucher, 28, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary, Ojibewa, 1 stepson, 1 daughter (all can only speak French)

...

Gilbert Boucher, 50, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary, Ojibewa, 1 adopted son (Gilbert can speak English and French)

[Ojibewas in Nipigon Band mostly still pagan; cannot read, write or speak English or French for most part]

Under the Pic Band:

[Paul] Desmoulin, 24, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Harriet

...

J.B. Desmoulin, 51, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Maggie Ojibewa, adopted daughter Philomen, adopted son Francis Janwenigejig (J.B. and Francis can write and speak English and French, Maggie and Philomen can only speak English)

Thomas Desmoulin, 46, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary Ojibewa, 5 sons and 2 daughters (Thomas can only speak English; children can read, write and speak English)

...

J. Desmoulin, 25, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Agnes, 2 daughters, 1 adopted son (he can only speak English)

...

Louise Deschamps, 26, Catholic, Ojibewa, 1 daughter Ojibewa S.B., 1 son Ojibewa S.B., (Louise can only speak English, daughter and son can read, write and speak English)

...

David Desmoulin, 54, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Elizabeth, 1 daughter, 1 son (David can speak English and French, wife cannot, children can read, write and speak English)

...

D. Desmoulin, 48, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife M, 4 sons, 1 daughter, 1 nephew (D. can speak English and French, wife can speak English, children can read, write and speak English)

Stephen Finlayson, 21, Catholic, Ojibewa S.B., wife A, Ojibewa F.B. (both can read, write and speak English)

[most Ojibewas in Pic Band are Catholic]

Long Lake Band:

Pierrish Legarde, 40, catholic, Ojibewa, widower (cannot read, write or speak English or French)

Pierre Legarde, 72, Catholic, Ojibewa, widower, 2 daughters (as above)

...

M. Legarde, 60, Catholic, Ojibewa, widower, 1 daughter (as above)

...

Nichol Finlayson, 45, Catholic, Ojibewa S.B., wife Jane, Ojibewa F.B., 4 sons, 6 daughters, all Ojibewa S.B. (Nichol can read, write and speak English, wife can speak, older children can read, write and speak English, younger ones can speak English, youngest three cannot)  
[most Ojibewas in Long Lake Band are Catholic, a few Anglicans, few pagan]

Fort William Band:

Simon Lewis, 57, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Margaret, Ojibewa (Simon can speak English and French)

...

Andrew Acabie, 45, Catholic, Ojibewa, wife Mary, 3 sons, 2 daughters (Andrew can read, write and speak English)

Ambrose Cyrette, 58, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Angelie, Ojibewa, 1 son (Ambrose can read, write and speak English and French, wife cannot, son can speak French)

Nanette Bouchier, 63, widow, Catholic, Ojibewa, 1 son, Ojibewa F.B. (she can speak French, son can read, write and speak French)

Luke Bouchier, 45, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Jane, 1 son, 2 daughters (can read, write and speak French, children also)

Thomas Bouchier, 48, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife C, 1 son, 2 daughters (can read, write and speak French, children also)

...

E. Kokkoskida, 50, widow, Catholic, Ojibewa, son Gabriel Boucher, Ojibewa F.B. (She can speak French, son can speak English)

...

Mo[ise?] Lewis, 56, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Louise, 3 sons, 1 daughter (he can speak English, she cannot, children can read, write and speak English)

Simon Lewis, 64, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife M, 1 son (parents cannot speak English or French, son can speak English)

...

Elie Lewis, 40, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Margaret, Ojibewa, 1 son, 1 stepdaughter Farah Lemay (Elie can speak English, wife cannot, children can read, write and speak English)

...

John Legarde, 4[0?], Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Marie, Ojibewa, 1 stepdaughter Melissa Cyrette (both parents can speak English, Melissa can read, write and speak English)

...

Catherine Deschamps, [19?], Catholic, Ojibewa F.B. (can read, write and speak English)

...

Xavier Boucher, 28, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Philomene, 2 daughters (Xavier and oldest daughter can speak English)

Ambrose Cyrette Jr., 28, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Agnes (parents can read, write and speak English)

...

Frank Legarde, 26, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Lizette (Frank can speak English, wife can read, write and speak English)

Frank Larose, 45, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Anne, 1 stepson, 1 adopted son (parents and stepson can speak English)

Charles Larose, 43, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary (he can speak English)

Michel Collin, 29, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Mary, 2 stepdaughters, 1 son (can both speak English)

Joseph Collin, 46, Catholic, Ojibewa F.B., wife Susan, Ojibewa, 3 daughters, 1 son (Joseph can read, write and speak English, children as well)

...

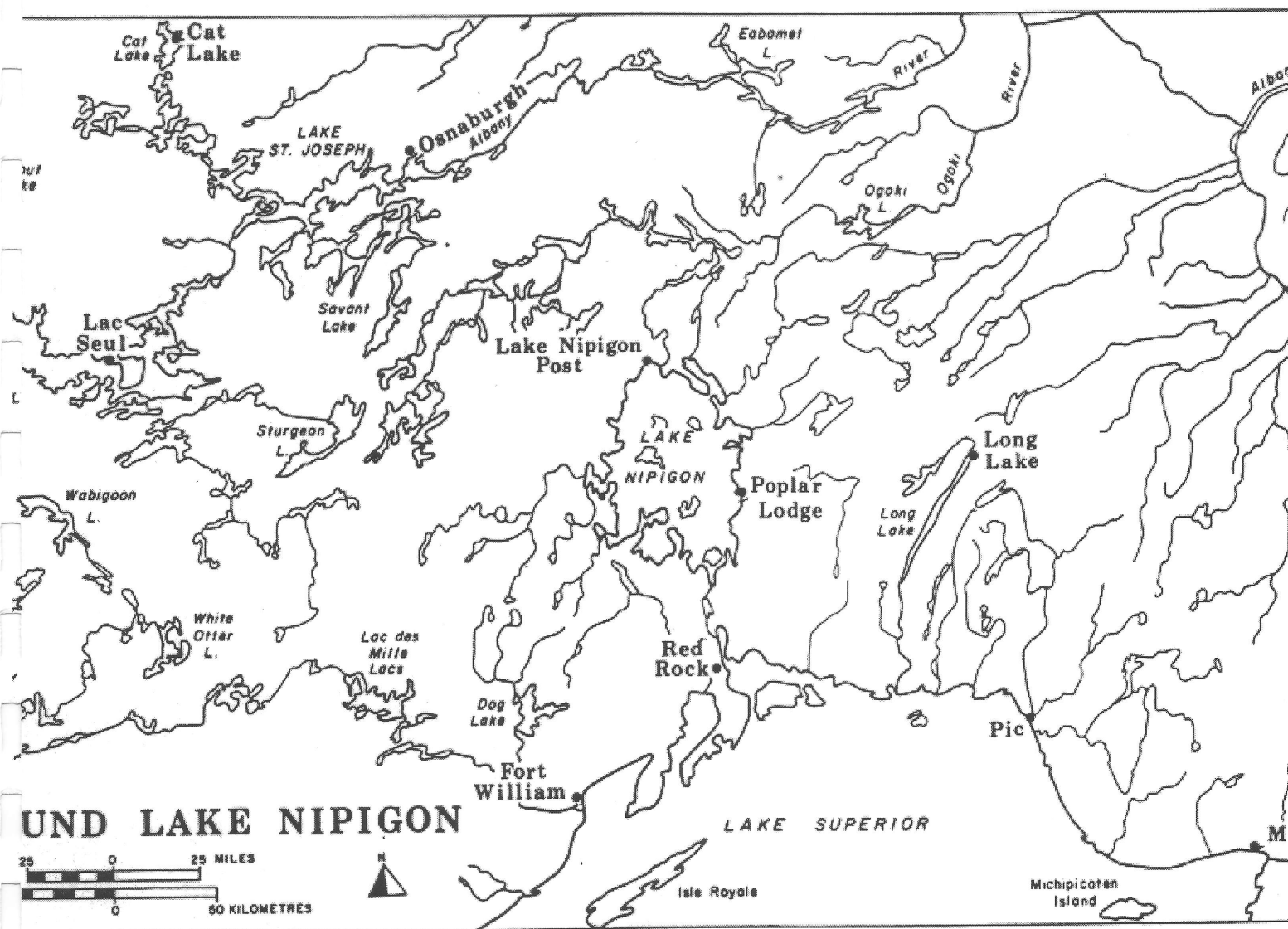
F.X. Ducharme, 80, Catholic, French, widower (can speak English and French)

...

[one page of Fort William Band census illegible]<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> NAC RG31, Census of Canada, 1901, District 44 (Algoma), "Indian Reserves, Ontario, Ojibewa Indians - Lake Superior", Reel T-6554



of de Laronde's with the Hudson's Bay Company in Northwestern Ontario, 1821  
Iain Hastie, Lakehead University.





# Red Sky Métis Independent Nation RST Map

- |                    |                  |                    |                         |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Thunder Bay     | 18. Upsala       | 35. White River    | 52. Hornepayne          |
| 2. Fort Willia     | 19. Raith        | 36. Amyot          | 53. Hillsport           |
| 3. Port Arthur     | 20. Reba         | 37. Duberville     | 54. Stevens             |
| 4. Westfort        | 21. McKenzie     | 38. Franz          | 55. Carmat              |
| 5. Pie Island      | 22. Pass Lake    | 39. Lochaish       | 56. Longlac             |
| 6. Silver Islet    | 23. Dorion       | 40. Goudreau       | 57. Nakina              |
| 7. South Gilles    | 24. Hurket       | 41. Hawk Junction  | 58. Jellicoe            |
| 8. Hymers          | 25. Nipigon      | 42. Chapleau       | 59. Beardmore           |
| 9. Murillo         | 26. Red Rock     | 43. Wawa           | 60. Orient Bay          |
| 10. Stanley        | 27. Schreiber    | 44. Agawa Bay      | 61. Cameron Falls       |
| 11. Kakabeka Falls | 28. Rossport     | 45. Montreal River | 62. Lake Helen          |
| 12. Sunshine       | 29. Dog Lake     | 46. Collins        | 63. Pine Portage        |
| 13. Kashabowie     | 30. Terrace Bay  | 47. Michipencoton  | 64. Armstrong           |
| 14. Shebandowan    | 31. Marathon     | 48. Batchawana Bay | 65. Black Sturgeon Lake |
| 15. Shabaque       | 32. Manitouwadge | 49. Frater         | 66. Timmons             |
| 16. Nolalu         | 33. Hemlo        | 50. Dalton         | 67. Atikokan            |
| 17. Quetico        | 34. Coldwell     | 51. Nichelson      | 68. Kenora              |

Black Line – Outline of RS Treaty Area.

