DOCUMENT 6 General Report of the Manitoba District for 1820 by PETER FIDLER

Manuscript B.51/e/1 fos. 1-20, Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba
Transcribed and edited by Joyce Gunn Anaka

Supplementary Document #6 to:
Eighteenth-Century Naturalists of Hudson Bay
by Stuart Houston, Tim Ball, and Mary Houston

http://www.mqup.ca/books/eighteenth-century/fidler

Any citation of any portion extracted from this material should give the title and the above six lines of information.
A single copy may be printed for individual use, but permission is required for any wider use.

The reasons for placing this material on the world-wide web are given on p. xix of Eighteenth-Century Naturalists of Hudson Bay. Document 6 should be read in conjunction with Chapters 9 and 11 (Peter Fidler and Climatology) in Eighteenth-Century Naturalists.

From Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, B.51/e/1 fos. 1-20
Transcribed March 1993 by Fidler’s great-great-granddaughter, Joyce Gunn Anaka, copying antiquated spelling of words as written by Fidler, without introducing ‘[sic]’ after each such spelling error. With permission.

[Note: Fidler's journal of 1819-20 at Fort Dauphin, tells that he completed the following General Report on 6 April 1820.]
EXTENT OF THE DISTRICT ETC. With the Particular Rivers in it.

The Boundaries of the Manetoba District, are, First by the Western shore of Lake Winnipic, commencing at 30 Miles to the Mouth of the Red River Northwards and running parallel to Red River Westwards along the head waters that run into the Manetoba Lake, which a little above Portage des Praries at the Musheroona River approaches to within less than 1 1/2 Mile of the Northern bank of the Ossiniboyne River & running on a Western course nearly the same distance, until the said Line reaches the Shell river; Thence running a North Easterly course until it crosses the Winnipicosis about 10 Miles NE of the Cedar Lake Portage 4 1/4 Miles over-still continuing in the same direction till it arrives in the Latitude (blank space) North from whence running a SEasterly course until it comes to the Southwest shore of Lake Winnipic, thence along that shore to the Place of beginning.

The Length of the District is 163 Miles from East to West and 157 Miles from North to South comprehending 25,690 Square miles and 16,442,240 Acres which is only at the rate of 1 single Native Inhabitant of all ages & sexes for every 25 Miles square which is a slender population. There are very few navigable rivers in this District, the most considerable is the Saskatchewanis, the entrance of which [is] opposite St. Martins Islands in Lake Winnipic at the bottom of a deep bay. There are a few rapids in it particularly near the Lake -- the Intermediate part easy current. Near the Southernmost end of the Manetoba Lake the White earth river falls in, an inconsiderable stream on the Western side. The Crane River falls into the Lake Northwards of the Cherry Island, and still smaller than the one last mentioned, only navigable with Indian Canoes a few miles. The next river going Westward is the Water-hen river, deep, easy current in general & from 20 to 80 yards wide. After passing this river we enter the Winnipicosis & on its Southern bank Twenty five miles above the last mentioned river is the Fort Dauphin or Tow et tan now River coming from a Lake about Eighteen Miles distance SSW, where the Northwest Company have a Settlement these many years –
- it is reported that Missionaries was formerly here when Canada was in possession of France. This last mentioned river is much impeded by Rapids and Shoals. The upper part is the deepest and has few rapids for 4 or 5 miles below the Lake -- about 12 Miles from its mouth a Small river falls in from the Westward. Along the South about 40 Miles from the mouth of Fort Dauphin River westward is the Duck River, but small and little water in it -- still more Westerly are a few other Creeks still smaller. No rivers fall into the Winnipicosis on the East side -- only the Red Deers & Shoal rivers on the West & South ends of this Lake. The War river is rather considerable & falls into the Winnipic to the Northwards of the Saskatchewan -- it approaches this river within Two hundred yards about 12 Miles from its mouth -- it comes from a Lake some distance Northwest of the Portage. There are also a few smaller creeks which fall into the Manetoba Lake on the East side -- also Dog river near the narrow which comes from a small Lake to the Eastwards which is more particularly specified on a Map of the Manetoba Lake & vicinity I sent to the Honourable Committee the last year. There are a few small rivers that fall into the Fort Dauphin Lake but all small & shoal taking their rise in the Mountain, which the nearest part from the House is about Eighteen Miles South and the Mountain is at least 1200 feet high -- from thence both ways it becomes lower. The lower end has the name of the Duck & the upper part the name of the Riding Mountain by the Indians. The upper or Western end terminates a little below Shell River, where it approaches pretty near the Ossininboyne River. The North East end extends within fifteen miles of the Manetoba Lake near the narrow -- its general breadth is about Six miles. The Northwest side is the most abrupt -- the opposite side is full of hilly ground & intersected with several small Lakes, formerly a very plentiful place for Beaver -- now scarce one to be found. Fort Dauphin Lake or Naw kin as kee is Eighteen Miles long and about five wide and lays SouthEast and Northwest, the west side shoal -- and no Tickameg in it. The fish principally consists of Pike and Succors [suckers]. On the East side of the Lake are two stout Creeks about two miles apart, Six miles from the lower end called Mes ke nak & the upper one Oo tha min or Red Paint both falling into the Lake from the Eastwards. The South East end shoal and a flat shore and no woods near the Lake. At the South East extremity of the Lake fall in two other small Creeks from the Dauphin Mountain about one & a half miles apart. The Westernmost one called Kaw nec shoo is noo. The small river that falls into the Lake on the Southwest side Three miles below the House is the most considerable one, it comes from the South South East, the Sources of which are in the Mountain. One mile from the present Houses over land at the bank of the river 3 miles from the Lake the old Canadian Houses have been built where they resided many years. The Small Lake from which it
takes its rise is called by the natives Tow et tan now -- some parts of the SW shore of the Lake is rocky. Where the NW removed from in 1806 at the river there has been several Houses there belonging to several Partnerships -- 2 miles below the Lake in the Dauphin river on the Right bank there was once many years ago 5 different trading houses at the same time.

On the South side of the Mountain nearly opposite the Source of the Dauphin river there is a chain of Lakes and rivers all the way to the Ossiniboyne river. The most considerable of the 3 Larger Lakes is the Clear water [Clear] Lake, the other two are of an inferior size. The road is navigable in Indian Canoes from near the source of the Ossiniboyne. At the South East end of the Mountain is the Oo ske ba can, a noted place where Indians meet in the spring to make maple Sugar -- there is also a fine open plain near it quite clear of woods. The head of the turtle rivulet takes its rise near that spot. The upper one is the more considerable of the two Lakes in the Riding Mountain -- and the whole length of the Chain has formerly been very abundant in Beaver -- now become very scarce wither these 18 years.

III ON THE NATURE OF THE COUNTRY, SOIL, TREES, ETC.

This District may be called flat and level, with the single exception of the Fort Dauphin Mountain mentioned in the last Article. The upper or Western parts of the District is pretty dry with small woods, altho' there are in some few places stout Oaks, but none of this species of Timber is to be found on the North side of the Winnipicosis, and but partially on the other side of that Lake. Pines are found but in few places except the Northern and Eastern parts. Maple is pretty plentiful in many spots particularly in the South West parts from which the Natives annually make a considerable quantity of Sugar. The time for commencing is generally the first Week in April and the season is generally over the latter end of the same month, tho in some late lingering springs they make some as late as even the Middle of May. The season usually lasts till the Snow is all off the ground. Three Gallons of Juice as in Red River generally make 3/4 or sometimes one pound of Sugar -- but what is remarkable and not easily accounted for is that no grained or Powder Sugar can be made from the Juice of those Trees that grow on the smaller Islands -- the whole becoming like Pitch of a very inferior Quality so that the Indians seldom choose the Islands on that account. There is some small Cedar Trees found in the Western parts of the District -- as also some Ash -- as well as Poplar, Willows, Thorns, Hazel, Cherries, Sascuttom [Saskatoon], Alder, Dogwood & Birch -- some of the latter attain a large size from which we get the Bark from the Indians and take to Norway house for the Athapescow Canoes to repair [?]for YF [York Factory]. The price given to Indians who take it is
one Skin per fathom for thick bottom bark & half a skin for the same length of side bark which is thinner.

The Soil is not near so good as at the Red River having so much Salt in particularly near Fort Dauphin Lake. If a spot is dug up it is soon covered with a whitish crust of a laxitive quality but very white & bitter. There are but few known Salt Springs in the District, the most noted one is a few miles up the White Earth river which rises from a strong spring in the small river, but is very seldom frequented for the purpose of making Salt. The other known spot is in little ponds near the Mouth of the Fort Dauphin river on the left Bank.

A little wild rice in favorable Seasons grow in some of the small lakes in the Southern parts of the District. There are also a great variety of different Medicinal roots whose virtues are known to a select few of the Natives which they gather in the proper season & preserve thro' the Winter. A few hops are also found near Portage des Prairie and Wild Plumbs about one Inch Diameter which is very good in the beginning of September, but none are found in the more Northern Parts of the District, the climate or soil not being adapted to that plant. The wild parsnip is also found, and the Mis tis coo se min in the Southern parts. Currants, Red, White and black Gooseberries & several other kinds of small eatable fruit. The Winnipicosis is Shoal and the water brakish -- & very clear. The West end the deepest, the shores are low except in some places near the Shoal river, where there high percipitious rocks of Granite & some Limestone. The South Eastern parts are generally free from Stones of any kind at least at the Surface. The Southern End of the Manetoba Lake is shoal, but the water clear. The water from the Western shores have lately receeded near 1/2 a mile and at present are fine open meadows between the Woods edge and the Lake -- some few sandy bays on the SW side, but no rocks till towards the Northeastern End where there are in a few places very steep & lofty rocks of Limestone entirely. In the river that runs out of the Lake at the head is a pretty strong rapid and in the bed of the river at that place there is a fine close grained whitish Marble. Gritstone is not to be found. There are also some Shell fish, such as Muscles about 3 or 4 Inches Diameter also two other smaller species of Shell fish. Frogs abound but very few Toads which are much Larger & blacker than the Frogs -- the latter begin to croak about the beginning of May. There are also Grass-hoppers & various other kinds of Insects.

IV. NATURE & QUALITY OF THE PRODUCTIONS

There are many Moose Deer in this District and some Red Deer [Elk] and in the Southern parts of the District some Jumping [White-tailed] Deer. A Moose is much more palatable & nutricious* than
either of the two former. Some seasons especially in severe winters, they cross the Fort Dauphin Mountain to the North side and come as far as the Trading houses in that Lake -- but in general they seldom cross that high ridge. They only remain the cold season and when the Days become warmer and the Snow partially wasted they return South towards the Ossiniboyne river where they bring forth their young in the open plains. This winter they came no nearer than Fifty miles of Fort Dauphin. The flesh of the Moose is sweet & Tender except some few old Bucks. They bring forth their young in May and generally have two at a Time. The Bucks does not shed their horns till Spring. The flesh of a full grown buck in the Month of September at which time they are the fattest weighs generally between 400 to five hundred pounds, the fat is soft contrary to the Red & Jumping Deer. The Does take the Male in September & the Bucks at that time are very furious. The Moose generally reside in thick woods and low bottoms, and in winter gnaw the Bark from the Birch & Willows. The Indians make Leather of their Skins after it is dressed into a soft pliable state for their Clothing in general Shoes & which are far more lasting that shoes made from the Buffalo -- but the Latter Skins are preferred to make their Tents or dwellings as being much lighter to convey along when they are moving to a fresh place.

The Red Deer, a full grown Buck is little inferior in weight to a Moose, but they are scarce in this District and in the Northern parts of it not a single one is to be found -- they preferring the Dry open country where there are but straggling hummocks of Wood. Their flesh is tender & fat hard. They generally bring forth their young near the same time as the Moose & have generally two, sometimes three at a time. They keep in herd, not like the Moose which may be considered as a Solitary animal, seldom more than one to be found in the same place, except in the rutting season. The Doe Moose is fat all winter and the Bucks from June till near Christmas when they become lean, the same may in general be said of the Different species of Deer. The Red Deer has large branching Horns and are above 40 pounds weight; the Moose flat & palminated and are still heavier that those of the Red Deer. The Jumping Deer a very pretty lively, active little Animal not weighing on an average above one hundred pounds weight, what we receive from the Hunters -- we only got four of the latter species this Winter. Their fat is similar to the Red Deer white & hard, but the Meat Tender. These are the only Meat Animals we have in this District that keeps constantly it in of a Large size.

There are in some Seasons plenty of Rabbits [Snowshoe Hares], this year in particular -- some years very few -- and what is rather remarkable the Rabbits are the most numerous when the Cats [Lynx]
appear. This Winter the Cats have come in considerable numbers, whereas these several years last there was scarce one to be had -- its flesh is good eating, sweet & Tender & they live principally on Rabbits. The Cats are only plentiful at certain periods of about every 8 or Ten Years & seldom remain in these southern parts in any number for more than Two or Three Years. They are supposed to emigrate from the North towards the Hyperborea Sea.

Few Bears are to be found here and those of the Black species — who keep in the Woods. There are also a few Brown & Issabella and still fewer of the ferocious Grizzle Bear [the now-extinct Plains Grizzly] -- the Largest & fiercest of the Bear Tribe. They bring forth in the Spring and have generally Three sometimes four at a litter -- they are then very fierce in protecting their young.

Beaver formerly a well known Animal is now very scarce -- formerly more Packs of Beaver skins of 90 lb weight was taken out of this District than are now got single Skins. About 19 years some disorder occasioned by the Change of the Air or some other unknown cause suddenly reduced them to the very few that is now to be found. This was the case South of the Athapescow all along the Coast of Hudsons Bay as far West as the Eastern borders of the Rocky [Mountains]. This unknown cause extended at the same time in the same direction to near Moose Factory, there & to the Northwards of that Settlement the Disorder seems not to have extended its fatal effects. The Beaver has generally Four at a Time sometimes Six in the Latter end of April & the beginning of May. They build or put in repair their Houses for the Winter about the Middle of September and at the same time lay up their stock of Winters Provisions which is generally the Bark of the Poplar -- sometimes the Willow & Birch -- never any of the the resinous species -- in these habitations about 6 feet high they pass the winter & comes out when the Ice has melted about their Dwellings in the Spring.

Martin have been plentiful these several years past, now there is scarcely one to be had particularly the latter part of the Winter -- in the early part of it a few was procured from the Indians -- which has been these several years their only staple article they had to barter for their wants -- luckily for them the Cats are come about in more plenty to supply their place -- or I dont know what the Indians could have done in order to procure their necessary wants of European Merchandise.

The Red Fox almost the only kind in this District are like other places but a scarce animal but universally extends thro' most all the known parts of this extensive Country. The Silver fox is still much scarser -- and a Black Fox is a real curiosity.

Swans used to be plentiful some years back -- now they appear to
be scarce & I believe is the real fact -- altho the Indians do not receive the same encouragement as formerly to kill them -- still the little they still receive for the Skins would not operate to the almost total exclusion of killing them were they as plentiful as some years ago.

A few Badgers are to be found. They are rather larger & their Fur of a finer thicker quality than beyond the Ossiniboyne River. Otters are also scarcer than formerly, as also Minks.

Of Fish the Tickameg is the best for eating when we can catch them, but they are also scarce in the District. The best place we know of is at Halketts House and at the head of the head of the small river at the Marble Rapid that falls out of the Manetoba Lake. There are some to be caught during the Summer at Big Point house but when the Ice is entirely set in they immediately become scarce and after the middle of December not a single one is to be caught. I imagine they go to deeper water which is on the opposite side of the Lake. They spawn the latter end of October & the beginning of November and are then the most easily & plentifully to be caught -- until the middle November. The winters stock is generally laid up for the whole winter by those who are well provided with Nets & when they are well attended & kept in good order.

The Pike is spread every where but in little estimation -- altho one above 20 pounds makes a tolerable shift -- particularly when well greased with a good lump of Butter or Marrow fat but Alas! little fat is to be had in the Manetoba District of that quality. This winter we caught one weighing 25 pounds on Set hooks, but the general size is from 4 to fifteen Pounds.

Carp or as we call them Succors [suckers] are pretty plentiful to be caught in nets from the opening of the Ice & until the fall, but more particularly in the Months of April & May. None of these is to be caught with a hook. They generally weigh 3 to 4 lbs -- large broad scales, the head is delicious -- part of the body next the head is also eaten seldom towards, being a very bony fish.

No Sturgeon in this District except in the Saskatchewanis plenty can be caught at the mouth of that river -- some very large ones weighing more than 120 lbs is sometimes caught & I am told that about 40 years ago a dead one was found in the North end of the Lake Winnipic as large as a small Indian Canoe. The largest I ever saw did not weigh more than 110 lbs.

The Musquash [Muskrat] has been particularly numerous in this District & Cumberland House, for these several years past, now there are very few to be seen. They are considered by the Indians as good food and relished by them -- more especially when roasted, one Man will generally eat two or three of them at a meal. They are very prolific bring forth several at a litter & have 4 to 5 litters in the Summer. They live on the roots of Grass that grows in the water &
they make small houses in the fall similar to the Beaver in shape, but much smaller & no wood used about it. Their houses on the outside is generally built in Swamps or at the edge of the water in Lakes, they are about 4 feet high and the same in Diameter. They have a whistling noise particularly when in search of their mate. They have generally 4 young ones at a time.

The Provisions in these parts are barely sufficient after serving the men at the Houses all winter, to serve the men who navigates the Boats down & up from the Sea Coast. And some seasons the people are obliged to have recourse to the Pemmican procured at Brandon & Qu'Appelle -- otherwise now Beaver Creek. What Dry provisions we procure here is used with the greatest economy, and put by for Summer expenditure on the Voyage.

The Price generally given to an Indian Hunter who hunts meat for the house is after the rate of 3 Skins for a Doe Moose in Winter, 2 Skins for a Buck & 1 for a young animal. The Price in Summer is reversed being 3 Skins for a Buck, only two for a Doe -- as being then poorer. This is paid in any kinds of Goods the Indian chooses -- which with the Bungees or Sauteaux [Saulteaux] the only people almost in this District are generally taken up in Cloth, Blankets, Guns, Kettles, Capots etc. -- whereas the Crees generally take up the greater part in Rum which at the rate is charged makes the Meat come much cheaper. Besides this we are to furnish Gratis Ammunition & Tobacco and for every Ten animals they kill of whatever size or kind they get one Quart of High Spirits. Our Hunter has killed us Thirty Eight Moose & Red Deer, principally the Former -- before we came into this District the NWest Company only gave a Single Skin per animal, and that principally in Liquor, or some other Trifling articles. The value of one Skin on an average with the Sauteaux may be valued at between Three shillings & Sixpence to four Shillings and Threepence at the Invoice price. We are also in addition to the regular payment above mentioned to give 6 Quarts of high Spirits which mixed with Water fills a Nine Gallon keg. We have besides all this some smaller presents to make to the Hunters wife such as 1/2 lb Beads, a Couple of Knives, a little Gartering, an Awl, Steel and a little of the Cheering Liquid.

V. ON THE CLIMATE, VEGETATION ETC.

This district is rather colder in Winter than the Ossiniboyne perhaps owing in some measure to the Two Extensive Lakes, The Manetoba and Winnipicosis besides being Two Degrees of Latitude to the North. The frost setting in and Lakes freezing over generally about the first of November. The last fall was the earliest we have had for many years, the Lakes being covered with Ice entirely the 22nd of October and kept in this state near Ten Days when a
continuous run of very warm weather opened them again & no Ice to be seen except what lay on the Shores. The Ice in general freezes upwards of four feet thick; in the deeper places not quite so much and is very firm and solid. The Severity of the Cold is generally between Thirty and Forty Degrees of Farenheits scale but this intense cold seldom lasts more than a Week at most when the Thermometer rises to about The Cypher sometimes to about Ten Degrees above it & even on some few Days to near the freezing Point. The cold is generally the most severe in periods of about every Week or Ten Days but we cannot observe that the Moon has any particular influence on the weather, tho believed by several.

Some Seasons the Aurora Boreales is very vivid and frequent -- in the Year or Winter 1808-1809 there was scarcely a night when it was clear during the whole Winter but was visible -- sometimes rising up in beautiful Columns to the Zenith & darting its light with a very beautiful & rapid motion -- but the general state is in a low arch of about from fifteen to Twenty five Degrees high with a steady white light. The middle of the Arch is observed to be over the Magnetic North by which means even the variation of the Compass may be pretty nearly ascertained by it. The center of the Arch in these parts generally is about 15 Degrees East of the True North. This winter they have been pretty frequent -- but for these last few years scarce about two or Three Time during the whole Winter. They very seldom appear in the Southern Quarter. It is imagined by the people that the more frequent they appear, is a sure sign of the increased intensity of The Frost. The winter 1808.1809 the Ice was very thick. These latter years when they was seldom seen, the Winters have certainly been milder -- it is not observed that it has any influence on the Barometer. Some few nights in the Summer months they are visible but the Arch does not rise quite so high as in the Cold Season.

The Spring is said to commence the latter end of March or rather the beginning of April when the first general Thaw commences but then Seldom lasts more than two sometimes Three Days when cold and even severe weather intervenes. About this time the Thermometer is observed to descent to upwards of Twenty Degrees below the Cypher but generally rises in the course of the Middle of the day to as many Degrees above. The cold is very fluctuating in the Spring months after the first commencement of the Thaw -- about the Twentieth of April the Snow is mostly all melted away except in the thickets. The Depth of the Snow on an average of several years just before the Thaw commences in the middle of March is about 16 to 20 Inches perpendicular. What falls the early part of the winter becomes like a coarse Salt in large grains -- and in the Spring by the first Thaw becomes a hard crust on the surface. At these times the Indians run & kill many Moose & Deer by chasing them with Dogs, they running on the
top whereas the weightier Animals break thro to the bottom and very soon fatigues them that the Indian comes up whilst the Dogs surround the Animal & easily shoots it, but the meat thus acquired is not good tho' becomes tenderer by the long chase. The Snow that falls at several times being added together is very considerably more than when the whole mass is measured just before the Thaw commences -- becoming more of an Icy nature, but that latter fallen still retains the exact properties as when it fell -- being loose & soft.

Rain falls in Summer, which may be averaged at Eight Inches -- tho' during some violent Thunder Showers near Three Inches falls as ascertained by the Pluviometer -- but these heavy rains are but seldom. Sometimes when the Wind is from the Eastwards the Rains are longer & oftentimes last during Two Days & Nights without ceasing -- but at those times it is generally gentle rain. Sometimes showers fall in Winter which immediately freezes covering the Trees & Grass with Ice -- which when the wind blows fresh afterwards makes a terrible noise by the Crackling of the Ice & falling down -- oft times the Branches and sometimes large ones are broken by the weight of the accumulated Ice. At these Times by the rattling noise the woods make, the Moose is particularly alarmed and don’t know in what direction to flee as they are surrounded by the same noise wherever they turn.

Hail in Summer is rather frequent, sometimes the Hail stones falls above an Inch diameter, during thunder Storms and on one occasion I have been informed that the Hail stones or rather pieces fell so ponderous as to break thro the Indians Leather Tents, which are built in a Conical shape. During the most intense frosts of the winter when Snow falls it is rather like a kind of very fine hail.

There are also heavy Dews in the Summer Months especially if the Night has been calm, but in Autumn they are more frequent & towards the latter end of that period in the Month of September, a hoar frost which remains till the Sun is some distance above the horizon.

In the fall showers of Sleet are frequent, seldom in the Spring months, and sometimes white frosts fall partially in the month of July that nips the Potatoe tops & makes them quite black -- and what is a singular circumstance even in the space of a Garen there will sometimes be Three or more spots touched by the Frost and all the remainder entirely exempt.

Fogs during a few Days in the Summer and even sometimes in the winter will last two Days.

At the Time or a few Days before or after the Equinox there are heavy gales of wind which generally last for two Days and nights with very little intermission. After these Gales the sky becomes much bluer, and generally the air becomes colder. These Gales generally come from the South West to the North West. During the rest of the Year more heavy winds generally happen in the warm season than in
Winter.

Rime frequently falls in the winter and adhere to the woods & every blade of Grass so as entirely to cover it but soon falls off with the first gentle Wind -- sometimes after a "rimy" night and the Sun shining Clear and Calm weather this has a very beautiful appearance very thing being so delicately tufted over.

The highest range of the Thermometer is near 90 Degrees above Zero but the average of the Summer Months is between fifty & sixty altho some few Days during that period it will descend to a few Degrees above the freezing point or Thirty two Degrees. A foggy Autumn is generally ........ as unhealthful.

The Wind during Winter is the oftenest in the Northern and Western quarter, and when it blows hard, the Snow drifts very much -- that during these Storms, any one who happens to be out in the open Plains generally dig a hole in the Snow and remain under that shelter till the weather has become more favorable. Sometimes when they get up the Snow will be Drifted over them Two or Three feet. The Indians in some parts of this country drive the Animals into deep drifts of Snow by which means they are easily killed by stabbing them. They have also nearly the same method by driving the Buffalo over steep rocks in the open plains when they get dashed to pieces -- or maimed that the pursuers easily dispatches them..

The leaves generally become green about the middle of May particularly the Asp. Poplar and Willow. The Oak is the last that is covered with leaves -- generally near the beginning of June and they are the latest in shedding them the latter end of September and beginning of October. July as in England is found the Hottest month as well as January the most severe. The leaves turn Yellow middle September. The Nuts are ripe about the Middle of August, the Plums in September.

Where the Houses are situated at Fort Dauphin is about 200 yards from the edge of the Lake and there are no woods for five hundred yards more, and then only small. This lake appears to have receded from the Western side and the Lake at no late date has every appearance of having extended to where the woods now grow. Along the shore or rather by digging a hole a little way below the surface, becomes soon covered with a fine white powder of an austere and purgative quality, altho the water in the Lake appears pure & free from any saline taste. Vegetation commences soon after the Snow is melted away and comes on very rapidly. The Grass is ready for mowing about the Middle of July, but is a coarse long kind. Along the lake to the Woods, here is a fine open plain of about two miles long.

There are also the same kinds of wood in this District with the exception of the Cedar which is found in the Northwestern parts, but the Trees are small and stunted, few attaining to be Ten Inches
Diameter. The Oak grows in several select spots seldom of any continued extent, but the largest is found in the Central parts of the District along the Northwestern boarders of the Fort Dauphin Mountain -- it prefers a rich soil. Some few small Oak saplings may be found at the Mouth of the Saskatchewan at the edge of Lake Winnepic but I believe extends not to the North of the Water communication from there to the Winipigosis. The Poplar is the most general wood in this District which is used for firing as there are few branches to clear away: besides it is easily split. The Maple is partially plentiful on the Northwestern side of the Mountain -- from which the Natives annually make Sugar by concentrating the Juice -- and when it becomes of the consistence of Honey a little lump of fat is thrown into the Kettle and by this simple process the Sugar becomes granulated. But what is very remarkable no powder Sugar can by any yet known method be formed. The whole becomes and remains black and nearly of the consistence of English Pitch -- on extensive Islands especially near the centre I believe this does not occur, but equally as good Sugar is made there as on the Main. About from Three to four gallons of the Maple Juice generally produce one Pound of Sugar -- tho the older the Trees are, the Sap is the richest & produces more sugar. The Indians tap the Trees by driving a Knife in a slanting direction upwards, above an oblong knotch which serves as a kind of Conductor to the Juice & a small stick or chip is inserted in the knotch to conduct the liquid into birch bark roggans or Dishes set beneath containing from one Quart to three Pints and in a favorable day when calm and hot, they are obliged to be emptied before noon. They run the most copiously a little after the Sun has risen -- and after noon gradually decrease till towards night when it totally ceases running any more till next Day. In Cloudy & windy weather they run very little. The Season for making the Sugar or when the Trees begin to run is generally during the Second Thaw which commonly happens here in the District the first week in April and extends to May, sometimes in backward lingering Seasons even to the middle of that Month. At the latter end of the Season the Liquor becomes ropy and the concentrated Juice will not granulate but remains like Pitch -- besides then it has a disagreeable bitterish taste. The Indians generally keep the same spot they have before been at and no others interfere whilst the original owner as we may say remains in the spot or resigns his right to some other. Some families will have upwards of one thousand roggans to collect the water in. When the Thaw continues constant and rapid the season is sooner over -- but a
lingering Season with sharp intervening frosts is the most plentiful season for Sugar making. When the Indians after the Season is over assemble at the Houses and they are willing to part with Sugar for rum it may then be had at a cheap rate. For a Roggan of about Thirty Pounds weight may be had for one Pint of Leeward Island rum. They wish to Trade Cloth, Blankets, etc. for Sugar which we very seldom do as the price in those Articles greatly exceeds the price in Liquor. The Indians frequently mixed it with their Pounded Meat in place of fat to eat and whenever they make a general feast much is consumed.

After the fur bearing Animal hunt is over the Season for sugar making Commences. And during the Summer Months the Indians may be said to enjoy a holiday Time till winter commences when begins anew their excursions in Trapping and killing fur -- tho' those months they make a quantity of Dry provisions which for the greater part they dispose of to the Traders.

The Ash is found in this District and like the Maple are generally found in the same parts. North of the Saskatchewan River neither of these kinds are to be found. The Ash is generally crooked and of a small size very rarely a stick can be found sufficient in Length and Quality to make an Oar. It generally prefers the Dry Ground -- the Maple more the low bottoms. There are very little Pine in the Southern parts of the District or to the South of the two great Lakes the Manetoba & Winnipicosis. In the Northern parts they are abundant, but near the Winnipic they are more diminutive than in the Western parts.

The NW Company altho they have been at Fort Dauphin many years they have but little ground in cultivation. Last Spring they had sown about Three Roods of Barley but the produce did not amount to more than after the rate of Thirty Bushels per Acre. Wheat they have not yet tried. The season for sowing the Barley is about the Twentieth of May and comes to maturity & cut down the Latter end of August. The Potatoes are planted about the same time the Barley and taken up the beginning or middle of October and produces about 25 Kegs for one planted. They have some Cabbage, Turnips & other smaller kinds of Vegetables.

This fall we purchased from the Indians five Bushels which we preserve for seed -- also about One & a half Gallons of Barley which we shall put in the Ground. Altho our people has been here Three Summers they have not made the least attempt at any kind of cultivation, which to a moderate extent can be managed by the few Men necessary to leave at the House for the Summer -- without the least additional expense. We also mean to sow a variety of Vegetables. The NW garden produced One Hundred and Sixty bushels -- they & the Barley is sown on the Second Parallel ridge from the Lake and they are very guarded in not letting us have any kind of seed -- but Thank God we have under hand a sufficiency to begin with. There were no
Grasshoppers last Summer about the place which ruined the Crop in the Red & Ossiniboyne River. Swan River and the Saskatchewan was also exempt from this terrible pest. They first made their appearance the Third of August 1818 at 2 O'Clock in the afternoon and came from the Southwest -- they remained & laid their Eggs and last Spring about the latter end of May their young appeared and increased rapidly in size. They destroyed almost every green thing and even eat the bark of the Trees that at the Forks of Red River the smaller woods had the appearance of Winter. When they were able to fly well about the Month of August they went away in Clouds and it is to be hoped did not leave any of their brood to plague them more. They are observed to be numerous every Eighteen years. The few select spots that escaped the Grasshoppers at the Forks were greatly retarded in their growth by a large black winged fly about half an Inch long -- which bored holes thro the leaves. The NW have Eight Horses here. They are stolen by the Indians and disposed of here. The Bungees of late years have become notorious in stealing horses.

In addition to the Birds etc. mentioned in Article 4 may be added - The small Vulture, but does not visit beyond the Ossiniboyne River and there they are scarce, it has generally Five young ones. The head is entirely bald & the feathers of an Iron grey colour inclining to black. The heron is also found, but is a very solitary and scarce fowl. The Whip poor will also comes here from the Southwards and is first heard about the Tenth of May, none of them is found to the North of the Winnipicosis. Some Summers there are also vast flights of the wild Pigeon [Passenger Pigeon] which does much mischief to the Corn crops. They are of a small size long Tail & bluish colour. The Snipe is also found as well as the Bittern but rather rarity. There are also a variety of other small Birds -- as very few pass the winter, but come from the Southwards in the Month of May. The Eagle makes his appearance in the latter end of February & is considered as an early harbinger of Spring -- that many district Tribes & different Languages have what they term the Eagle Moon. The Black Bird & another species with Yellowish wings are in great numbers and very destructive to the Grain -- the latter kind is frequently found along the Rivers & Swamps perched on the long Grass & reeds. The Snow Bird [Snow Bunting] also makes it appearance early in the Spring about the size of a Sparrow with many white feathers -- this is also the harbinger of Spring. The Crow [Common Raven] remains here all winter but in more southern Latitudes they keep in large flocks. There is also the Jay and Magpie exactly the same size and plumage as in England. There is also the diminutive Tomtit [chickadee], which remains here all winter. The Red Bird [American Robin] about the size of a Throstle makes its appearance pretty early in the Spring and has the finest and most musical of the Songsters who visit us. Two of them in the Summer evening after Sunset perch
themselves on Trees within a short distance & sing alternately. The
Nightingale is said to be heard in Red River, but I had never the
pleasure of hearing it. There are during the Summer a great
variety of small birds, some with delicate plumage and melodious,
that I do not know the names of. A few ravens are also here and a
small kind of Crow [American Crow] nearly similar to the Jack Daw.
The Hummingbird or rather there are three species of them, makes its
appearance the latter end of May and has very beautiful plumage. The
largest size no bigger than a Walnut and the motions of its wings are
so rapid that it is only when they nearly cease that they can be
discerned. I believe they are no further North than the Red River.

Our old and constant friend the Whiskey Jack [Gray Jay] or Butcher
bird remains with us all winter, he is a very hardy fellow and brings
forth its young long before the Snow is dissolved -- and by far the
earliest in hatching. He is a very general Bird and spread in every
part of this country I have visited. There are also a great variety
of water fowl such as the Swan, Three kinds of Geese, ie. the Grey
Goose [Canada Goose] being the largest, the Wavey a white feathered
bird [Snow Goose], and the Laughing [White-fronted] Goose, called by
the Crees Pis tes kis. There are many species of Ducks I don’t know
the names of, also the Water hen and Coot. The Cormorant or Crow
Duck as it is termed by our people is in great numbers and lay their
Eggs towards the latter end of May on the Rocky Islands to the North
of the Narrow in that Lake, they have generally four Eggs. The Loon
has only two. Two kinds of Gulls also inhabit here in the Summer and
are the latest in going to the Southwards in the fall generally
remaining with us till the Lakes are covered with Ice. They lay
their Eggs on rocky Islands -- the larger kind is nearly the size of
a partridge. In the Northern parts of the District in some severe
winters the White Partridge [Willow Ptarmigan] is met with. There
are also here the Wood Partridge [Spruce Grouse], the Pheasant
[Sharp-tailed Grouse] & Whiteflesher [Ruffed Grouse] -- but in small
numbers. In the calm evenings in the early part of Summer they make
such a noise by the flapping of their wings, that it very much
resembles Thunder at a Distance. The flesh of the Partridge is black
& the Whiteflesher remarkably white and delicate; all these three
kinds lay generally about a Dozen Eggs and frequent the dry ridges.

The Throstle is also found here and two kinds of Swallows which
lay the eggs in holes they bore in the steep banks of the Rivers and
keep in large numbers. They arrive about the Twentieth of May &
remain here till about the Twentieth of August, when not one is to be
seen. They are the first that leave us -- and what may be considered
singular the same bird is known to return to the same nest the
ensuing Summer. One kind is called by us the Swallow, the other the

Flies there are also a great variety -- as the Musketto which
generally make their first appearance the latter end of May after the
first Thunder is heard -- they are not near so numerous as near the
Coast of Hudsons Bay. They generally retire in the beginning of
October but the most troublesome time is during the Month of July.
The Sand fly a diminutive species but whose bite is very painful &
leaves an intolerable itching in the part some time after and
suddenly rises into a kind of blister or small swelling. They remain
with us later than the Musketto [Mosquito] but come after them in the
Spring.

The Ants are also in some particular spots very numerous raising
mounds of small bits of Grass and earth above four feet high and
fifteen in circumference -- in some places there will be a Colony of
them made similarly and sometimes above half a score hillocks within
a short distance all very populously inhabited. They are of a Dark
red Colour. There are also some Winged Ants of a larger kind but not
so general as the other. There are also a very great variety of
Grasshoppers, but none of them who constantly reside here do any
mischief like the vagabonds that came two years ago.

The Bee is also found of two species -- also the Wasp -- they
generally build in holes in the Ground as well as the Bees but some
of the Wasps make pendant nests of a fine filamentous stuff which
they attach to the Branch of a Tree about the size of a Foot Ball.
They are of a Yellow colour but inoffensive unless molested when the
whole camp immediately attack the daring intruder.

The Fleas in many places are now become very numerous. They
appear to have been first introduced into this Country about the Year
1802 as few were observed till a few years after. There is also a
species of Bug that is on the Oak & are very painful when bitten by
them which soon raises a blister but they are only observed where the
Oak is to be found. Sometimes there are great numbers of the
Musketto hawk or Dragon fly. There are yet a great variety of
Insects, Fowl & Beasts I have not yet mentioned that I am not
thoroughly acquainted with the habits and time of Emigration.

ARTICLE SIXTH, ADVANTAGES & DISADAVANTAGES

The advantages in this district are very few. The Beaver which
formerly abounded and which was the principal Article of Trade are
now very scarce, the whole both us and the NorWest Company take out
of late Years does not amount to Three Packs of Ninety pounds weight
each.

The Martins which have been for these several Years pretty
plentiful and which composed the most valuable part of the Trade, are
this winter become very scarce. Luckily for the Natives when that
resource failed the Cats became tolerably plentiful. Very few was to
be found these several years past so had not they made their appearance the Indians would not have been able to procure their necessary supplies. The Cats generally appear in considerable Numbers for the space of two or three years at periods of from Eight to Ten Years and come from the Northwards. They are generally caught in Snares fixed in a Small inclosure about 2 feet Diameter. The Snare, made of Deer Skin is fixed in the small aperture left, within is a small bunch of Twisted Grass rubbed over in Spots with Beaver Stone or Castorum which the Cats by its agreeable smell to them is attracted to the spot.

Some Maple Sugar may be purchased from the Indians at reasonable rates especially in plentiful seasons -- particularly when they purchase Rum. Cloth, Blankets etc they are unwilling to give the price for and will not Trade those Articles under at least 4d per lb -- which we very seldom pay those articles -- rather loosing it than give that enormous price. From 800 to upwards of One Thousand Pounds in good seasons might be purchased from the Natives.

Oak for Staves for Casks or Kegs could be had but I believe would scarcely pay for their carriage to the Sea Coast.

The Navigation is tolerably Good, but the scarcity of valuable furs more than counterbalances every other good quality that the District may possess. The Rats [Muskrats] that has for several years past abounded is now become scarce owing I apprehend in a great measure to the Swamps & small Lakes drying up -- at not to be imputed to any disorder similar to what has nearly extirpated the Beaver.

In the Southern end of the Manetoba a considerable quantity of Hops grows but it is very doubtful but that they are of an inferior quality to the English ones.

ARTICLE SEVENTH: ON THE NUMBER AND LOCAL SITUATION OF THE TRADING HOUSES IN THE DISTRICT.

The first time we made any permanent Settlement in this District was in the Summer of the Year One Thousand Eight hundred and fifteen by Craft direct from York Factory. Indeed Mr. Best passed one Winter in the Manetoba Lake Trading with the Indians about Twenty years ago but only remained one season; he received his Goods from Albany. Since 1815 we have regularly Traded in the District. In the Years 1808 & 1809 The Albany Master at Brandon House in the Ossinboyn sent a few men with a small outfit overland near that place. They had some success but none passed the Summer or made any permanent Settlement. Since [18]15 we have regularly gone there with Goods. At present there are Three Houses in the District where people reside at this winter. The lowermost one is at the head of the Partridge Crop River on the left bank. It was first established by us last
fall where Mr. Thomas McNab resides with three men. There are but few hunting Indians there and the major part trade with the North West Company. Mr. Heron the Canadian Master opposes him he has about Six Men. This is the same person who deserted our Service in the Year One Thousand Eight hundred and fifteen from Carlton House at the Elbow of the Ossiniboynie river.

The 2nd & next House is towards the Southern extremity of the Manetoba at a place called The Big Point, about Eight miles from the entrance of the White Earth River. Here was built the first Permanent House we had had and has been regularly wintered at since, but none passing the Summer except the Summer 1816 -- where the N West Companys Servants & Brulees plundered of every thing the 22nd September the said year. The NW has never built here in opposition, but generally the Southernmost extremity of the Lake. At present Mr. Andrew McDermont remains there with about Seven or Eight men. It is proposed for the first time to leave a few men & a little goods at it in preference to the Manetoba where we had four men remaining all Summer.

The Third and last House is in the Fort Dauphin Lake built last Summer -- but in the Summer 1817 we built at the head of the river & our people passed two Winters there but being found an ineligible spot, we left it as there are several deep creeks to cross from the Canadian House, the Indians did not choose to cross them but very seldom. And the NW would not abandon their old established house & oppose us. Last fall the present buildings were erected and The NW Company removed their House from the distance of near five Hundred yards nearer the Edge of the Lake and not more than Forty Yards from our Dwelling. We are here Nine and one boy. Angus McGillis is Master here for the NW, and has constantly resided here since the year 1808 -- previously to the Junction of the two Canada Companies in 1815 he was for the Forsythes concern.

2. On the Buildings: The buildings at the Partridge Crop the first mentioned, built last fall consists of one House Thirty Six feet Long by Sixteen Wide, divided into Three apartments. The one for the Master, one for the Trading room & the other for the Men, besides a small detached Store to contain Fish or fresh meat when they are so fortunate as to get any which I believe is but seldom. Their principal resource is in the Whitefish & Brochet.

The buildings at the Big Point is a House about Thirty five feet long & Twenty wide, divided in the same manner as the one last mentioned. Mr. Thomas Thomas had a house built for him fall 1816 which is now removed close to the other buildings from the distance of about Sixty Yards in which the Trader resides in this Winter. The House is situated just within the Ledge of Large Oaks & Poplar about Six hundred yards from the Lake -- in 1816 a deep broad swamp running
parallel with the Woods & Lake edge -- now since we have lately had dry Summers is become dry firm Ground. It is called the Big Point from the great Quantity of Timber growing on it. The situation is very accommodating to the Indians who hunt in the vicinity.

At Fort Dauphin there are a Large House and a small one, at present answers for the Provision store fourteen feet by nine. The Dwelling house is under one roof about fifty six feet Long by nineteen feet wide divided into four parts. The Westernmost end is the Masters room 15 feet, the Kitchen 12 ft, the next the Trading room Thirteen feet, and the Mens House 16 feet long & the various divisions occupy the whole breadth of the Building. The ridge is 8 feet above the walls and the wall is 2 1/2 feet above the beams -- at present covered with grass and loose Earth, but this summer we intend to cover the whole of the buildings with Elm Bark which is very durable & light. We also propose building this Summer another house Twenty five feet long by Sixteen wide. Sixteen feet of which to answer for a store, the remaining Nine feet for a Stable to keep a Horse in during the Winter for the express purpose of hawling home firewood which is Twenty Seven Minutes light walking -- by this we shall nearly save the constant labour of one Man, who can be more profitably employed in going to the Indians Tents.

3rd. Altho our people have been here three Summers in this Quarter they have never attempted to make any kind of cultivation but we were so fortunate as Trade some Potatoes and a Little Barley from the Indians. We intend to have a Quantity of other small seeds sown such as Cabbage, Turnips etc. which will be a considerable saving in the Expenditure of Meat. The ground near the House, an entire open plain -- from the Lake to the Woods edge about Seven hundred yards wide which seems at no old date to have been covered by the Lake. There are three different parallel ridges betwixt the water & woods on that next the Lake the Houses are erected. After the melting of the Snow till the Beginning of August thre is a deep swamp to cross to the woods but about that time it becomes quite dry. It is about Eighty yards across and runs a considerable distance on either side.

4th. The Soil especially where it has recently been covered with the Lake is full of saline, bitterish kind of concretion, and is found on digging Six feet Deep. Some distance from the waters edge the soil is free from this saline matter. And the ground in these low vallies is very firm and I believe will not produce any considerable crops. The ridges are the best soil. In the Woods the soil is a fine black loam in many places. Little clay is to be found, but the Plaster made of this Saline earth dries & hardens almost like a Stone and cracks very little. It is only on these narrow elevated ridges which are from 15 to forty yards across that the NW have made the little
progress in cultivation they have done.

5th. The method the N West has of cultivating their gardens in the Hoe -- no person being here capable of making a plow. Their produce is but slender perhaps owing to want of more Industry and care.

6th. The Produce in Barley the only Grain they Sow produces from fifteen to Twenty fold and this slender crop even requires a favorable Summer with frequent Showers of Rain. The Grain is not so plump as what is raised at the Colony -- in the vallies still a less produce is obtained -- on which account the ridges are preferred for the little Cultivation they have.

7th. The Cultivation might undoubtedly be extended, but the few men usually left Inland during the Summers Season -- & having the fishing then to attend, Indians occasionally to visit at their places of resort, to get Dry Provisions -- Hay to make, some Firewood to cut, that the few men left can only take care of the crop necessary for the consumption* of those who remain at the post -- without incurring an additional expense by leaving more men during the Summer. As where any considerable quantity of Grain etc. required, the Red River is by far the most eligible & can easily be cultivated, the Ground being already cleared & of a good quality.

8. The General means of Subsistence at Fort Dauphin is meat of the Moose & Red Deer. At the Manetoba, Fish is their principal reliance. At the Big Point few fish are caught during the Winter Season so that they then principally rely on the Wild Animals. In Summer it is a tolerable good place for the Tickameg of a superior quality. The Pike, Perch & Succors are the other general kinds that are to be had in any number. The Dry provisions the Indians generally make during a whole Summer for sale will seldom amount to above Two Thousand pounds and where there are two Houses a smaller share falls to each. The provisions obtained at the Manetoba is principally Beat Meat only; the Indians use the far greater part of the Fat themselves -- so that the Big Point is the most plentiful place for getting dry provisions as being more in the vicinity of the Buffalo. Some seasons particularly in the Springs 1817 and 1818 they were swarming at the Southern extremity of the Lake not more than Nine or Ten Miles off. A part of the Dry provisions we get there is Traded from the Indians who keep about the ridge of high land between Fort Daer and Brandon House.

ARTICLE VIII ON THE NUMBER OF MEN EMPLOYED IN THE DISTRICT ETC.
The last year there were Employed Thirty one People in the District Officers included. This Year there are Nineteen able men including the Officers besides one boy & a Cripple who is kept at the House as an Interpreter -- & this latter number is fully sufficient for Three posts and more is not necessary. As very rarely our Indians hunt to the Northwards of the Winnipicosis, & even in that case we could easily send to them without making any additional number of Houses, as that is unavoidably attended with an extra expense in comparison of the same number of men residing at the same House.

The Big Point and Fort Dauphin are permanent winter establishments as always a considerable number of Indians frequent those two places -- there are a few who wander about from place to place so that the Men now wintering at the Partridge Crop can be easily removed to any particular spot the Indians fix upon to make their winters hunts.

There are usually two small Boats in the District that fetches up the Goods & takes down the Returns to the Bay. They generally leave the spot as soon as the Clearing away of the Ice in Lake Winnipic permits them, which season varies, but the most general time is about the first of June. Some years Ten days earlier & others as many days later. In the Year 1797 the Ice did not clear away as to admit a passage thro' the Winnipic till the Second Day of July -- the preceding winter had been uncommonly long and severe. It is proposed to leave two or three people at the Big Point this summer, and the same number of Men at Fort Dauphin who are capable to go about any necessary Duty that is required. John Kipling Junior tho unable to leave the House is very serviceable at it as he acts as an Interpreter and can do several things at the House. He got hurt by a fall from a horse Five years ago when we had a Settlement at the Portage des Praries. George his Brother, a youth about 14 or Fifteen also remains here. The particular list of the Mens Names, Wages etc. who winter in this District is always inserted in the Account Book which is sent annually.

ARTICLE IX. ACCOUNT OF THE INDIANS

The Natives Trading and residing in the District is by far the greatest part Bungees or Soteaux. They obtained the name of Bungees by us from the word Bungee in their Language signifying small or little which they so frequently repeated when their supplies was not adequate to their wants that they have thus obtained the word as a fixed term to the whole Tribe. These Indians are not originally
natives of these Parts, but were first introduced by the North West Company about the Year 1797 -- before this there were a very few Stragglers. They being then Industreous they was induced by the Reports of the Canadians that Beaver abounded here & was invited to leave their original Lands about the Rain Lake & the Western borders of Lake Superior. Now they finding this Country so much more plentiful in Provisions than their own & the Beaver being then plentiful they have grown quite habituated to these parts & I believe will never return to their own Lands again. There are a few and but a few who reside at the half way Bank about 30 Miles above the Portage des Praries who occasionally Trade at the Big Point house. From my short residence in this District I am not yet able very exactly to ascertain the number of Indians who at present reside & hunt in it but from the best Information I have yet obtained they are as follows..

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Children Under 20 of all Ages &amp; Sexes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Dauphin</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>110 &gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partridge Crop</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>45 &gt; At present Trading at Big Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Point</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>132 &gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duck River</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>550 &gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>106</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>342 &gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

making a population of Five hundred & seventy two only of all ages and sexes -- which is only at the rate of one Single Individual for Forty Square Miles that the District contains. To the North side of the Winnipigosis there is not one who constantly inhabits there -- the whole or at least by far greater part harbor about the Southern parts of the District. The principal Man in assumed authority is Blue Coat a Chief made by the Colony in 1817 -- and by that means has entirely spoiled him in hunting furs -- before that he was but even a tolerable Hunter. He generally resides near the Big Point & there trades the few Skins he kills. He is about 42 years of age but has little authority amongst his Countrymen. He goes every Summer to the Colony and occasionally supplies them in a little Provisions. He trades with us. His Brother called I ah coo generally Trades with the NorWest Company and resides in general about the Partridge crop and the vicinity he is a good fur hunter, quiet, but a confounded beggar -- he is generally clothed every year gratis by the NW Co. and has about Six or Eight followers.

Oosoowan a good Indian about Forty years of age, generally Trades with us at the Big Point, he has also the Ambition of being a Colony chief and now is a pretty good fur hunter.

The Old Bayonet has a few followers & hunts between Fort Dauphin
& the Big Point at which last place he Trades, he is now an old man.

The Three best Indians that is the most industrious who Trade at Fort Dauphin are The Arrow-Cheeak and Neetimecappo. The two former Trades with us but has very few followers. Cheak hunted for us this Winter, quiet when sober but a mere Devil when intoxicated. Those Indians who reside in the vicinity of Duck river usually had Credits here but they have latterly so badly fulfilled their dishonesty that no credit is given by us to them. They are all owing us considerable Credits, but we have now come into the Custom of giving them none & the NW intends next fall to adopt the same plan. This winter they have given out considerable Credits & they have upwards of Five hundred Skins unpaid (1st May). We only gave out last fall 1 3/4 yards of Cloth but was so fortunate as to get it paid. We go to the Indians Tents with a small assortment of Goods & there Trades direct with them -- and the Indian is better pleased when he thus acquires his wants than when he takes his whole supplies in the fall & the greater part worn out before the time he is able or willing to pay for them. Formerly the Bungees where much more punctually paying their Debts than now. In the Red River our people has adopted 3 years ago the plan of giving no Credits & it is still followed with the most beneficial effects; as The Indian when he visits the Houses he is able to say this is mine & immediately can barter for any thing he requires. There was not one in fifteen who was in the habit of clearing away their Credits in the Spring -- on that account, by giving no Debts we sell our Goods cheaper, which is more pleasing than by giving a higher price to the Merchandise.

2nd. The Bungees are more laborious & regual fur hunters than the Crees but the former is more steady. The Bungees lead a more dirty life than their Southern neighbors -- many of whom have intermarried. Some few of the young Bungee Men are very flashy & decorated with a variety of Silver ornaments in the Summer Months -- Such as necklaces made of Whampum about 2 Inches broad-Arm and wrist bands with forged Broaches etc. Scarlet Leggins garnished with Ribbands and Beads and a number of small Broaches which is very tastefully arranged. They are very attentive and indulgent to their Children particularly to the boys, never molesting or correcting them but letting them indulge in every whim they choose. The Girls generally get husbands at fourteen years of age and frequently have children at Sixteen and commonly leave Childbearing at Thirty, tho some few has Children after that period. Poligamy is common amongst them, but the two Sisters is generally pref'd. The young men generally get partners before they are Twenty Years of age and are much more attentive & kind to their Wives than those who has passed Thirty Years.

They reside in Leather Tents made in the Cree fashion in the winter generally the Dressed Skins of Ten to Twelve Skins of the
Moose, Buffalo or Elk. They are of a Conical figure, with a small aperture in the middle to let out the Smoak and admit the Light -- and their beds are made on the Ground with a Little Grass or a Buffalo hide with the hair on in place of a Bed or Mattras -- throwing over them a Blanket & a Buffalo robe. The Master of the Tent generally keeps the right hand side as you enter and the Mother, Moth in law or Son in law occupy the other. The women performing all the drudgery work such as fetching meat, Cooking -- Dressing skins -- Cutting the necessary fuel & then generally have the largest & most weighty sled to drag with their little all lashed on it -- but the Jepowyan [Chipewyan] or Northern Indian Women excell in being able to Drag a heavy sled. They frequently hawl one of at least Two hundred pounds weight -- push an other that a small Dog is fixed to not strong enough to drag half of it -- besides all this -- they carry a good weighty bag and if they have children the young one on the top of all -- thus slowly & heavy laden they drag on from one encampment to another -- which generally is not above four or five miles.

The Bungees according to their original custom many of them especially in the Summer, reside in oblong Tents covered over with birch bark, some of them will be Thirty feet long and about 14 wide, and sometimes four or five families reside in. Some are even longer -- others nearly round about Ten or twelve feet Diameter & six to 7 feet high in the form of a Beehive. The fire is made in the middle and a small open place left in the center of the Top to let out the Smoak -- but they are now becoming more generally to follow the Crees construction of their Wigwams. Some of the Indians has his Divinity painted in black & red on each side the Door without. The Medicine bag is generally also hung on the outside but directly over the Door and whilst the Tent is erecting it is always hung up never being allowed to remain on the Ground. Several of the Bungees are acquainted with the healing & sanitive powers of a variety of Roots and herbs & they have the reputation amongst their neighbours to be the most skilled in the healing art -- but they never fail to be well paid for their advice & prescriptions from those who are under the necessity of applying to them.

Their Domestic utensils consist of a few Birch Bark Dishes with a few wooden ones formed from the Knot of the Maple & Pine but the former receive a finer polish and the fine curled nature of the Wood that some of them are even elegant when they come from the hands of the fabricator. They have some wooden spoons & Ladles called Meequan. Their Kettles they obtain in Trade from us.

Their snow shoes differs from those of the Crees, being much narrower at the forepart, but in other respects the same. They are generally made of the Birch -- the Sleds sometimes of the Oak -- & sewn together with the raw hide of the Moose, Elk etc. Where the foot rests is cut thicker than the fore & hind part. Some few have
them turned up at the Toe as the Jepowyans or Northern Indians invariably do. Snow shoes of the women are much wider in proportion to their length. The names of the principal Men are mentioned in the first Article.

4th. The Hunting Grounds of the Indians under consideration -- at Partridge Crop generally lays all round the House, but more particularly to the North East and South East & extends to the Western Shore of Lake Winnipic.

Those at the Big Point House generally hunt E & West of the House, almost a continued open plain from the South end of the Manetoba to the Northern banks of the Ossiniboyn river, with here and there a few small detached Hummocks of small aspen woods but the greatest number of those who trade there hunt in the Fort Dauphin Mountain -- extending Two Days walk from the House. & the Hunting Grounds of those Indians who Trade at Fort Dauphin is generally along the North side of the same Mountain opposite the House & extending as high as the Banks of the Shell River -- seldom any of them visit the Northern shores of the Winnipicosis to hunt in the Winter. The small band consisting of Three Tents, the headman Weeshenow wintered at that river -- he is a very industrious Indian and one amongst the select few who honourably discharge their Debts. In the Winter he Traded with the NW, but since with us.

There are a small Band of Indians & bastard Crees who generally reside on the Borders of Lake Winnipic about The Jack head and the Fisher rivers which fall into that Lake. Mr. Crebbasa the NW Clerk generally winters with them with four Men and a small quantity of Goods. Sometimes these Indians winter on the East side of the Lake about Berens & Pidgion rivers. None of the NW remain in their House during the Summer.

This small band of wandering Indians may amount to Eight or ten able hunters with a proportionable number of Women & Children. About 4 Years since we had people there but they made little Trade -- and since our people has not wintered with them.

5th. The Indians do not appear to hold any exclusive right to any particular part to hunt in but range wherever their fancy or inclination leads them. But the spots they have before made sugar at no one seems to interfere with as long as the same family reside there -- perhaps this regard to each one not being interfered with is that Their Bark Dishes and various other necessaries are left on the spot when the Season for making Sugar is over. The same may be said of any other spot they may have cleared for a Garden to produce a few Potatoes -- none ever attempting to occupy the same place whilst the original cultivator remains in the neighborhood but on his removal either thro Death or any other excuse his family if he has any claim
an exclusive right to the spot, and this Right is allowed by their fellow Countrymen. But on his removal to a distant part any one occupies the spot that puts in the Seed.

A particular spot on a river where a fishing weir is erected is the exclusive property of those who erected it no longer than till the fishing season is over after the Ice sets in. Next Spring it is common & free to any who are the first to make the necessary repairs as the weir is generally greatly damaged by the floating Ice in the Fall, but in the Spring is totally swept away by the driving Ice, drift wood & high water.

6th. The Indians for the greater part go first to the NW house and seldom Trade with us openly at the House but when we go to their Tents the Indians are very ready & willing to Trade any thing they have with us to our opponents. As in general our Goods are of a better quality besides what is still more pleasing to them we sell at rather lower a price. The NW being exclusive here these many years, it is not all of a sudden that an Indian be induced suddenly to entirely forsake his former Trader. But as we have been amongst some of them for these last four years they are by degrees becoming better acquainted with our cheap & fair way of dealing that by degrees they will many of them openly enter our Houses to Trade.

Their former attachment or rather their fears are gradually wearing away. Tho the Destruction of the Colony by the NW people in 1815 & the ensuing Summer a good deal intimidated the Indians from openly Trading with us. We are under the necessity at present of underselling the NW Co to attach them to us -- as for Instance a Petticoat which is 5 feet of Cloth we sell for five Skins, whereas our rivals sell for six. A Gun we sell for 10 or 12 according to the Length, our neabors [neighbors] a Skin or two more. Our Kettles we sell for 2/3 ft per Skin -- our neighbours for 1/2 ft -- and all other articles in proportion. Thus a little underselling our neighbours is the only method we can adopt to encourage the Indians to openly Trade with us.

At the Big Point we have no NW people nearer than the Portage des Prairie which is above Thirty miles distant. The most staunch Indian the NW have is I ac coo before mentioned, the rest with very few exceptions are very ready to Trade with us when we come to their Tents & they have anything.

There are now very [few] Indian hunters Clothed Gratis in the Spring when the Winters hunt is over- last fall two of McGillis's principal hunters were literally (?) promised to be clothed Gratis, a Big Keg of Rum given them, besides many other articles if they were staunch to him -- but unfortunately they both have not fulfilled their promise, but Traded many Skins with us -- so the fine promises have vanished and they are marching about in a tattered Coat.
ARTICLE X. ACCOUNT OF THE CANADIANS OR THE N.WEST COMPANY

The Canadian establishments in this District are at present Two; besides one built last fall at Portage des Prairie on the left bank of the Ossiniboyn River. Their first or lowest House at present is at the Head of the Partridge crop river on the left bank built in the Year 1818 where three or four men Wintered, but made little Trade. This Winter Mr. Heron winters in the same place and has Seven or Eight Men & they have got the greatest part by far of the Trade made there by the Indians.

Their next post is at the Fort Dauphin Lake, Mr. Angus McGillis Master who has been here since the Year 1806. He has nine Men with him, and have been established here many years. They make perhaps Ten Packs of furs and at Partridge crop near half that number. They have no permanent post in this District than the one last mentioned but move about to wherever the Indians mean to hunt. DeLorm is the Canadian Master at Portage des Prairie and has none of our people close to him, what few skins he gets may amount to five or six packs and are got from the Indians who hunt on the South side the Ossiniboyn in the Pembina hills which extend from near Fort Daer to within Forty miles of Brandon House.

An Indian formerly from Severn Factory called Capt. Grant or Oo ke mow es cum, resides at the half way bank & 6 or 8 others and have two houses built in the European manner -- the Rest keep in Tents and the whole is enclosed with Pickets & they have many Gardens like a little farm where they remain during the Summer but in the latter end of the Autumn they disperse to hunt furrs to procure their necessaries. The NW have a little cultivation at Fort Dauphin, but very little for the number of years they have been here & the men at the establishment. Sometimes the NW have had an out Post at Duck River forty or fifty miles to the Westwards but latterly those Indians who hunt thereabout have Traded at Fort Dauphin.

At the Manetoba or the narrow of that Lake there has formerly been Trading Houses on the West side. There are also two other old Canadian Houses on the opposite side near the Birch Island the foundations of the whole being still discernable -- for the two last winters they had a small out post near the entrance of the White Mud River but none at it this Winter.

3rd. There was one Canoe with Goods at Fort Dauphin -- and also one Canoe at the Partridge Crop not half loaded. There are Four Loaded Canoes gone to the Swan River District, Allan McDonell Proprietor & winters at Carlton House about Twenty Miles above the Elbow. They have also Men at Swan & Red Deers river. They are all very sparing of
their Dry goods but very Lavish with the Rum. They are now beginning to advance little Credit to the Indians as formerly as a Debt unpaid in the Spring is of very little value, the Natives hardly ever think of paying it, but is always ready next fall to get as much more Debt as he can. So that next fall they say they will only advance Credits to a select few whom they know by experience to be trust worthy.

Notwithstanding the Inferiority of the Canadian Goods in comparison of ours, still the Indians have a habit of going to their House, but they are Daily becoming more independent and will in a few years openly Dispose of their Furs to those who will pay them the best. The Furs they have pro-cured in general for these last years have been Martins, with Bears and some other small Furs. The whole number of men Officers Included of the Canadians at their Two Houses amount to Eighteen or Nine-Teen. They have none directly to oppose us at the Big Point -- none of the Canadians have yet built close to us there. They generally go from this after us in the Spring -- having to wait till their Canoes from Swan River arrives. We are generally first back at our Wintering stations.

**ARTICLE XI. ON THE TRADE**

The Amount of Furs procured in this District since the Rats failed have been few; the following is a Statement of what kinds and quantity was procured the last; and present year 1820 with the number of Men employed in the District during the same period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the Years</th>
<th>1819</th>
<th>1820</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men employed No.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furs etc. Traded</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bears of sorts and sizes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Skins</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badgers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cats</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishers</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foxes of sorts</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martins</td>
<td>1456</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musquash</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otters</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swans</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolves</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolverins</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drest Skins</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quills Goose</td>
<td>M.</td>
<td>2 3/10 3 1/10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2nd. More men than we at present have cannot be profitably employed in this District. There are already sufficient to attend the few Indians that Trade in it -- and more would be attended with more expense than their service would pay for. There is every probability that our share of the Furs procured in this District will increase as the Indians by being longer acquainted with us, our superiority of Merchandize and by rather under-selling our opponents, there cannot be a Doubt but that our returns in Peltries will increase every year according to the success the Indians may have in their Winters hunt, above the present share we now receive.

The Loss on this District the last Season was upwards of Four hundred Pounds Sterling, but I confidently trust this year will be a considerable deal less -- but am not able exactly to assign the Profit or Loss till the time we leave our last settlement the Beginning of June.

(signed) P. Fidler
HB