A NATIVE GAME:
SETTLER PERCEPTIONS OF INDIAN/SETTLER RELATIONS IN CENTRAL LABRADOR

EVELYN MARY PLAICE

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by

© Evelyn Mary Plaice B. A. (Honours)

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Central Labrador

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores Settler perceptions of Indian/Settler relations in a Labrador community and interprets these perceptions as statements about Settler identities and social characters. Analysing the causes of changes in perception, the thesis demonstrates the operation of various influences, historical, economic, and political, in the creation of these identities and perceptions. Finally, it shows how ethnicity becomes fluid with the fragmentation of social experience caused by these influences, and how this fluidity makes it possible to manipulate ethnic identity in pursuance of various goals.

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* * *

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PREFACE

* * *

> So pretty it looks in the fall when we come home from our summer quarters, above 70 miles from here. When we are sailing up in our large boat, to see the ducks in our bay when we are nearing the river, and when we get ashore to the pretty river banks and walking up the path under our large trees, some 50 feet and some 60 feet high, we often meet with a flock of partridges flying up to the trees. Before we get to the house, so pretty, then is the scramble among the young ones who will see the first turnips and potatoes, and sure enough all around the house is green with turnip tops, and between them and the wall of the house is hanging red with moss berries, some falls. Then we get home to our winter house for ten months more (Lydia Campbell 1980:2-3).[1]

The description is of Mulligan, a small settlement not far from North West River, which lies at the head of Hamilton Inlet, the deep fjord which bisects the Labrador land mass. As is true of all deep fjords, the head of Hamilton Inlet is rich in wildlife and vegetation because it is sheltered. It is situated 170 miles inland from the North Atlantic, but it still forms part of Labrador's 11,000 miles of coastline, and the four communities[2] situated at the head of the Inlet are home to approximately 9,000 Indians, Inuit, Settlers, and 'come-from-aways' with diverse cultural and historical backgrounds. North West River has a population of 800 Settlers, and the neighbouring Indian community of Sheshatshit has a population of approximately 400. Until 1979, Sheshatshit was part of North West River.

Labrador is the easternmost section of the Canadian or Laurentian Shield, and lies on the northeastern edge of the North American continent, facing Baffin Island to the north and Greenland to the east. It has a triangular land mass of approximately 112,000 square miles, with a population of approximately 36,500, which means that most of Labrador is scarcely populated, especially since more than two-thirds of the people live in the three urban centres of Wabush-Labrador City, Churchill Falls, and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The urban population is largely composed of 'come-from-aways,' such as mainland Canadians and Newfoundlanders, while the remaining third of the population is a mixture of Indians, Inuit and Settlers.[3] Most of the indigenous and semi-indigenous (Settler) peoples live in small, isolated communities along the coast, communities which are reached year round (weather permitting) by light aircraft (Labrador Airways), and by coastal ferry service (run by CN Marine) during the shipping season, which is between late June and October.

The summer season is short and intense, especially at the head of Hamilton Inlet, where a considerable amount of market gardening takes place in the two hot, dry months of summer. Summer activities in central Labrador include salmon and cod fishing, for which the North West River Settlers move out temporarily to summer quarters in Grosswater Bay, and berry picking, which is carried out on their return,

during late summer and early fall. The weather is usually warm and dry in April, when the Settlers hunt seals on the old winter ice in Lake Melville and Hamilton Inlet. In summer, people travel by boat, because most of the settlements and the camps from which people hunt, fish and trap are situated along the shore. The waterways serve as highways in both summer and winter.

Snow precedes the ice in the fall, beginning sometimes in September, but it usually arrives in earnest, heralded by the arrival of snow buntings, in October. During the years of the fur trade, trappers would set out for their traplines by canoe during this part of the year, and hunting and trapping still take place inland during the fall and winter. Most North West River Settlers have the use of a cabin situated along one of the rivers or lakes. Ice forms over the small lakes in October, and is formed and broken by storms several times throughout November in Lake Melville and Hamilton Inlet. Once the ice forms solidly across the main stretches of water, then transportation is by snowmobile, snowshoes and skiis. However, there is always a tedious wait while freeze-up and break-up, the transitions from land and water to snow and ice, take place and travel of most sorts is curtailed.

* * *

I became interested in Labrador at the end of my high school career, when I chose to spend a year working as a volunteer for the International Grenfell Association before continuing with my education. The experiences of my first year in Labrador and Newfoundland, in 1974-75, convinced me that I wanted to study anthropology. I returned for a further six months of voluntary work in 1976-77, and, following this, spent the summer of 1979 in North West River carrying out field research for an undergraduate honours dissertation.[4] These brief visits served to give me an appreciation of the pace of change and its effects on the lives of the North West River inhabitants, and I returned in 1983 to carry out fieldwork on the present thesis.

The North West River Settler population has experienced complex and radical changes in its economic, political and social past. People were (and are, still) attracted to the community for a variety of reasons, and Indian, Inuit, French, English, Scottish, and Newfoundland ancestry are represented in different families. Some Settlers came as pioneers, some as trappers and others as administrators and professional workers in various service industries (such as teaching and nursing). However, despite the many different reasons for being in North West River, affiliation to the community is strong, as is family identity. Through my field research, then, I intended to examine not only how the history of the community and its present problems affect

Indian/Settler relations; but also what part individual family histories had played in the formation of contemporary perceptions of Indian/Settler relations which are held by Settlers in the community.

My original hypotheses were: 1) that Settlers were not unanimous in their perceptions of Indian/Settler relations; 2) that the diverse perceptions that Settlers held of Indians and Indian/Settler relations were the result of the diverse historical experiences of the community; and 3) that these could be traced by examining individual and family histories in the community.

On my first trips to the community my purposes had been employment at the hospital or children's home. The experience of arriving in the community in order to do 'fieldwork' daunted me. I could not, at first, begin to conceive of how I was to achieve the collection of data that I needed for my research during this visit, and yet I needed to construct an itinerary and plan my days. In order to do this, I had to examine the meaning of being an anthropologist who was studying a community. My opportunity came through an oversight of which I was guilty.

After I had been in the community for a few days, the mayor of the town, asked to see me. She wanted to know whether I had obtained the consent of the town council and the community in order to proceed with my study. In my

embarrassment at not having arranged to see her sooner, I agreed to write about my project in the town council's newsletter, which was distributed to all members of the community. This I did,[5] and was quite astonished to hear about myself during a televised news bulletin the following week. Soon after this, a reporter from the local radio network arrived to interview me about my fieldwork. I was no longer hesitant about studying the community after these encounters, nor were the community members hesitant about my presence in their community - I was their anthropologist and a local celebrity! People were not particularly concerned about the exact nature of my research ; they understood mainly that I was collecting stories of Indians, but they had noticed the presence of researchers in the neighbouring Indian community of Sheshatshit, and welcomed a researcher who was showing interest, instead, in their community.

I used the two fieldwork methods of participant observation and interviewing in order to gather information, and had intended to structure the data collection around individual life histories and extended case studies.[6] I had wanted to become acquainted with as many people as possible at an early stage in my fieldwork, so that I would have a large selection of informants from which to draw candidates for life history studies, and be able to complete several histories within the span of my stay. However, although I established several key informants and many more general

informants, I did not collect life histories. My aim to become acquainted with as many people as possible in the early stages of my fieldwork led me to begin by collecting genealogies. Most members of the community have a keen interest in their ancestry and in the region's history, and I found that, by asking to be told about their family trees, I made the acquaintance of a large number of the residents. I needed no more of an introduction than the explanation that someone's niece or nephew, cousin or grandchild, had sent me for further information on the community's 'family tree.'[7] Interviews about ancestry soon developed into extended chats about the 'old days,' and the oldtimers who populated them. As my familiarity with the community grew, I realised that collecting life histories would not lead me to an understanding of variations in perceptions any more efficiently than did analysing the shifts from one perception to another in the course of conversations and other social interactions.

The extended case method proved to be more useful as a strategy for shaping my data collection, and the seasonal activities associated with Christmas and the New Year provided me with some suitably "apt and isolated illustrations" (Gluckman 1965:235). There were two large community gatherings, and several smaller and more private affairs, all of which gave rise to speculative gossip and the airing of opinions about changes in the community, and relations with

the community of Sheshatshit. In addition, the construction of a bridge, the closing of the hospital, the formation of teams for winter sports, discussions about the newly opened Lion's Club; the growth of the newly established youth group, and the progress of the men's and women's Darts Leagues offered plenty of opportunities both to become involved in community activities and to study general and pervasive phenomena in the community's social structure.

I spent five months in North West River, from the end of September until the following spring, during which time I met and made excellent friends and informants in the town. I did not attempt to interview people formally until I had been in the community for three months, by which time both the members of the community and I were familiar with each other, and I had been able to absorb a lot of general information about the people and their community. This meant that, during interviews, I was able to be perceptive about the significance of statements, jokes and the more subtle ways that the people had of communicating their ideas and thoughts. I asked in advance whether I could use a tape recorder when conducting a formal interview, but when permission to do so was not granted, I conducted the interviews with a notebook and pencil.

The subject matter of each interview was as much at the discretion of the interviewee as it was shaped by my questions. Initially, I asked to be told stories about trapping

and about Indians. I also asked people what they felt about the changes taking place in their community, but invariably, the content of the interview shaped itself around the things that most appealed to the interviewees for discussion and comment.

Much of my data came from observing and participating in community activities, and, as is usually the case, I gained some interesting insights about North West River society by inadvertently overstepping the unwritten laws of the community. For example, on my first evening I asked what was going to be happening in the community, and I was told that it was 'darts night' at the local Lion's Club. Unfortunately, when I turned up and greeted the informant from whom I had received this piece of information, I was dismayed to find myself the only woman in the company of serious male dart-players. They courteously entertained me on that first evening, but firmly told me that, in future, Tuesday darts nights were a strictly male affair. I later joined the women's Darts League, where I was responsible for causing my team to come second when it had previously been first. I thank those very gracious women for their friendship and tolerance!

This division of recreational activities reflected a deeper division of social activities, and I found that during my visits, I would be entertained by the women in the household, but if I requested an interview, I was referred

to the men. Hence, much of the data I collected informally was associated with women and their social activities, but much of the formal collection of data was provided by men. The nature of the two kinds of information is, of course, quite different. The nature of the informally gathered information provided insight into the private lives of the women I visited, whereas the formal interview material furnished me with information that the interviewees wished to impart to me about activities in the public spheres of trapping, and other such economic concerns. Nevertheless, I was present at many public and private social affairs which involved both male and female participants, and on many of the interviews, the women added comments and counter-arguments in the background, which I was able to record. Trapping culture was essentially male, however, and although women played a significant part in the economy, it was seldom in the public sphere of activities, in which the men operated. The fact that much of my data revolves around the men's perceptions of their activities has meant that many of the perceptions that are analysed represent male activities, such as trapping, rather than female activities, such as craftswoman, horticulturalist and trapper's wife.

Likewise, I distressed my landlady by learning handicrafts on Sundays and spending the rest of the week visiting, when, for all of her life, the activities had been conducted in the reverse order. It just did not do to sew on

Sunday, because Sunday was for visiting. Sunday has always been regarded as a day of rest, and, in Labrador, the Settlers fill these days with activities they would not otherwise have time for. I explained that, for me, visiting translated to mean 'work,' whereas sewing was a pastime that I enjoyed. But people did not understand this. I discovered that community members to whom I paid visits were unable to equate my visiting with work or serious activity, and this flavoured the nature of the information which I received from them. Until they were used to my visits, they encouraged me to call when they were watching the 'soap operas,' which seemed appropriate entertainment for social visitors, and hedged my calls (or were embarrassed) when they were occupied with household chores.

North West River Settlers have a European cultural ancestry; consequently, I was already familiar with at least some aspects of the community's lifestyle. I did not, therefore, suffer from severe 'culture shock.' Instead, I began to recognise the complex nature of a culture with which I had thought I was familiar. For instance, the fact that my hosts were perturbed by my insistence upon engaging in activities which were obviously inappropriate to my age and status, given the time of day and day of the week in which I conducted them, led me to realise that I was also uncomfortable with the 'unwork-like' aspects of my stay in the community, and that visiting palled unless I got some

substantial information from it. Their perturbation also led me to realise how fine is the line which divides 'work' from 'play,' and that, in fact, as the dividers of work from play, time and place are as significant as are the activities themselves. I also became aware of the 'invisible' side of the community's family tree and the Settlers' interest in it. What seemed superficially to be an interest in ancestry was also an obsession with the possibility of relationships which community members consider to be incestuous, and which become almost unavoidable in a small, isolated community. My genealogical data will never be complete because of the many sensitive and 'unknown' areas of information in the community family tree.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. Lydia Campbell: 'Sketches of Labrador Life' The Evening Telegram 1894, reproduced by Them Days Publication 1980:24 (see below).

2. Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Mud Lake, Sheshatshiu and North West River.

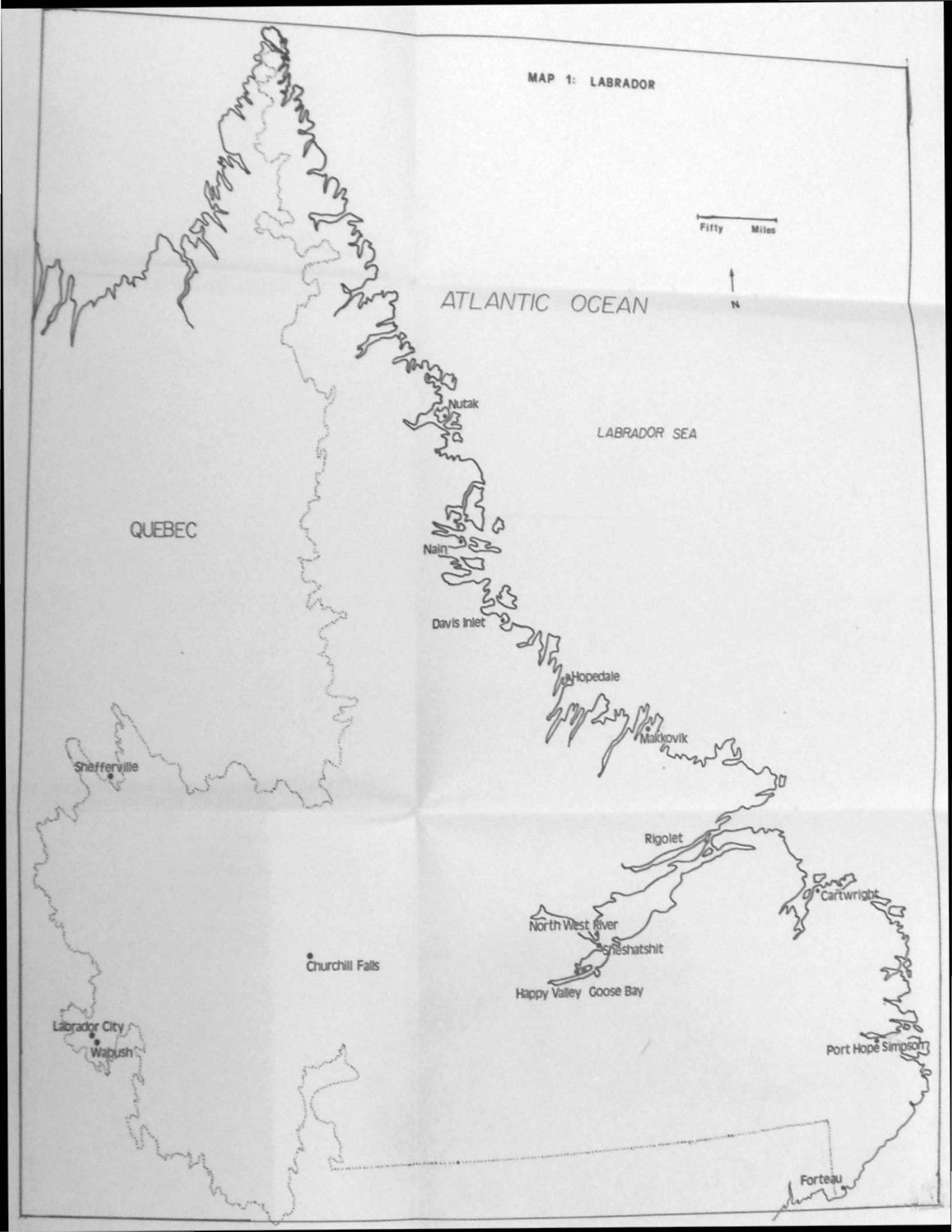
3. Settlers are the European inhabitants of Scottish, English and French origin, who came to Labrador and married Inuit and, occasionally, Indians during the colonisation of Eastern Canada.

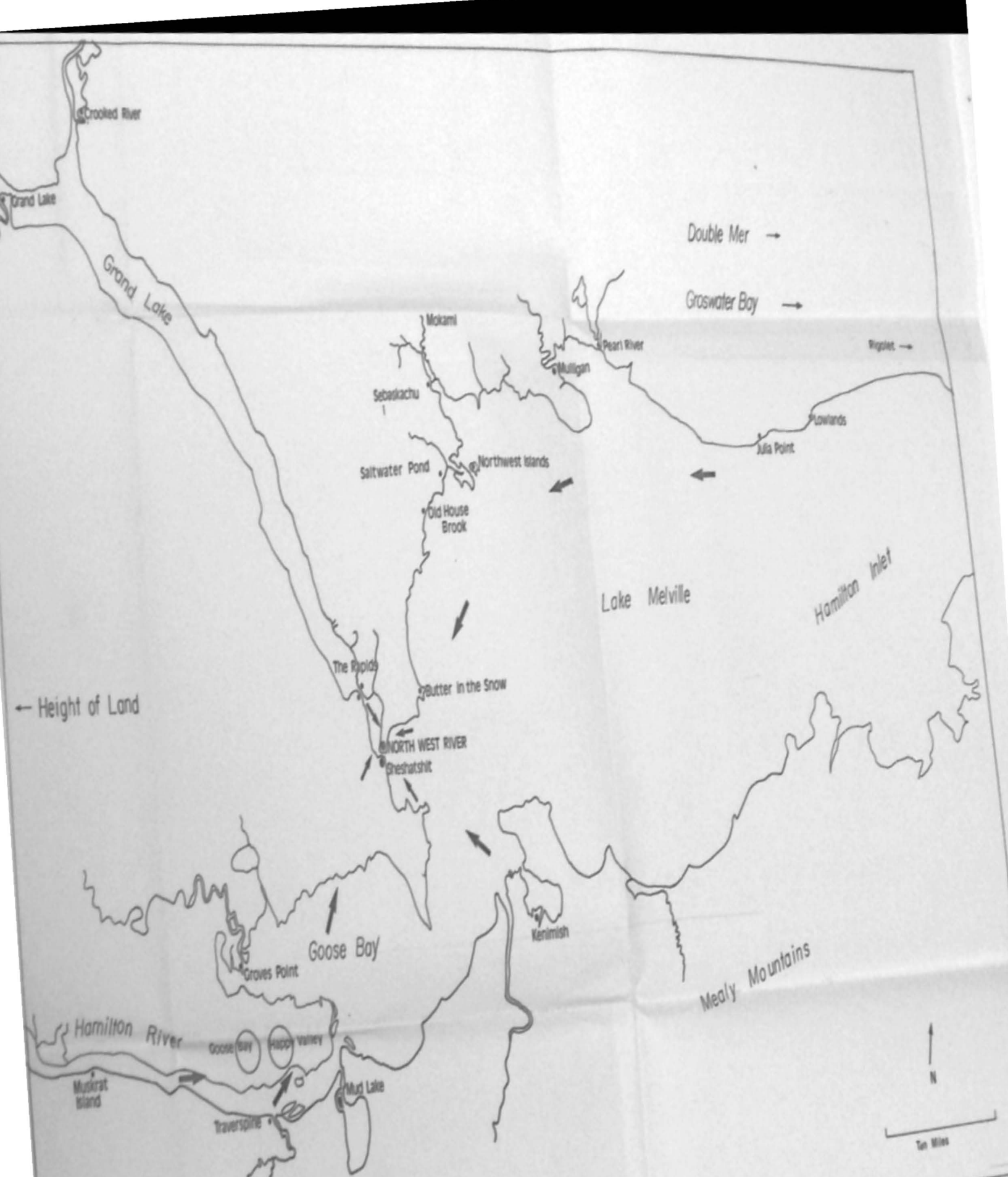
4. Evelyn Mary Plaice: 'This Land is My Land - Nin Ume Ntassi: Conflict Over Land Between Indians and Settlers in Central Labrador,' unpublished honours dissertation, Oxford Polytechnic 1980.

5. I described my project as follows:
My interest lies in the development of relations between the people of North West River and the people of Sheshatshiu, and in what people think about the relationship between themselves and the Montagnais Indians. I am particularly interested in finding out whether this relationship changes with time, and what causes the change. To do this, I am asking people about the old days, about stories and incidents which happened in the past, whether they remember their dealings with the Indians, and what these were like. I am also finding out about the things which make the two communities different today, and how people feel about these differences (Newsletter of the Town Council of North West River, December 2, 1983).

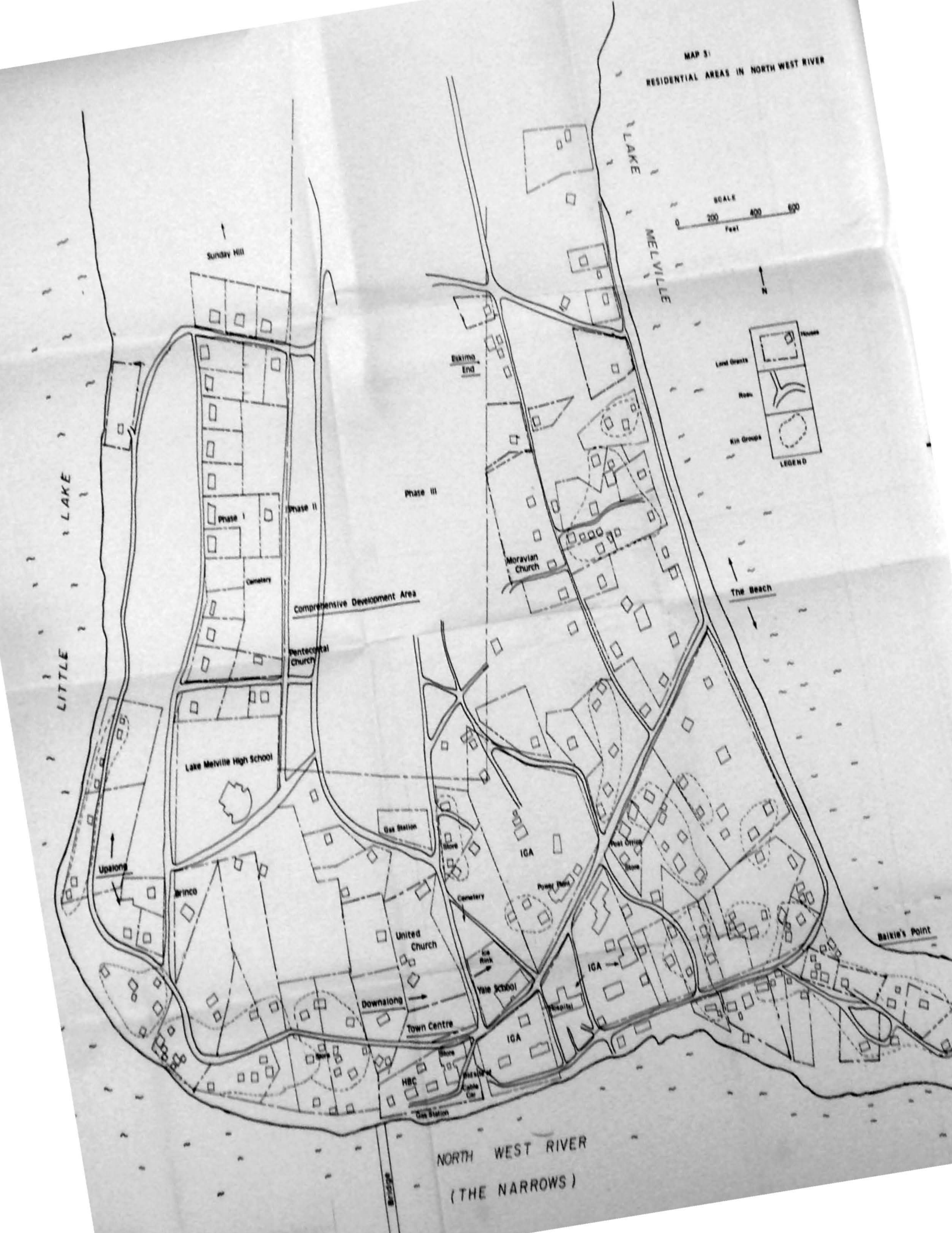
6. Gluckman describes this method as the extended research of "apt and isolated illustrations" to help explain more general and pervasive phenomena, in Max Gluckman: Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company) 1965, p. 235.

7. As will be seen later, most North West River inhabitants can trace their ancestry back to one or two of the few pioneer families.


MAP 1: LABRADOR
Fifty Miles
N
ATLANTIC OCEAN
LABRADOR SEA
QUEBEC
Nutak
Nain
Davis Inlet
Hopedale
Makkovik
Rigolet
Cartwright
Sheffferville
North West River
Sheshatshit
Churchill Falls
Happy Valley Goose Bay
Labrador City
Wabush
Port Hope Simpson
Forteau



MAP 2: DISPERSED SETTLEMENT IN LAKE MELVILLE REGION


MAP 3:
RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN NORTH WEST RIVER
LAKE MELVILLE
LITTLE LAKE
SCALE
0 200 400 600
Feet
N
LEGEND
Houses
Land Grants
Roads
Kin Groups
Sunday Hill
Eskimo End
Phase I
Phase II
Phase III
Cemetery
Comprehensive Development Area
Pentecostal Church
Moravian Church
The Beach
Lake Melville High School
Upalong
Brinco
Gas Station
Store
IGA
Post Office
Power Plant
Cemetery
United Church
Ice Rink
Yale School
Downalong
Town Centre
Hospital
Baikie's Point
HBC
Cable Car
NORTH WEST RIVER
(THE NARROWS)

"The Trapper," young boy in Hallowe'en costume

-Chapter One-
INTRODUCTION

* * *

The three points I wish to make in the following analysis are: 1) that ethnic identity is self-referential, 2) that changing social environments cause a fragmentation of social identity, and 3) that, given the fragmented nature of social identity, ethnicity becomes a resource to be manipulated in the creation and communication of social identities.

The thesis falls into two sections. Chapters in the first section give a detailed appraisal of the historical, economic and political development of North West River and of the Lake Melville region in general. Chapters in the second section explore contemporary social interaction among North West River Settlers, revealing the complex array of perceptions arising from the Settlers' past experiences. The present chapter serves as an introduction to the community of North West River and the particular ethnic situation of this community in relation to other communities in Labrador. It includes a survey of the literature available on central Labrador and sets out the theoretical approach used in this thesis.

* * *

Until recently, North West River, Labrador, was a single municipality bisected by a river and composed of 450 Settlers on the north bank and 500 Indians on the south bank. In 1979 the Indian side was formed into an administratively separate unit. The physical division of the settlement is paralleled by the maintenance of distinct ethnic identities. Throughout the 20 years since 1961, when government first encouraged the settlement of the Indians at North West River, the two groups have remained separate. Very little social integration or interaction has taken place, and there have been few incidents of combined activities of any kind. Each group runs its own community hall, church and school, although a few facilities such as the Hudson's Bay Company store and the International Grenfell Association hospital, both on the north bank, are shared.

In 1742 Louis Fornel, an independent trader from Quebec, established the first trading post at the site of the present day North West River. The establishment of Fornel's post initiated a trend in which sojourning traders and pioneers, Frenchmen from Quebec and British seamen, began appearing in the Inlet, some of whom married Inuit, and subsequently settled in the region. In 1836 the Hudson's Bay Company began operations at North West River. The fur trade grew, and North West River became the regional centre by the turn of the century. Revillon Freres opened a post in 1901 on the south bank, primarily to serve the Indians, and the

International Grenfell Association opened a hospital on the north bank in 1916.

Incursion into the Indians' hunting territory increased as trapping by Settlers expanded, and by the 1920s Settlers' traplines had filled the valleys and spread onto the 'Height of Land'. This area had never been trapped before, and had previously been regarded as exclusively Indian hunting land. This encroachment contributed to starvation amongst the Indians, leading to their increased dependence upon trips to the trading posts to receive government relief. At this time the Labrador-Quebec boundary was in dispute, as was Newfoundland's jurisdiction over the Indian bands roaming the interior. The Settler population, which fell squarely under the jurisdiction of the Newfoundland Government, expressed anger at the free reign allowed the Indians with regard to hunting because they were not covered by Newfoundland wildlife regulations:

> A great deal of friction arises from the fact that our Indian visitors are Canadian subjects and also the boundary line between Canada and Newfoundland-Labrador has never been settled. Hence the Indians can do with impunity, right alongside the Labrador man, what the latter is liable to be severely fined for (Paddon 1920:109).

The height of the fur trade, which came in the 1920s, was followed by the depression of the 1930s. Prices were affected negatively, causing a rapid decline in fur trading, and many of the Settlers sought alternative means of obtaining a living. Goose Bay Airbase, when it was constructed in

the early 1940s, offered this alternative. Many Settlers were attracted to the wage labour economy, and the military operations of Goose Bay have provided a significant amount of employment since World War II. However, from the beginning of the 1970s the military has been withdrawing from the area, causing unemployment. North West River continued to house the IGA hospital and the many administrative functions and services spawned by it, which were the major source of employment for the community after the decline of trapping. The hospital has since closed, transferring hospital and other services once offered in North West River to the military hospital premises in Goose Bay, and North West River is presently facing severely increased unemployment.

The narrows at North West River were, for several centuries, an Indian summer camp,[1] which grew in significance as trading posts and other services became available. Indians were not attracted to wage labour, even when the construction of houses by the government started in 1961, and the Indians' subsequent sedentarisation resulted in a severe restriction of hunting activities. Growing political awareness amongst Indian groups in Canada during the 1960s led to changes in policy concerning Indian rights. The concept of aboriginal rights was re-examined, and land claims based on aboriginal occupancy were acknowledged. Concern with native rights and identity became organised in this province with the founding of the Native Association of Newfoundland and

Labrador (NANL) in 1973. This group subsequently split into separate organisations which represented the three different native groups in the province. The Naskapi-Montagnais Innu Association (NMIA) was formed in 1975. Their land claim was recognised soon after this and has been under research. In consonance with their heightened political awareness, the Indians separated from North West River and their community became known as Sheshatshit in 1979.

Ethnic relations within North West River stand in marked contrast to those in the Inuit communities on the Labrador coast to the north. The boundary between Inuit and Settler identities is to some extent ambiguous, as is shown recently by the Labrador Inuit Association's decision to include Settlers in the LIA and as beneficiaries in any future land claim settlement.[2] Historically, all Settlers had a higher level of interaction with Inuit, with whom they shared a littoral adaptation, than with Indians. The latter remained inland for most of the year, coming out to the coast only for short periods to trade. Indian/Inuit relations have always been marked by avoidance. This makes the North West River Settlers' position an interesting one: their past affiliation with Inuit is similar to that in other northern Labrador communities, but their more recent affiliation with Indians and with trapping has left them out of LIA organisation.[3] Nor are they included in the land claim negotiations of the NMIA, and North West River has

long since lost its native status. However, there is growing interest in a newly formed Metis Association.

* * *

There are several types of data available which are pertinent to my study. Primary sources of historical data covering North West River/Sheshatshit include government documents on the boundary dispute in the 1920s, International Grenfell Association records and publications,[4] and Hudson's Bay Company records and documents. Secondary sources of data include both academic studies and memoirs. Vaino Tanner (1944) refers to North West River in a comprehensive account of Labrador towards the end of the fur trade. He predicted that Indians would acculturate to the Settlers' environmental adaptation, which he saw as much more successful. More recently, Zimmerly (1975) has examined the change from subsistence to cash economy in central Labrador as it affected Settlers.

Other academic studies of North West River concentrate on the Montagnais Innu population. Speck's (1935 and 1942) work on the distribution of Montagnais-Naskapi bands in the Labrador interior includes the Innu of North West River, as does Leacock's (1954, 1955 and 1969) writing on band structure and the effects of the fur trade on band organisation. These studies of Innu band life complement more recent studies which are primarily interested in the effects of Euro-

pean influence on traditional hunting lifestyles. McGee (1961) examines conditions amongst the Indians just prior to and around sedentarisation, and Adrian Tanner's work (1977), on Indian land use and occupancy for the land claims project, includes some statements on attitudes towards Settlers.

Elliott Merrick (1933) and Elizabeth Goudie (1973), in their memoirs, offer interesting accounts of the trapping way of life during the fur trade period, referring occasionally to Indians and to the encounters between them and the Settlers in the interior. Them Days magazine also has collected numerous stories of the past which further illustrate the Settler trapping lifestyle.

So far there has been no substantial study of the Settler population, nor a study of the peculiar ethnic position of the Settlers in North West River.

* * *

Indian/white relations have seldom been approached through the eyes and minds of the non-Indian participants, as is the intent of this thesis. In this analysis, Indians are considered only peripherally as anything more than a 'black box', whereas the Settlers' perceptions of Indians are used as a window through which to view the development of Settler identity and social character. The self-reflective nature of ethnic identity stems from the fact

that perceptions of ethnic identity are based upon the recognition of differences between self and other. In expressing perceptions of Indians, Settlers are exploring and communicating these differences in a social arena. It follows, then, that Settler perceptions of Indians say as much about Settlers' perceptions of themselves as they do about Indians. Thus, an examination of the process of boundary maintenance becomes the starting point for an exploration of internal structure.

The development of internal structure does not occur in isolation from a wider social setting, and therefore, this study also aims to examine the effects that external influence have on the shaping of the Indian/Settler boundary. An analogy suggested by paleomagnetism, a phenomenon encountered in geology, illustrates the kaleidescopic effect that such influences have on the development of internal social structure. Paleomagnetism describes the retention of magnetism in rock. The position of any rock in relation to the magnetic pole changes throughout its history, during which time it is also subject to pressure and heat. The components of the rock take on magnetic alignments when they are in a suitable state of flux produced from the heat and pressure. One piece of rock can acquire several magnetic alignments over time, each resulting from different alignments with the magnetic pole. It is as if the rock were a piece of blotting paper taking up impressions from its sur-

roundings before being moved and absorbing different impressions in its new position which then become superimposed over the older impressions. The same principle can be applied to the 'bricolage' of Settler perceptions of Indians, where external alignments influence internal structures, thus forming a 'socio-magnetism.'[5]

Influences from outside the Settler community have acted very much as magnetic pulls on the perceptions of Settlers, and each change in external influence has resulted in an absorption of corresponding values which are then reflected in a variety of perceptions. Any given perception may be comprised of numerous influences, since the community is in a constant state of flux. Contemporary influences are like magnetic fields, pulling the fragments of the community into an alignment which previous alignments resist. In the community at any given time, there is a struggle between old alignments and new, with many of the old alignments themselves being equally polarised. It is within this continuous state of flux that new alignments are formed, using or rejecting old structures, and the volatile nature of change provides social actors with the possibility of a multiple number of roles.

This thesis, then, is a study of both ethnic boundary maintenance and social structure within one ethnic group in a community. It is concerned with the part played by social, economic and political changes experienced by

Settlers in the development and fragmentation of Settler ethnic identity. The survey of literature on ethnicity given below attempts to place this study within the spectrum of studies on ethnicity, and makes clear the tangential position of the thesis with regard to other theories of ethnic interaction.

* * *

The field of ethnic studies covers many aspects of group relations and identity management, including studies concerning group members versus outsiders, political managers of group identity and boundary maintenance between different groups. As a field of study, it has been criticised for its lack of theoretical direction. Van den Berghe attributed this to the ubiquity of the phenomenon of ethnicity: "It is still premature to speak of a 'theory of pluralism' (which includes ethnicity in Van den Berghe's definition), and indeed it is doubtful that any such distinct body of theory will ever emerge, for pluralism is nothing more than a set of basic characteristics common to a great number of the world's societies" (1973:961).

However, Anderson and Frideres (1981) have attempted to give a summary of approaches to ethnicity. They discern two basic perspectives: firstly, conflict; and secondly, exchange and symbiosis. Either of these perspectives can have a psychological or a socio-structural orientation.

Whilst most studies exhibit a bias towards one or more of these approaches, no study uses one single perspective to the exclusion or all others.

De Vos (1975:6) sees "conflict as a normal or chronic condition in pluralistic society" and he believes that theories should take this into consideration. Bonacich (1972) uses the concept of 'antagonism' to embrace all levels of conflict from overt behaviour, such as riots, to discriminatory institutional arrangements. She describes a situation of a 'split labour market' where an immigrant population provides cheap labour which undercuts local labour costs, causing a division in labour along ethnic lines. This phenomenon is used by Bonacich to form a model of conflict based on the coincidence of ethnicity and class.

Teal and Bai (1981) criticise Bonacich for not expanding the correlation between class and ethnicity further. For them ethnicity becomes subsumed into the class conflict: "Neither social class nor ethnic group formation can be analysed primarily by referring to ethnicity. Rather, what is required is an understanding of the underlying relations of production" (1981:102). However, conflict can arise also from matters other than class or economic differences (see Anderson and Frideres, 1981).

De Vos believes that no analysis is complete without a psychological approach: "One cannot fully understand the

force of ethnicity without examining in some detail its influence on the personality of minority group members. It is insufficient to examine ethnic group behaviour directly only from the vantage point of social structure or social process" (1975:8). Braroe's (1975) study of relations on a prairie Indian reserve takes a strongly psychological approach towards a situation of conflict. He begins with Goffman's (1959) concept of the self as being sacred, and his analysis pivots around the profanation of the Indian self which occurs as a result of Indian/white relations. Braroe states that "A self is the outcome of communication in social interaction" (1975:8), and he argues that "respect ... is necessarily a component of every social interaction" (1975:33). But Indians do not receive such respect in their interactions with whites, which leads to withdrawal on the Indians' part. Lithman (1978) discusses this point in his analysis of why Indians prefer to remain in poverty on reserves rather than move into white communities.

Inglis (1970), Carstens (1971), and Stymeist (1975) have examined the effects of government policies on Indian/white relations, an analysis which reflects a socio-structural perspective. The argument put forward by Inglis in his analysis of the relationship between the Indian agent and the Indian elite in a reserve community is that the study of an Indian band does not lead to an understanding of traditional Indian society, because the band is artificially

created and maintained by the government. Although this fact is often recognised in studies, Inglis argues that many of the latter still attempt to analyse the situation as if the effects of government intervention were not present, and he suggests that more can be learned about Indian band life if the effects of government actions and policies are seen as central. Carstens discusses the influence of changing governmental policy on Indian band life and coins the term 'administrative determinism' to describe it. Stymeist's work begins by considering various attitudes held by whites in Crow Lake. He rejects these as being insufficient to explain the social isolation experienced by the Indians in contrast to other ethnic groups of the community. He concludes that it is the white groups' reliance on the administration of government 'aid' which keeps the Indians as a pariah group. These studies show the necessity of understanding the relevance of government action, government policies, and administrative structures in the life of a small community.

All approaches discussed above have some relevance to the situation in North West River-Sheshatshit. Social conflict appears on many levels in relations between Indians and Settlers of North West River-Sheshatshit, and is the result of both historical and contemporary differences. Bonacich's concept of antagonism applies to this situation because the interactions of the Indians and Settlers range

from overt to implicit conflict. With limited success, her model of conflict in a 'split labour market' can also be applied to North West River-Sheshatshit where wage labour has been almost exclusively carried out by Settlers. However, with the loss of the hospital as the major employer, there is no longer a significant division in labour between Indians and Settlers within the two communities (although a few Settlers commute to work in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, whereas Indians do not).

As Anderson and Frideres suggest, conflict is not caused solely by differences in economic opportunity, although this is often present. Braroe's description of the denigration of the Indian self through their relations with whites, and Lithman's discussion of the Indian preference for living on reserves, also help to explain the distance maintained in everyday transactions in North West River-Sheshatshit.

Finally, the effects of government policies are felt no less in North West River/Sheshatshit than elsewhere, as the decision to close the hospital shows. Funding to the Labrador communities is controlled by policy, and its flexibility is also restricted by administration. Now that North West River is separate from Sheshatshit, different funding programmes apply to each administrative unit. It is essential to be aware of the effects of policies and administration for an understanding of these communities.

Lithman and Braroe deal directly with the Indian perspective when analysing responses to interaction in Indian/white relations. Inglis and Carstens examine the effects of government policies on Indian life and the responses of Indians to government agencies. In all cases, the treatment of whites as groups or individuals is peripheral. Very few studies analyse the attitudes held by the white groups in their interactions with Indians. A survey conducted by Pontings and Gibbins (1976) finds very general trends in white Canadian attitudes, some of which are interesting. Nevertheless, this survey does not analyse perspectives held by a single white group, but, rather, is an appraisal of trends in general Canadian society. Although most studies adopt a range of approaches, they usually do so with reference to the Indians' perspective.

Of all the studies outlined above, the one carried out by Stymeist most closely parallels the approach of my thesis. Stymeist attempts to explain Indian/white relations with reference to external influences, and explores non-Indian attitudes towards Indians in the process. However, Stymeist's study is not self-reflective in that it does not examine how the non-Indian groups in the community perceive <u>themselves</u> in relation to Indians. Nor does he take the Indian/white relationship as a starting-point for further study, but makes the relationship the focus of the study.

I do not question that a study of ethnicity requires the types of approach described above because the topic requires the analysis of an interface. However, this thesis is not solely a study of an interface between two groups, but, rather, it is a study of the meaning of ethnic and other differences to members of one group in a community, and how these meanings have been shaped by external influences to produce social identities within that group. The identities which are thus constructed become ethnic identities when they are constructed in relation to Indians and form the fragments of a 'Settler' ethnic identity. I aim to show how changing circumstances in history not only created radically different economies at different times, but also changed the way the Settlers thought about themselves, in relation to one another and in relation to Indians.

Social experience for North West River Settlers has been fragmented by the changing social environments of the community's past, and this fragmentation is represented in the present-day community by the diversity of perceptions which Settlers hold about themselves and their relationship with the Indians. These diverse perceptions form part of the contemporary social environment of North West River in that different perceptions have currency in different social situations or interactions. Perceptions are aired in conjunction with specific roles, giving rise to a number of 'social characters' in the Settlers' social repertoire.

'Social characters' represent nodes in a volatile social environment, coalescing around perceptions and identities which are grounded in a variety of social experiences. I use the term 'social character,' therefore, to describe the selection by individuals of traits (or perceptions) available and acceptable in their particular social environment, rather than to describe the expression of individual identity. The range of Settler social experience becomes represented by the espousal of different social characters, in a variety of situations, and social characters, in turn, become the fluid components of a Settler identity. Each character brings a new set of perceptions to Settler identity, and the espousal of different social characters in different social situations results in the manipulation of that identity. Settler identity is the product of interaction between Settlers as social characters, and, thus, it represents some aspect of this identity in all possible social characters.[6]

In sum, this study concerns itself with the development of social characters, which represent the various aspects of Settler ethnic identity, in the community of North West River. It does this by exploring Settler perceptions of Indians, and tracing the historical component in the development of these perceptions, recognising that historical changes in the social environment of the community have produced the present-day 'bricolage' of Settler perceptions.

* * *

Two perspectives which attempt to analyse the fragmentation of social identity, and which have not so far been applied to ethnicity, are Goffman's 'frame analysis' (1974) and Rapport's (1983) 'worldviews' of different 'personae' in one individual, both of which owe much of their theoretical history to phenomenology, linguistics and ethnomethodology.

Ethnomethodology, begun by Garfinkel in the 1950's[7] and based on the work of Schutz and others (1974)[8] aims at evaluating social meaning and organisation from the point of view of the people who form the society. Ethnomethodologists postulate that people in society are continually making sense of their social environment, and assert that in order to understand the construction of society it is necessary to study the processes by which members of the society make sense of their social environment should be studied. Further, ethnomethodology denies the 'superiority' of the reasoning implicit in social scientific theory, instead suggesting that all methods of making sense of society, carried out by laypeople and scientists alike, are equally valid. For ethnomethodologists, the attempt of the social sciences to model themselves on the physical sciences diminishes their applicability to the study of society because methods of making sense of everyday situations do not use scientific rationality.

'Commonsense knowledge' is the phrase Schutz used in contrast to scientific rationality to describe the way people make sense of their social environment. It includes 'the stock of knowledge at hand,' or knowledge drawn from social experience, 'the natural attitude of everyday life,' or the acceptance of the social world as factual, and 'the practices of commonsense reasoning,' or social knowledge derived from a shared understanding of experiences. Commonsense knowledge and scientific rationality coexist, occupying different arenas, but neither constitutes an exclusive reality. Instead, they represent different methods of viewing the same reality, and this has the effect of fragmenting society into many different realities. Rather than commit itself to one reality, ethnomethodology errs on the side of saying that there is no reality beyond social construction.

This analysis can be applied to the situation in North West River on two levels. On the one hand, 'commonsense knowledge' adequately describes the way in which Settlers make sense of their society, ethnicity and identity. On the other hand, the fragmentation of social realities as described by Schutz in his contrasting of 'commonsense knowledge' with 'scientific rationality' describes, to some extent, the way social experience is fragmented for Settlers. Settlers as bricoleurs construct everyday social realities from the remnants of diverse past experiences, and these constructs are then applicable in specific social

situations. It is particularly the fragmentation of social experience that I wish to apply to the study of ethnicity, and this is taken up in two different ways by Goffman and Rapport.

In Frame Analysis, Goffman fragments society by exploring frames. The idea brought forward in Frame Analysis is that the important criterion of analysis in social interaction is the 'frame,' or context, in which the interaction takes place. Context, for Goffman, includes perceptions derived from compounding experiences of situations, in much the same way as Schutz (1974:12) describes. Goffman elaborates this idea by describing in increasing detail how 'frames' are continually being superimposed so that any small fragment of interaction is linked to endless other fragments of interaction. I draw from Goffman's arguments the importance of context and recursive links throughout frames which, for North West River society, is to explore the historical contexts in which perceptions developed, and the present day contexts in which these perceptions come into play.

Rapport carried out fieldwork in rural England, where he analysed conversations between people to show that any one individual was 'composed of several 'personae' with differing 'worldviews.' In essence, Rapport succeeded in fragmenting the social world of the people in the village, since each villager was acting in a number of different

roles in relation to others. While Rapport is interested in showing that people have the freedom to be, and can be, creative rather than passive in their social environment and from within the confines of their 'personae,'[9] I wish to use the idea that people consist of multiple 'personae' in order to show how they are different social characters in different social situations.

The effects of changing context have been explored only partially in studies of situational ethnicity,[10] but situational ethnicity as described in such studies differs in several important ways to frame, context and personae. Firstly, situational ethnicity describes interaction between two groups rather than within one group. Secondly, it describes the anomalous situation of a few cases where there is ambiguity between ascriptive and achieved statuses rather than the possibility of any one individual having access to a number of different social characters simultaneously. Thirdly, it deals with changes and choices as discrete events (which become ends in themselves, such as the taking of sides across ethnic boundaries), rather than continual or multi-leveled and reversible swings in a 'fluid' social environment. Goffman asserts that an individual is involved in several frames at once, and that some of the realities within these frames are contingent upon other realities in other frames. Likewise, Rapport describes how several personae with distinct worldviews come into play simultane-

ously, in one conversation. It is this fluidity in social interaction that I find useful to apply to the study of ethnicity.

The extrinsic shaping of social environments selectively encourages the formation of some social characters. 'Frames' and 'personae' are bounded by the social environment, and thus confine the individual to the playing of certain roles and games, thereby limiting the perceptions and responses used. Interactional situations draw upon a stock of perceptions and responses which are embodied in prevailing social characters, rarely without inherent contradictions because of the different social environments from which they arise. Given this, it is difficult to see ethnic identity in certain social situations as anything but the expedient use of a resource.

* * *

The thesis is organised into nine chapters, including the Introduction. Chapter Two is an historical overview of the European settlement and development of central Labrador, with particular reference to North West River. There are three sections in this chapter. The first deals with early European settlement in central Labrador, and explores the economic climate in Europe and the rest of Newfoundland and Labrador in order to explain what caused settlement in the region to occur when it did, who the early Settlers were and what backgrounds they came from. The second section explores the development and structure of the Hudson's Bay Company in order to examine the effects of this structure on the conditions in central Labrador during the Company's pursuit of the fur trade there. The third section deals with the community's transition from trapping to a sedentary lifestyle, and the establishment of the International Grenfell Association as the major employer in North West River after the decline of the fur trade.

Chapter Three describes the pattern of settlement that developed along the shores of Lake Melville in response to a seasonal harvesting regime practised by the Settlers from early settlement onwards, and shows how elements of this pattern can be traced in the present day spatial arrangement of the North West River community. It includes maps of early settlement and diagrams of kinship networks in the town. This chapter can be seen as a visual history of set-

tlement, using as primary sources of information population census, statistics, church records (including graveyards), genealogies, land grant records and town plans.

Chapters Four to Eight explore the development of social characters in the community, and their manipulation in social interactions. Chapter Four uses genealogical material collected in North West River to trace the development of the 'oldtimer' social character, and then places this character on a continuum with 'newcomers' and 'outsiders.' Using transcripts of interviews held in the community, Chapter Five illustrates the importance of the trapping way of life to Settler identity, and, in doing so, traces the creation of the 'trapper' social character. Chapter Six develops from the previous chapter, and shows the effect of sedentarisation on Settler perceptions of Indian/Settler relations by exploring the changes in perception over time and within different generations in the community. Polarisation within the occupational and social structure of North West River produces the social characters of 'Upalonger' and 'Downalonger,' which are examined in Chapter Seven. Social characters are analysed in the context of social interaction in Chapter Eight, which is the culminating ethnographic chapter. Several social characters are espoused during the course of a conversation between seven people in North West River, and the fluid and complex nature of ethnic identity becomes apparent. The conclusion re-examines theoretical

perspectives in the light of the ethnography.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. See William Fitzhugh: Environmental Archeology and Cultural Systems in Hamilton Inlet, Labrador, Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology, number 16 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press) 1972.

2. See Carol Brice-Bennett: Our Footprints Are Everywhere (Nain: Labrador Press) 1977, and John Kennedy: Holding the Line: Ethnic Boundaries in a Labrador Community (St. John's: Institute of Economic and Social Research) 1982.

3. Although membership is extended to them, their particular interests and the land they trap are not covered by the Nain-based LIA.

4. For instance: Among the Deep Sea Fishers, publication of the International Grenfell Association.

5. The term 'bricolage' was first used anthropologically by Claude Levi-Strauss (1966) and for a full discussion of his usage, I refer the reader to The Savage Mind, pages 16-22. I follow his usage, especially with the intention of conveying a sense of 'making do' with the available resources in order to construct a 'patchwork' identity. Settlers create a collage of perceptions which are continually being adjusted in order to meet the requirements of changing social contexts.

6. Clarence Glick (in: Andrew Lind (ed.) Race Relations in World Perspective (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press) 1955) refers to a somewhat similar phenomenon in his essay "Social Roles and Types in Race Relations," but his analysis lacks the fluidity and multi-faceted dimensions I wish to explore in this analysis of social characters.

7. The theoretical orientation which is now associated with ethnomethodology developed out of the early works of Harold Garfinkel, for example, "The perception of other: A study in the problem of social order", unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass, 1952.

8. The work published posthumously in The Structures of the Life-World (1974) was originally written in preparation for a book during 1957, 1958 and early 1959 and represents the collection and organisation of many previously published pieces of work. The final preparation of the contents of the book were carried out by one of Schutz's students, Thomas Luckmann.

9. Actors are not necessarily aware of the confines, which are imposed upon them by others during the course of their social interactions.

10. Fredrik Barth: Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Difference (Boston: Little, Brown and Company) 1969, Shmuel Ben-Dor: Makkovik: Eskimos and Settlers in a Labrador Community (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research) 1961, Terje Brantenberg: "Ethnic Values and Ethnic Recruitment" (in: Robert Paine, editor: The White Arctic; St. John's: ISER) 1977, Harald Eidheim: Aspects of the Lappish Minority Situation (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget) 1971, and John Kennedy (1982).

-Chapter Two-

THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE HAMILTON INLET REGION

* * *

The present chapter is a survey of outside influences upon the history of European settlement and development of the Central Labrador region, and is intended to provide the reader with a reservoir of information for the ensuing discussion of the thesis. The origins of the social characters which are active in contemporary North West River society become apparent from an exploration of the Settlers' history. However, to attempt a history of European settlement in Central Labrador, which covers a period of nearly 250 years, is no small undertaking. This history is complex and extensive, being influenced by events and changes taking place much further afield than Central Labrador, and has not been exhaustively studied in itself or as part of a more encompassing project. Thus, much of it remains unclear.

The small stream of Settlers arriving in Hamilton Inlet during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries clung to values and aspirations which had been shaped by their lives in the Old World in the face of a frequently hostile alien environment. The society that developed thus reflected the Settlers' origins as well as their adaptation to a new environment. They adhered to their old religion and

beliefs, such as observing Sunday as a day of rest, and this adherence often gave solace when other social structures had yet to be established:

> I remember that time so well when Father met us at the door as we came home from seeing our rabbit snares, with a book in his hand, and told us she (their mother) was dying. We all kneeled down near our good mother, breathing her last. By the time Father was done reading and praying, she was gone. Oh, what did I do? Where to go? Far from any other habitation, only five of us, but the Lord was with us (Campbell 1980:24)

The development of the society did not stop with the arrival of pioneers, but the society continually grew and changed as new people arrived in the Inlet. There are recognisable trends in the population history, marked by the arrival of new groups of Settlers with distinct origins and differing reasons for seeking to settle in the Inlet. The history can be divided into three periods: the pioneer period; the fur trade period; and, the administrative period. Each of these will be covered in separate sections of the chapter.

* * *

The Pioneer Period:
Origins of the Hamilton Inlet European Population.

* * *

The available information on the area points to the fact that certain families of planters and traders were established around Hamilton Inlet between the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century. And it was during this period that seasonal fishermen, who were brought out to Labrador by merchants and adventurers involved in the Newfoundland fishery, established homes and families in the Inlet rather than return to Europe or Newfoundland. The lifestyle of the pioneers has been influential in shaping the contemporary culture and society of communities in Hamilton Inlet, and much of the present-day folk history centres around adventures in adapting knowledge from their backgrounds in the Old World to the economic requisites of their new environment. This section aims to explore the origins of the Settler population in order to understand what reasons the early Settlers had for emigrating to the New World, and why they ended up in Labrador.

The social history of Hamilton Inlet is fairly well documented from 1836 onwards because of the arrival at that time of the Hudson's Bay Company. However, before the Hudson's Bay Company opened its North West River post in 1836 there were independent traders and planters living in

the area. It is difficult to discover much about these few people who were amongst the first permanent Settlers in Labrador to come from Europe. The documents compiled for the Labrador Boundary Dispute occasionally refer to the inhabitants of Hamilton Inlet in the period before 1836, but this collection of data is selective and certainly not extensive. The Public Archives have collections of data pertaining to the merchants who had establishments in Labrador. Amongst these are the journals kept by George Cartwright (1792) during his sixteen years in Sandwich Bay, and the crew lists and documents of the Slade and Bird companies.[1] These provide insight into the skills required of crews who intended to winter in Labrador, and the difficulties traders encountered in their pursuit of the fishery.

There are a number of accounts of the lifestyle of the early Settlers compiled by visiting missionaries and officials. The account of the Settlers in Hamilton Inlet given by Hickson on his visit to assess the need for a Methodist mission for the region in 1824 is typical of many such accounts.[2] His strict Methodist training led him to both pity and condemn the "ungodly Europeans and their Eskimo concubines"(Hickson 1931:23) he lived with during his visit. An accurate portrait of conditions is difficult to draw from such writings. One of the best accounts of pioneer life in the Inlet is given by Lydia Campbell, the daughter of one of the pioneers. Her collection of reminiscences, Sketches of

Labrador Life, was first published as a series of articles in The Evening Telegram during December and February of 1894 and 1895, and has since been reproduced.

Not only are primary sources scarce, but also there are very few secondary sources of information pertaining to the period prior to the Hudson's Bay Company's arrival. No history of the settlement of Hamilton Inlet has been compiled, and so this account of the history has been gleaned from works which are peripheral in orientation to the subject in hand. Gosling's (1910) history of Labrador deals with Hamilton Inlet in the context of the rest of Labrador. The brief history given by Zimmerly (1975) in his study of the area only sparsely covers this period, and does not discuss the origins of the population, nor their social and economic backgrounds. In their contributions to John Mannion's book (1977), both Thornton and Hancock have studied the settlement trends of people from the West of England who came out with the fishery. Hancock's study concentrates on isolating the towns and villages that supplied most of the Settlers coming to Newfoundland from the West Country, whereas Thornton studies the merchants responsible for settling the Southern Coast of Labrador, which includes the Straits Region and the Southeastern Coast of Labrador. Although neither study deals with Hamilton Inlet Settlers, in combination they describe the trend of settlement instigated by the West Country merchants on the Southern coast of Labrador,

giving the origins of these first Settlers and the time period and context in which Southeastern Labrador and probably Hamilton Inlet were settled. Matthews also examines the migration patterns from the Old World during the fishery, discussing the machinations of the West Country merchants.[3] For an understanding of the conditions in rural England during the pioneer period of migration, I have referred to E. P. Thompson's (1978) seminal work, The Making of the English Working Class.

A large part of the region's early history will forever remain as the 'Dark Ages' of Labrador because of the limited documentation. Nevertheless, the Settlers that appeared during this period dominate much of the community's oral history, and so are significant to the study.

* * *

Newfoundland, and to a lesser extent, the coast of Labrador, had been attracting settlement for a long period prior to the arrival of the first Settlers in Hamilton Inlet. The Newfoundland fishery had attracted Basques as early as the 1500s, and fleets setting sail from the Southwest of England and Northern France had been disputing the right to settle the Island until the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The Treaty of Utrecht was strengthened by further amendments in 1763 and 1783 (the Treaty of Versailles), which gave the lion's share of both

Newfoundland and the fishery to Britain.

The fishery was developed by merchants and adventurers from the West of England who had been integral in the discovery of the New World, especially Newfoundland. It was imperative for the West Country merchants to keep business on home territory if they were to retain a strong control of the fishery and, to this end, they fought any attempts to settle their portion of the New World. Hence, there was very little settlement anywhere in Newfoundland or Labrador during the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries. However, a greater threat manifested itself in the form of French claims to the region, and it became increasingly more apparent that settlement was needed in order to support British claims to the region. A policy was introduced which instructed that crews of twelve men should be left to winter at fishing posts in order to maintain the facilities that were built each season, and to ward off destructive attacks from foreign opponents. The men normally spent two to three years living in these harbours. Thus began Newfoundland's legitimate 'planter'[4] population. It was not altogether unwelcomed by the merchants because these planters were in an excellent position to make the pursuit of the fishery more efficient.[5]

The Southern Coast of Labrador is shown on the earliest maps of European adventurers and explorers to the New World, and it is this area that became the natural extension to the

Newfoundland fishery during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Whilst the discovery of Labrador by the Old World stems back to the Viking era (circa 897), and the fishery started a few centuries later under Basque whaling fleets (14th century), the various European claims to Labrador were not clarified until the Boundary Dispute of 1927. The first attempts at systematic settlement in Southern Labrador came with the French when the seigneurial system, which existed along the northern shore of the St. Lawrence, extended as far as Red Bay. The first seigneurie was granted in 1702 to Augustine Le Gardeur (Courtemanche), and incorporated Hamilton Inlet (then called Kessesaskion). Courtemanche only set up posts along the southern extreme of his seigneurie, never venturing into Hamilton Inlet. The southern portion of this seigneurie was later divided up into smaller concessions and most of them were seasonally occupied until 1763 when Labrador was ceded to Britain. By this time the fishery in Newfoundland was thriving, and the coast of Labrador began to join the fishing enterprise of the West Country merchants.

From its beginning the fishery was prone to periodical depressions, and, during a bad season, it was quite possible for a company to lose all the investments it had made. This served to make the fishery less attractive to those merchants who could afford to compete in more stable concerns. However, the fishery was not short of entrepreneurs. In an

atmosphere of increasing competition, it became a matter of great significance whether a company had weathered several seasons and was able to ride a particularly poor season. This ability arose from the security achieved by experience gained and investment made over a period of time.[5]

In 1790-93, there was a severe depression in the Newfoundland fishery, caused largely by the American Revolutionary war, and later, the Napoleonic wars. Shipping routes were disrupted and the labour force upon which the fishery depended was commandeered to fight in the wars. After the Treaty of Versailles, it became necessary to establish a more tangible claim to Labrador, and because of this particularly severe and drawn-out depression in the Newfoundland fishery, the West Country merchants became interested in the Labrador fishery. Insecure firms began looking elsewhere for business to bolster their failing enterprises, and other more secure firms retreated to Labrador to sit out the depression. A number of firms extended their businesses from the 'English Shore' of Newfoundland. The Dartmouth- and Bristol-linked firm of Noble and Pinson, whose headquarters were in St. John's, is representative of this movement. As the Newfoundland fishery never fully recovered from the depression, many of these firms eventually retreated permanently to Labrador.

A few other adventurers, driven north earlier because of the competition offered by established merchants further

south, had already begun new enterprises in Labrador which were based in England. Cartwright's Bristol-based company was the first recorded establishment in Labrador, at Chateau Bay in 1770. Competition grew as other companies followed Cartwright's initiative. Cartwright responded by moving further north on the Southeastern Coast and opening an establishment at Sandwich Bay, the furthest north any adventurer had dared move because of the somewhat hostile reception expected from the indigenous population. During his sixteen years on Labrador, Noble and Pinson remained Cartwright's most steadfast competitors. However, numerous small enterprises came and went in that period.

In 1764 Hugh Palliser, the Governor of Newfoundland, granted land to the Moravian mission in Labrador. This was to have the effect of keeping the northern Inuit away from the fishery in the south, where they had been disrupting its progress. The Moravians were also to keep the European fishermen from settling too near the Inuit in the north, thereby weakening the control the missionaries wished to exercise on them. At about the same time, Cartwright was establishing himself in Sandwich Bay, on the Southeastern Coast of Labrador. Settlement had apparently already started along the Southern Shore, and was greatly supplemented by hordes of seasonal fishermen in the summer. At this point the first Settlers arrived in Hamilton Inlet.

In her study of merchantile activities along the Southern Coast of Labrador, Patricia Thornton (1977) describes three distinct phases of traders. These are: firstly, the West Country phase, of which Cartwright and Noble and Pinson are the forerunners; secondly, the Jersey merchants such as De Quetteville and company, who established businesses west of Forteau; and thirdly, a phase when businesses were once again run from the West of England, but these businesses also recruited workers from the Channel Islands. During this latter phase Joseph Bird's company from Sturminster Newton in Dorset was the most significant. Most pertinent to settlement in Hamilton Inlet were the two companies of Joseph Bird, who established a base in Forteau in 1800 and operated a fishing post at Kenimish, and Slade's, whose business ran out of Newfoundland as early as 1780s, and which sent crews up to fish in Grosswater Bay.

The reasons that these early Settlers had for wanting to settle permanently in Labrador or Newfoundland, rather than visit seasonally, are obscure. Those wishing to stay in Newfoundland and Labrador in order to be nearer the fishery had to outweigh the convenience of being close to the industry against the hostile winter climate and isolation from food or any kind of service. Abject poverty or political problems at home often tipped the balance in favour of permanent settlement in the New World, despite the attempts of the English merchants to prevent it.

From the mid-eighteenth century, when wintering in Labrador began, Britain was in a state of turmoil, due to the American and Napoleonic wars and to economic changes affecting both agriculture and industry. The first Settlers who ventured as far north as Hamilton Inlet were, in many cases, avoiding press gangs who were seeking men to crew ships for the American and Napoleanic wars; they found it as favourable to stay in Labrador and make good as to risk remaining at home. Whole fishing crews were pirated and men seeking work in ports were impressed into crews for war ships. Merchants with establishments in Newfoundland remained in Newfoundland rather than risk their vessels and crews in returning to England. Many sailors jumped ship and stayed in North America, a few making their way as far north as Labrador.

The enclosures, which lasted from the mid-eighteenth century until well into the nineteenth century, changed the face of Britain's countryside by enclosing the inefficient strips and common grazing land into large fields in privately owned farms. England had had a dense rural population before the enclosures. Along with the Industrial Revolution, the enclosures effectively transformed the country's population from a rural to an urban one. To avoid starvation, those who could left rural areas for the towns. However, many of the towns during this period were also having to cope with surplus workers, the surplus being caused by

the advance of technology in industry which rendered many types of craft production obsolete. The West of England textile industry was severely affected by industrial advance, and so the towns and villages of Dorset, Wiltshire and Devon yielded a goodly crop of aspiring emigrants to the merchants in search of labour for their fishing establishments in Labrador.

As with the first Newfoundland planters, the men who came out to work in Labrador stayed for three or four winters before they returned home. Presumably, men were rehired from year to year, much as Cartwright describes in his journal. He often re-hired men who had spent a season in his employ, and not infrequently he hired those who had just left another firm's employment. This meant that employees must have spent a good deal longer living in Labrador than any individual contract would suggest. Men employed to spend the winter in Labrador were not just fishing crews. Merchants who opened new establishments needed more men to maintain them who had such skills as builder, carpenter, bricklayer, sawyer, blacksmith, cooper, mason and the like as well as boatbuilders and fishermen. Cartwright soon had furriers on his payroll at Sandwich Bay to extend his trapping activities. A number of trades are recorded on the headstones of the first generation of Settlers in graveyards along the Southern Coast of Labrador (Thornton 1977:165).

Cartwright also began bringing women out as maids, housekeepers and cooks. Both Thornton and Hancock point out as significant the fact that women were introduced to the various establishments. Settlement only occurs when a part of the migrant population decides to remain permanently, raising families in the area, and this can only happen when women form part of the population. At the same time, Cartwright not infrequently describes in his journal the liaisons formed between his workers and native women living at one or other of his establishments.

The Labrador Settlers came from the hinterlands of the ports where vessels called to recruit labour on their way to the New World. In Cartwright's time these would have been Dartmouth, Bristol, Cork and Waterford, and later, London as well.[6] De Quetteville drew their labour from the Channel Islands during the 1780s and 90s.[7] But a majority of the Settlers came out during the time that Joseph Bird and Slade's were establishing their companies in Southern Labrador. Recruitment for Bird's was mainly from the Dorset villages and towns just north of Blackmore Vale and following the Stour valley (Thornton, Hancock 1977), and recruitment for Slade's was from the ports and inland villages of South Devon.[8]

There were both planters and traders amongst the people already settled in Hamilton Inlet in 1836. In his account of the history of the region, Zimmerly (1977:52) names two

Englishmen who are recognised in oral history as being the first men to settle in Hamilton Inlet. These men, Phippard and Newhook, are thought to have arrived in Hamilton Inlet at around 1788. Although they married Inuit women from the Inlet, they left no descendants. Shortly after them in the early 1790s, another man, by the name of Ambrose Brooks, arrived from Brighton in England. Brooks married an orphaned Inuk who had run away from her community, and many of the residents of North West River trace their ancestry back to this man and his family.

The names of two traders appear in the 1836 Hudson's Bay Journal[9] as being established in Hamilton Inlet. Thomas Groves was mentioned as a trader with his own establishment at Tubb Harbour, on the Southeastern Coast of Labrador, and with buildings he was willing to loan to the Hudson's Bay men in 1836. Joseph Bird's company was also mentioned. He ran a salmon fishing post at Kenimish, across the bay from the present site of North West River, which is still inhabited. Bird's operations in Labrador began in 1800 (Thornton 1977), and the man in charge in 1836, Thomas Garland, was said to have been in the Inlet for some thirty years. There are numerous Bird families in Sandwich Bay, and the name Groves exists in both Sandwich Bay and Hamilton Inlet.

* * *

The previous paragraphs have served to illustrate not

only where the first Settlers in Hamilton Inlet might have come from, but also what kind of social and economic environment they left behind them when they came, and by what route they might have arrived in Labrador. The first Settlers were most probably rural labourers or craftsmen and tradesmen from rural towns and villages in the West of England and the Channel Islands. Social and economic conditions made it difficult for them to remain in their home countries, where there was a severe shortage of both land and work. At the same time wars were causing a depression in the Newfoundland fisheries, and also adversely affecting shipping. The failing fishery in 1790 weeded out the weaker merchants in the enterprise and caused some of them to remove to Labrador, where some companies remained permanently. The surplus of labour accumulating in England was, to some extent, dissipated by the need for soldiers and sailors to fight in the wars. Conditions for the labourers were far from pleasant, but the press gangs certainly did not offer a palatable alternative. Opportunities to enlist for the fishery were limited, due to the disruption of seafaring during the wars; however, a slight but steady stream of people found their way out to the fishery in Labrador, where they were forced to remain until commercial seafaring became easier.

References are made in the folk history of North West River both to the rural life in England which had been for-

saken by the pioneers of Hamilton Inlet, and to the Napoleonic wars. In her diary, Lydia Campbell remembers her father, Ambrose Brooks, reminiscing about the life he left in England:

> When I first remember to see things and to understand, I thought there was no place as good as this in the world, and that my father and mother and my two sisters was (sic) the best in the world; but our good father used to take me on his knee and tell me his home was a better country, only it was hard to live there after his good old father died and his mother could not keep him so he stayed with a good old minister, what was living in the parish, until he died, and then he came out to this country to try his fortune in this place, for the wars was (sic) raging between England and France and all over the world and the pressgangs were pressing the young men, so he and a lot more English people came out up the shore for woodcutters, seal fishing and the cod fishery, which was the highest in those days. (Campbell 1980:8)

Edna Campbell, a contemporary North West River resident, remembers songs she learnt from her great uncle, Eamon Chaulk, which date back to the Napoleonic wars. [10] The relative freedom of pioneer life in Labrador, the unlimited land and abundant game, must have seemed marvelous to the early Settlers, and must have gone a long way towards compensating for the isolation and the harsh new environment they had to face.

* * *

The Fur Trade Period: History of the Hudson's Bay Company Involvement in North West River.

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This section of the history explores the influences of the Hudson's Bay Company and its work force on the developing society in Hamilton Inlet, and particularly in North West River. The chapter begins with a synopsis of the social structure of the Hudson's Bay Company, describing how it operated at the time the Company was influential in North West River. Much of the Company's labour was recruited from the Orkney Islands in Scotland, and a brief history of the islands gives an understanding of the economic position of Orcadians during the phases in which recruitment was taking place. The social standing of probable recruits with the incentives for their joining the Hudson's Bay Company are extrapolated from this. These elements will be drawn together to describe the growth of the community of North West River throughout this period.

Philip Goldring's Papers on the Labour System of the Hudson's Bay Company 1821-1900 (1980) is an excellent analysis of the working structure of the Hudson's Bay Company after its amalgamation with the North West Company. Although the book is concerned with recruitment and employment patterns for Rupert's Land (central Canada), the general structure and practises described for the Northern

Department apply equally for other departments such as the Montreal Department, in which North West River is located. For more specific details relating to Hamilton Inlet, I have consulted the Hudson's Bay Company Journals for North West River and Rigolet (1834-1910), where these have been available (see below).

There are few studies of the relationship between Orkney and the Hudson's Bay Company. J. Storer Clouston wrote a series of three articles in The Beaver between 1936 and 1937, but these are more descriptive than factual. The most recent and informative study is John Nicks' essay 'Orkneymen in the HBC 1790-1821' (1980). His study concentrates on the recruits from one parish in Orkney (Orphir) over a period of thirty years, between 1790 and 1821.

There are a few comprehensive histories of Orkney[11] but I have drawn mainly upon the work of W. P. Thomson. This work singles out and concentrates on two specific periods and issues in Orcadian history: The Little General and the Rousay Crofters (1981) covers the enclosure of, and struggle for crofters' rights on one estate in Rousay; and Kelp Making in Orkney (1983) covers the kelp industry. The Statistical Account of Orkney 1795-1798, or the Old Statistical Account, (Sinclair 1927) is a compilation of writings done by the various ministers of the Orkney parishes, and gives descriptions of the life of ordinary Orcadians around the turn of the century. The New Statistical Account of Scotland

(1845) does the same for the mid-nineteenth century, at the time when recruitment was taking place for the Labrador posts.

The Hudson's Bay Company Journals for Rigolet and North West River for the period 1834 - 1910[12] constitute the main primary source of information about Hamilton Inlet during that time. These are supplemented by articles in The Beaver, and also by the records of independent traders who were in the region at the same time, when records were kept. The journals, focussing on the daily activities in and around the posts, mentioning names of people and places, and describing events, are unavoidably biased in what is seen as relevant to the records kept and in the way in which this is recorded. Even taking this bias into account, the wealth of information offered by these records is extremely useful. The latter represent one of the few consistent and detailed forms of recorded history for the region. There are also a few personal diaries and reminiscences, kept intermittently by the early Settlers. However, these personal recollections do not in themselves build an accurate picture of the history of the Inlet because they are so limited.

* * *

A charter issued from London in 1670 gave the Hudson's Bay Company exclusive trading rights in the area around Hudson's Bay, but the control of trade over such a vast area

proved difficult from the beginning. French merchants had been trading in the area prior to 1670, and independent traders carried on with their business after the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company. Hudson's Bay Company managers in charge of inland posts were required to be resourceful because they had little communication with other posts or head offices between the seasonal visits of boats bringing merchandise and new recruits. A structure developed within the Hudson's Bay Company which enabled its traders to cope both with the competition and with the isolation the posts faced in the early years of operation in the north. The Company did this by encouraging loyalty from its workers and establishing hierarchies and class-based social structures. Since the latter were based on the British class system, they ensured that gentlemen and servants fresh to the north knew how to respond to each other despite the unfamiliar conditions in which they found themselves. The hierarchy developed into a system unique to the Hudson's Bay Company, one that absorbed new recruits and, in the beginning, gave enough incentives to all ranks to establish a sense of loyalty.

The main hierarchical structure divided the Hudson's Bay Company employees into gentlemen and servants (or officers and workers). Gentlemen and servants were drawn from very different backgrounds in Britain. Gentlemen were almost exclusively recruited through the London office, and

were required to be literate. Maintaining accounts and keeping records were part of their duties. Shareholders had the right to bestow apprenticeships where they saw fit as one of their privileges, and, although these favours were "not tossed around indiscriminately" (Goldring 1980:50), family connections often helped. Servants, on the other hand, were recruited through regional offices, such as the one in Stromness, Orkney. The difference between the origins of the gentlemen (traders and factors)[13] and the servants helped to perpetuate the hierarchy.

Gentlemen, who were recruited from social classes in which they were recognised as gentlemen, also expected to be treated as gentlemen when they arrived in the north.[14]

> Rank brought privileges. Those which set a man's relations to the Hudson's Bay Company and its property were spelled out. Those which fixed his relations with subordinates lay among the tangled skein of unwritten traditions of the service. (Goldring 1980:58).

The gentlemen were set apart from the servants by obvious differences in lifestyle, such as different tasks and food allowances and more leisure time, as well as by more subtle differences as in the control of information and authority. Being transferred to other posts without notice was more common among servants than gentlemen. Gentlemen were also shareholders, traders being entitled to half shares, and factors to a full share, whereas ordinary workers were given wages.

The need for skilled workers grew as the Company consolidated its pattern of expansion. A majority of the recruits required by the Hudson's Bay Company were ordinary labourers, but a significant number of tradesmen were needed at the main posts. The production of tools, boatbuilding and repairs, construction and maintenance of post buildings and the collection of wood for fuel and building were common tasks at all posts. Workers were increasingly expected to supplement their food allowances, and often had to supply meat or fish for the post in which they lived. Some posts began gardening and farming on a small scale in order to vary their diets. North West River became famous for the gardens cultivated under Factor Donald Smith's management, which produced a range of basic vegetables, and hay for a number of livestock. Hunting, fishing and the tending of gardens and livestock, then, became work requirements. In North West River the workers also trapped when they had the opportunity, and the newly released employees who had chosen to stay in the region became the Company's trappers.

Some kinds of tradesmen were more commonly employed than others. Among the most common were boatbuilders, carpenters, sawyers, coopers and other woodworkers, and, in the earlier years, stonemasons. Less common, but essentially more valuable, tradesmen were the blacksmiths and tinsmiths who made traps, ice chisels, horseshoes, knives, and anything from bedsteads to nails. The different trades gave

rise to an informal hierarchy within the ranks of servants. Blacksmiths tended to gain the respect of all the other workers, often becoming the spokesmen for the servant class as a whole because the value of their skills put them in a relatively secure position.[15] The more prestigious tradesmen had a longstanding argument with the Company because they refused to do ordinary labouring, preferring to carry out the functions of their trades only. However, the Hudson's Bay Company needed, above all, a versatile work force, and tradesmen had limited specific functions which were periodically essential, but which did not fill all the tradesman's time. When retired employees began to settle, the Company was able to employ tradesmen on a seasonal or temporary basis; for instance, in North West River, Daniel Campbell was seasonally employed as a cooper, and gained a certain amount of prestige because of his ability to fulfill this necessary function. But until this was the case, the Company required that all their workers carry out any task that had to be done.

The Hudson's Bay Company has a long history of recruiting its workers from Orkney. The Orkney port of Stromness was a convenient stopping place for the Hudson's Bay Company ships leaving London and sailing north along the eastern sea board of Britain. It offered fresh water, supplies and labour to passing ships, and the whaling fleets headed for the Davis Straits also recruited men from Stromness.[16] Ork-

ney has always been agriculturally oriented, but the various systems of land ownership and tenure had caused farming to be inefficient until the advent of enclosure. The English absentee landlords, who owned and controlled large tracts of agricultural land, first introduced enclosure during the 1760s. Many small tenants were dispossessed, and life for the majority of people in Orkney became extremely unpleasant. There were few labouring jobs available on the enclosed farms, and wages for these jobs were low. And yet, these early enclosures did little to change the inefficiency of farming in Orkney. At the turn of the eighteenth century, then, Orkney had very little money and few opportunities for young people to improve their standard of living above mere subsistence level. An alternative form of employment was offered by the Hudson's Bay Company ships which began arriving at the small port of Stromness in order to recruit young able-bodied men to work in the New World, sometime between 1670 and 1701.[17]

The wages offered by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1790 varied considerably, depending upon the skills and trades of the employees. For a basic labourer the wage was between £6 and £8 a year. A boat-builder earned between £20 and £30, and a house carpenter earned as much as £36. At the same time rural workers in Orkney earned between £2.10 and £3.10 in a full year of employment, providing that there was work. (Nicks 1980:117). This in itself was enough incentive for

some of the destitute population, but signing up for a stipulated period of assured employment also offered security. The Hudson's Bay Company provided for all of the basic needs of its workers as well; passage, food, lodgings and a minimum of clothing. This, and the fact that there was little to spend money on in the wilds of Canada, meant that the employees were able to save much of their income over the period in which they were employed. Many saved enough to set up as farmers on their return.[18] With their savings, these returned workers acquired a certain notoriety in Orkney. Whether they returned to farming or not, their wealth effectively raised their social status as long as their savings lasted. Sometimes servants returned home only to sign up again for a second term after a short period in Orkney. The northern way of life also had appeal because of its relative freedom from social constraints, and it was not uncommon for servants to form liaisons with local Labradorians. Social pressures at home might also have resulted in extending sojourns in the North West, as one of the ministers in the Old Statistical Account mentions:

> When a man and his wife cannot live in peace together, the parties and the parish are relieved from such disquiets, by the husband's retreat to the Hudson's Bay settlements (Sinclair 1927:120-1).

The kelp industry in Orkney began in 1722, and increasingly employed people from the crofts and cottages, when their land could not provide subsistence. The industry

lasted for over a century, collapsing suddenly in 1832 when tariffs were removed on the importation of European seaweed at much lower prices. This left people suddenly out of work and with little opportunity to go back to a land-based economy. Many people left Orkney, and again, the Hudson's Bay Company offered a means by which to leave for greener pastures. Improvements in farming had been gradually made since the 1790s, when a few landowners had enclosed their farms successfully, but it was not until after 1830 that most of Orkney was transformed from a region of uneconomical land use and poor management to one of the most productive agricultural regions in Scotland. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the arable acreage increased by 250 per cent in Orkney, and from the 1830s onwards, the economy and standard of living in Orkney improved by leaps and bounds. At this time, interest in working for the Hudson's Bay Company declined.

Such was the success of recruiting in Orkney during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, that the Hudson's Bay Company turned largely away from its original recruiting grounds in England. The Reverend William Clouston, in the Old Statistical Account, said that the Hudson's Bay Company preferred these 'Orkney men' because they were "more sober and tractable than the Irish, and they engage for lower wages than either the English or the Irish" (Sinclair 1927:148). He estimated that as many as three-

quarters of the Hudson's Bay Company men came from the Orkneys at the time he was writing in the 1790s. Perhaps the fewer alternatives open to Orcadians provided the Hudson's Bay Company with a better choice of recruits than it could find elsewhere.

The Company employed between sixty and a hundred men each season, and at the peak of this relationship, seventy men was an average recruitment. Recruitment from Orkney reached its peak at the end of the eighteenth century, when 78% of all Hudson's Bay Company employees were from the Islands. The remaining 22% were almost entirely in the officer category, and from England (Nicks 1980:102).[19]

Poor communications in the eighteenth century limited travel between parishes in Orkney, and so most of the early recruits were drawn from parishes which bordered Stromness. Nicks[20] calculated that approximately a quarter of the recruits hired before the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company with the North West Company in 1821 came regularly from one of the poorer social groups, that which was formed by the crofters. (The poorest group would have been those without even the tenuous income of a croft). Goldring describes recruits made after 1821 as coming from the "lower levels of society, from families with too little land, trade or influence to share with the rising generation," and he also describes "labour attachment" as being "weakest among the desperately poor and chronically unemployed" (1980:178).

But, whereas Goldring describes a lack of access to influence among prospective recruits after amalgamation, Nicks' study of the pre-amalgamation period reveals that patronage influenced much of the recruitment, either from family members already successfully employed by the company or prestigious figures in the community such as the priest and school teacher.[21] Clouston follows the fortunes of a group of recruits hired in 1798 and says that "fully two thirds bore the names of one-time land-owning families, and fourteen of these were even numbered once among the 'best landed men' found on the assizes of the sixteenth century head [chief] courts" (Clouston 1937:40). This finding may help to explain the change in the 'quality' of recruits that the Hudson's Bay Company clerks noted after amalgamation. The Company found that the 'quality' of the Orkney men had dropped and now workers were no longer 'loyal and industrious' but 'sly', 'slothful' and even 'unable to carry out the tasks required of them'.

It may be surmised, then, that the early recruits, who were hired at the peak of the recruiting period, were almost exclusively from Orkney, and were mainly from families with prestige in the communities, but relatively little wealth. By contrast, the later recruits seem to have had little social status as well as little economic status. Before the turn of the century, the available pool of labour for recruitment was also limited by proximity to the port of

Stromness. The conditions in Orkney after 1832, which produced the second surge of labourers, were different to those of forty years previously, and quite probably, those affected were from different social backgrounds.

A combination of factors resulted in a decline in the numbers of Orkney men working for the Hudson's Bay Company after the turn of the century. The needs of the Company had changed, as had circumstances in Orkney. In 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company absorbed the old North West Company. Amalgamation caused a surfeit of employees and recruitment was cut back. This was primarily due to the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company inherited a more local supply of workers, namely the Canadian[22] employees of the former North West Company. The Hudson's Bay Company wages also stagnated against the improving rates of pay for labour in Orkney. This stagnation was compounded by the tendency of the Company's hierarchy to become more rigid after amalgamation. Whereas before, opportunities had existed for ardent workers to make careers for themselves in the Company, now there was little opportunity left for ordinary servants to make good and rise through the ranks, and so contracts with the Company became less and less appealing.

Re-engagement was one tactic used by the Hudson's Bay Company to maintain an optimal supply of efficient workers, and this method of recruitment became more expedient as the Company encountered difficulties in recruiting from outside.

It saved the Company from having to find new recruits or transport them back and forth, and besides, a seasoned employee was already used to the ways of the Company and the type of work. However, the Company's unwillingness to increase its wages caused difficulties for the traders and factors who needed ways of enticing their good workers to stay. The Company preferred to rehire workers at the same rate of pay, while, at the same time, the incoming new recruits were receiving slightly better wages. It was also the Company's policy, under normal circumstances, to discourage its employees from settling permanently, the prospect of which may well have enticed some of its workers to re-engage. (In the case of Labrador, long term re-engagement frequently encouraged settlement). Despite this, re-engagement was often the only recourse for desperately under-staffed posts, and the post's managers found ways of promoting desirable workers, either by raising them from the rank of labourer to that of craftsman, or by creating categories of work which then required promotion.[23] In fact, Governor Simpson described his labour supply as having a turnover rate of approximately nine years. As this represents little more than the term of one contract, only a small number of employees can have been regularly re-hired.[24]

When recruiting from Orkney became difficult, the Hudson's Bay Company began recruiting elsewhere, notably

from Lower Canada and the Red River settlement.[25] The Company did not find enough suitable recruits, however, until the collapse of the kelp industry in Orkney in 1832 again created a dire need for work with the Hudson's Bay Company. This coincided with a period of expansion by the Company, which was now secure in its monopoly of trade in the north.

The two marked declines in Orkney's economy, which were brought about by the onset of enclosure in 1790 and the failure of the kelp industry in 1832, then, coincided with the visits of the Hudson's Bay Company ships. There was a ready market of willing recruits when the ships first appeared in Stromness at the end of the seventeenth century. The number of recruits slackened off after the turn of the century, until the failure of the kelp industry in 1832, and it was during the 1830s that the Hudson's Bay Company was expanding its activities in the north. These two periods of recruitment drew men from different backgrounds in Orkney, and those who hired on with the Company during the 1830s came from one of the poorest segments of rural Orcadian society. The structure of the Hudson's Bay Company was, by then, unconducive to career-minded recruits, and working for the Hudson's Bay Company had become a less prestigious and a less enticing prospect than it had been in the 1790s. The opening of posts in Labrador represents part of the Hudson's Bay Company's expansion during the 1830s.

* * *

Despite low wages, a considerable proportion of the Hudson's Bay Company's workers came from Orkney during the 1830s and, in 1836, the complement of men arriving in Hamilton Inlet to set up the post at North West River were Orkneymen. The wealth and freedom of Hamilton Inlet in comparison to the conditions that they had left in Orkney must have seemed overwhelming to the first recruits to the North West River post. Lydia Campbell describes the richness of wildlife in the Inlet just before the start of the fur trade with the Hudson's Bay Company:

> About this time people began to settle, one after another, mostly French people, few English, for everything was plentiful at that time. People could stand on the rocks and hook fish ashore on the beach and spear the salmon that was swimming along the shore. I heard Father say that people could not row up and down the river with any tide, they would have to wait until the tide would turn for to clear the fish and caplin away before they could row through them. Everything was so plentiful (Lydia Campbell 1980:17).

Labrador was one of the regions into which the Hudson's Bay Company was extending its domain during the late 1820s and 1830s. The Fort Chimo post in Ungava Bay had been opened a few years earlier by Erland Erlandson, a Hudson's Bay Company employee who was crossing the interior of Labrador in 1834 on his way to Mingan on the North Shore of Quebec. Erlandson was taken to North West River instead of Mingan by his Indian guides and, on his return to Fort Chimo, reported that there were already traders in Hamilton Inlet. He suggested that the Hudson's Bay Company should

consider establishing posts there, and, in 1836, a contingent of men set out from the 'Kings Posts,' on the North Shore of Quebec, to establish a post at North West River.

For the recruits from Orkney who arrived in Labrador, the experience of working for the Hudson's Bay Company was somewhat different from the experience recruits to other Hudson's Bay Company posts might expect. The Hudson's Bay Company encouraged settlement in Central Labrador, which they did not do elsewhere, and the opportunities thus provided amounted to an alternative career path for the general labourer and low-level craftsman.

When the Hudson's Bay Company arrived in Hamilton Inlet, there was a small Settler population already established, making use of several diverse ecological niches and learning skills from the indigenous Inuit and Indian peoples who occupied complementary littoral and inland environments. The native population was prominent in the early years, but as time went by they were affected in various ways by the influx of Europeans. Smallpox had earlier wiped out most of the Inuit population below Hamilton Inlet, and the establishment of the Moravian missions at Hopedale and Nain drew the remainder of the population away from Hamilton Inlet. It is speculated that the Settlers' habit of marrying Inuit women depleted the number of eligible wives for Inuit men in the south so much that this also became a reason for the latter to migrate north. Elsner, the Moravian missionary

who visited at the behest of the Hudson's Bay Company Factor Donald Smith to estimate the need for a mission in Hamilton Inlet, commented on the population of the bay thus: "On Esquimaux-Bay, and its coves, in a district about 150 miles long, there are to be found twenty-one fishermen's families, and, at the outside, not more than ten families of Esquimaux" (Elsner 1857:448). The Indian population kept to the interior increasingly as the coast and Inlet waterways became settled, and their visits to the coast became limited to the summer, when they visited the trading posts. For various reasons, then, European contact with these indigenous peoples had resulted in their retreat to the north and west, leaving the Central Labrador basin predominantly occupied by Settlers.

This led to an unusual situation for the Hudson's Bay Company. The normal pattern for the Company to adopt when establishing a new region was to import the management and labour requirements for its own posts and rely on the local population, usually Indians, to supply these posts with furs. In Labrador this was almost impossible from the outset because the indigenous population was small and had largely withdrawn from the region. Those who did come out to the posts were not reliable fur suppliers partly because they were not readily attracted to the goods and services offered by the posts, at least not sufficiently to become dependent on such goods. In the area to the north of Hamil-

ton Inlet this was partly caused by the fact that they would have to forsake hunting caribou in order to trap furs, since the ecological areas required for the two activities were very different. Research on the Naskapi of the 'Barren Grounds' shows how manipulation by the Hudson's Bay Company brought about dependence on trade goods and resulted in starvation amongst the Indians.[26] The Hudson's Bay Company encouraged a reliance on guns and ammunition so that the Naskapi had to trap fur in return for the ammunition they needed in order to hunt, and this eventually led to a precarious division of time spent hunting in one area and trapping in another. The Naskapi were left destitute when the caribou migration path changed, taking the herds too far away for the Indians to reach. Looking through the post's journals it becomes obvious that the Indians did not initially bring in much fur, and never became major fur suppliers:

> 'They [Indians] generally went in the winter and killed a sufficient number of Beaver, Otter, and Marten in this track to purchase a stock of necessary articles such as guns, tobacco and ammunition; and, after their return hither, in the following summer, never thought of hunting a skin until their necessities obliged them to start again for the above mentioned posts [Kings Post on the North Shore of Quebec].... (extract of a letter from Nicol Finlayson, Hudson's Bay Company Factor at Fort Chimo:1834).

The Hudson's Bay Company, which wanted a more committed trapping force, had to find alternative fur suppliers for their Labrador posts, and they turned to the Settler popula-

tion, which grew increasingly as retiring recruits chose to remain and settle in the region. At the outset there were too few Settlers to bring in many furs, and the Company used its own labour force to supply the posts with furs, cutting and maintaining traplines along the river system:

> Immediately after the business of the summer season is closed by the departure of the vessel, generally about the middle of September, the men are sent in parties of two each, up the different rivers, to pass the winter in trapping martens and other animals; they live in small huts, warmed by a stove; their work consists in visiting their traps, keeping them free from show, and in hunting for a part of their subsistence.....The men, on leaving the main Post, are furnished with a certain quantity of pork, flour, and ammunition, which is expected to last them until they return in the spring, generally about the first or second week in June (W.H.A. Davies 1843:87-8).

However, it became much more economical if the labourers ceased to be the responsibility of the Hudson's Bay Company in a credit and debit system, and so, unlike other parts of the continent where it was actively discouraged, settlement was encouraged here. At the end of their five-year contracts many of the retiring recruits, rather than risk returning to the poverty-stricken Orkneys, settled in the region, thus becoming the major fur suppliers for the Company.

Settlers arriving with the Hudson's Bay Company brought some useful skills and trades. The Company necessarily recruited metal-smiths, boatbuilders, bricklayers and others in order to run their posts effectively, and some of these

craftsmen were among those who settled. This did away with the inefficient but otherwise unavoidable practise of recruiting more costly skilled labour which could only be fully used periodically. Having resident craftsmen in the local population meant that the Company could hire them seasonally as the need arose. The case of Daniel Campbell is an example. He was hired by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1845 as a cooper, a trade that was essential to the transporting of salmon from the region. He later married Brooks' daughter, Lydia, and became an independent trapper, but he was available to work as a cooper for the Company when they needed one, as his daughter Margaret describes in her diary: "Sometime in March, Mr. Smith [the Hudson's Bay Company factor] sent for Father, for he was the only cooper in the bay. He wanted him for a month to get some barrels ready for the spring" (Baikie 1976:31). Lydia Campbell's sister Hannah was also seasonally employed by the Company to prepare winter clothing for the recruits when they first arrived.

The Hudson's Bay Company post at North West River was started by a group of Orcadians and Canadians[27] under the auspices of Simon McGillivray:

> The Governor and Committee have determined on meeting the opposition that has recently been commenced at Esquimaux Bay by Stuart of Quebec, acting, it is said, for himself, and on behalf of some people in Boston, United states, with the view of encroaching on our Trade with the Mingan Indians and anticipating us in the occupation of

> the back country situated between Esquimaux and Ungava Bays and to that end an expedition consisting of Mr McGillivray - the gentleman appointed to the charge thereof - two clerks and twelve men is to be fitted out this season with sufficient quantity of Trading Goods, Provisions &c which you will forward as early in the Season as possible say in the course of the month of May in a vessel to be chartered by Mr. James McKenzie. Of the Servants to be employed on this expedition, I am desirous that four should be Orkney men and Eight Canadians. The Orkney-men you can either get at Mingan or in the King's Posts [North Shore of Quebec], of those to be brought out this season whose wages are £17 per ann. for five years, and the Canadians, Middlemen or common voyagers you will engage if possible at the same wages for the term of 3 years. It is desirable a good fisherman should be of the party; likewise one or two rough carpenters and a Blacksmith, and it will be necessary that the Expedition should be provided with netts and Tools for the Tradesmen. (extract of a letter from George Simpson to John Sievright, from Governor Simpson's Public Correspondence Book. No 1292; copy in the Provincial Archives).[28]

The task of the first recruits was to construct the buildings for the post in the face of the hostilities of the other traders already established in the region. Comeau, the North West River agent for the Boston trader Stewart, gave the early Hudson's Bay Company recruits a difficult time. The Company's policy was to compete for trade directly with an opponent, and this involved building a post upstream to the opponent in order to capture the Indians first as they came out of the interior. If the opponents retaliated by themselves moving further upstream, the Hudson's Bay Company workers were expected to follow suit until the opponent conceded defeat. Apparently Comeau not only moved his posts with alacrity but he also offered alcohol to those Indians whose trade he sought. The

Hudson's Bay Company did not allow the distribution of alcohol to Indians at the time. It took a considerable time to organise the construction of post buildings because of the fierce competition Comeau gave the Hudson's Bay Company men, and in low spirits towards the end of the summer, McGillivray was describing the expedition as "a voyage of disappointment throughout" (extract from the Hudson's Bay Company journal of Simon McGillivray 1836:8).

There were a number of small traders in Hamilton Inlet at this time. Joseph Bird of Forteau, who came to Labrador in 1810, was still operating a salmon fishery at Kenimish and kept a winter house in Shabis Kasho (Sebaskachu). Both the salmon post and the winter house were sold to the Hudson's Bay Company for £40 soon after the latter arrived. On his way to Hamilton Inlet, McGillivray met with a Captain Lock, who was employed by Bird, and purchased Bird's business in the region through him:

> A Brig (Hope) belonging to Mr Bird of Forteau and a French schooner cast anchor among us. This Mr. Bird has an establishment in Esqx. Bay called Kinimish.....[I] made some arrangements wt. Capt. Lock of the Hope (Agent for Mr. Bird) to purchase Kinimish. He offers the premises for £40 Cy. but I must first see the place.....
>
> Purchased the stores and premises about here from Capt. Lock, agent for Mr. (Thos) Bird of Forteau, for the sum of £40 Cy. for which I gave him a draft on the Hudson's Bay house in London. There is a winter house also at Shabis Kasho, halfway, between this & Moolagen, which is included in this bargain. (McGillivray 1836:10-14).

Another trader in the region, Thomas Groves, was also willing to sell property to the Hudson's Bay Company. He gave them a house at a place now called Grove's Point, in the region of Goose Bay, and sold them his shares in "a fine masted large boat called the Race Horse" (McGillivray 1836:4). Groves, however, unlike Bird, continued to trade in the region, his main post being at Tubb Harbour on the coast.[29]

It was primarily Donald Smith, factor at Rigolet and North West River from 1848 until 1868, who was responsible for the development of an efficient trapping and salmon fishing economy in Central Labrador under the aegis of the Hudson's Bay Company. He had begun his career by managing the 'King's Posts' which were situated along the North Shore of Quebec. Shortly after his arrival in Labrador became trader, and then factor (in 1852) of the Central Labrador posts. Under his management North West River became the regional centre, and the post was expanded to include roads, gardens and a small number of livestock such as cattle, horses and chickens. The explorer, Hallock, described the effect of coming upon this 'farm' in the middle of Labrador:

> Then the astonished ear is greeted with the lowing of cattle and the bleeting of sheep on shore; and in the rear of the agent's house are veritable barns, from whose open windows hangs fragrant new-mown hay; and a noisy cackle within is ominous of fresh-laid eggs! Surely Nature has been remarkably lavish here, or some presiding genius, of no ordinary enterprise and taste, has redeemed the place from its wilderness desolation! Both

> are true. The climate is much warmer here than upon the coast, and there is a fair admixture of soil. Donald Alexander Smith, the intelligent Agent of the post, is a practical farmer, and, by continued care and the employment of proper fertilizing agents, succeeds in forcing to maturity, within the short summer season, most of the vegetables and grains produced in warmer latitudes. He has seven acres under cultivation, of which a considerable portion is under glass. There are growing turnips, pease, cucumbers, potatoes, pumpkins, melons, cauliflowers, barley, oats, etc. Corn will not ripen, nor even form upon the ear. Before Smith's house is a flower-garden. Here, too, is a carriage road two miles long (strange sight in this roadless country!), upon which the agent betimes indulges in the luxury of a drive; for he has two horses which he employs upon the farm. A bull, twelve cows, half a dozen sheep, goats, fowls, and dogs comprise his live-stock. There is no other place like Smith's in Labrador, in all its area of 420,000 square miles! (Charles Hallock in Harper's Magazine, December 1861).

Smith's farm provided much of the food requirements of the posts under his control. Most Hudson's Bay Company posts had to rely upon the annual arrival of goods shipped in at considerable cost from Britain. Supplies of dried goods such as flour, rice, and some dried fruit were severely limited, and often preserved delicacies were rancid on arrival. Rather than allow the exigencies of shipping to circumscribe the diet of his staff, Smith was able to provide fresh and varied foodstuffs to supplement the fish and wild meats his men hunted. There are numerous references in the post journals to the planting, tending and harvesting activities of the North West River recruits.

Smith also fully exploited the salmon fishery which had been started by the early traders such as Louis Fornel,

Joseph Bird, Thomas Groves and the North Westers, Stewart and Comeau. The increasing turnover at the posts as he developed the salmon fishery and other resources had the effect of drawing out and directing the activities of the Inlet population, since most of the population became employed either directly or indirectly by the Hudson's Bay Company. Smith was an extremely enterprising man, but the stamina and work required by these enterprises were not altogether appreciated by the Hudson's Bay Company: "We are all sadly overworked here, our business is increasing each season, yet we have the same number of labourers and we are not expected to increase our expenses." (Smith 1856: extract of a letter from Rigolet). This situation reflects the difficulties that the Hudson's Bay Company were experiencing in recruitment.

Smith was responsible for introducing to Labrador the practise of canning salmon for commercial retail. This was particularly insightful since commercial canning was a recent innovation, and it remained a successful industry long after Smith's retirement from the region:

> I have worked like a slave since I have been here, and like yourself I am glad to say that my tough labours have been crowned with success. The collection of salmon at this post alone amounts to 370 tierces against 95 sent to the London market last outfit. At Cartwright, in Sandwich Bay, there are ready for shipment 360 tierces; from these two places alone we ship 730, against 401 packages sent to London last year, including Ungava and other northern sections. If Ungava does its quota, we should ship between 11 and 1200

> tierces. (Chief Factor P. W. Bell, writing in the Hudson's Bay Company Journal for North West River, 1864)

Tinsmiths, or 'tinmen', became regular members of the parties of recruits arriving annually at the Rigolet and North West River posts. The introduction of canning may have been the major cause of the growth and success of the salmon fishery in Labrador after Smith's arrival. Previously, there had been no way of transporting salmon the distances required to reach large markets.

Although Smith must have demanded a lot from his men in adding fishing and farming to their workloads, and in exacting labour from an insufficiently large staff during these days of expansion, he also gave a great deal of his time and energies to the Hamilton Inlet populace. He learnt the rudiments of medicine, acted as judge and arbiter in disputes and served as priest in marriage and baptism ceremonies for the Settler population, of whom, by this time, a fair number had formerly been Orkney recruits for his posts and nearly all were working on some level for the Company.

Donald Smith left Labrador in 1868 for Montreal where he became Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company (not long after the death of Sir George Simpson), and later, the first Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal. The savings he accumulated during his years with the Hudson's Bay Company, and the contacts he made, both during his visits to Montreal and whilst

he held office there as Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, enabled him to help finance the first trans-Canada railway, for which he remains famous in the history of Canada. His sojourn in Labrador certainly reflects his capacity as an unusually industrious and talented individual. Before his departure, Smith succeeded in putting Labrador firmly on the Hudson's Bay Company map, and by the time he left there was a thriving population of Settlers in Hamilton Inlet, with North West River undisputedly at the centre.

As the post developed and more recruits became Settlers, the main salmon fishing posts and traplines changed hands. Whereas formerly they had been run by Hudson's Bay Company staff, now they were run by independent Settlers. Reference is made to Traverse Pine (Traverspin), a trapline following the Traverspin River, which changed hands from the Company to John Goudie and family (and back again when the family decided to move north). Kenimish, a salmon fishing post, is also mentioned. Malcolm Maclean and Henry Hay initially ran the post as Hudson's Bay Company employees, and later independently. 30

The Blakes, Groves and Meshers of the pioneering period were gradually supplemented by Michelins, Goudies, Campbells, Baikies, McLeans, Montagues and Olivers over the next sixty years, as the Company's Orkney recruits became independent Settlers. Retiring Hudson's Bay Company

recruits were not only responsible for a major growth in the Hamilton Inlet population from the end of the nineteenth century until the Depression, they were also instrumental in shaping the Settlers' lifestyle in that period, primarily through example. Davies' description of the activities of the Hudson's Bay Company workers (given above) soon became the template for the Settler seasonal round, in which trapping was the major activity. The economy of the Lake Melville region changed from the seasonal fluctuation between littoral fishing and inland orientations of the pioneer Settlers - the isolated families of "frolicksome sailors who prefer[ed] the freedom of a semi-barbarous life and the society of a brown squaw to the severity of maritime discipline and the endearments of the civilised fair"[31] - to an inland trapping orientation, and this eventually led to the division of the Hamilton Inlet population. Some gravitated to the coast and the cod fishery while others settled inland around the trading posts and oscillated between the summer salmon fishery and winter trapping. The Company became central to the existence of every Settler in the inland region, and trapping became a way of life.

* * *

The Administrative Period: The Transition to a Sedentary Lifestyle

* * *

This section of the history chapter deals with the transition that the community had to make from a seasonally oriented trapping economy to a year-round wage labour economy. The influence of the Depression of the 1920s and 30s was widespread, and, in Labrador, the loss of fur markets meant that trapping was no longer a viable way of life. The failing fur trade brought about a change in the economic orientation of the community. Several alternative forms of employment arose at the beginning of the twentieth century, the most important from the point of view of North West River being the International Grenfell Association. However, environmental exploitation, such as mineral exploration, logging, and later, the harnessing of hydro-electric power, also affected the community.

The Second World War acted as a catalyst with the construction of the Airbase at Goose Bay, for much of the change which had been precipitated by the Depression. The construction attracted people from all over Labrador, but most of the employees who stayed for the duration of the project came from the Settler communities in the region, and not least from North West River. Thus, North West River increasingly found itself the focus of various activities, for which it became the service and administrative centre.

The different aspects of economic and social change which have occurred during the present century will be discussed below.

* * *

Exploration of the Labrador interior had been going on for the best part of the century, beginning with the journeys made by Hudson's Bay Company employees John McLean (1849) and Erland Erlandson. North West River became a starting point for many of the voyages of exploration and adventure into the Labrador 'wilderness.' The Geological Survey of Canada expedition, led by Albert Low in 1893-94, was the first scientific survey undertaken of Labrador, and undoubtedly had repercussions in the instigation of mineral exploration. A. P. Low's report (1896) of the geology of the Labrador peninsula gives some information about the Settler population of North West River, where he spent time while organising his journey.

Expeditions were often of an adventurous rather than scientific nature, but served to draw attention to the prospects that the Labrador interior offered. In 1903, a party of three men from the New York magazine Outing set out from North West River. The expedition proved to be fatal for the leader, Leonidas Hubbard. This was partly because the group had not included a local guide, and the men lost their way. From this point onwards it became common to employ North

West River trappers as guides on expeditions inland, and this proved to be a lucrative alternative to trapping for some men. The expedition was successfully completed by Hubbard's wife Mina, who raced Hubbard's companion, Dillon Wallace, to complete the journey in the summer of 1905.[32] Mina Hubbard's account of her journey (1908) supplied greater knowledge of the terrain she travelled through than had previously been available. Other expeditions followed. Elliot Merrick accompanied a group of North West River trappers up the Hamilton River to their traplines and spent the season trapping with John Michelin in the 'Height of Land.' He recounts the adventures he had with the trappers in his book True North (1933). The Finnish geographer, Vaino Tanner, carried out a geographical survey of the Labrador peninsula in 1937, and completed an extensive two-volume account of Labrador's customs and geography in 1944. In 1951, Merrick's companion, John Michelin, was a member of another expedition into the Labrador interior, accompanying another Settler, John's cousin Leslie Michelin, and two journalists for the National Geographic Magazine. The aim of this expedition was to photograph the journey to Churchill Falls, which the men made in aluminum canoes over white water rapids, for the magazine (1951).

Following Low, various teams of scientists travelled inland in search of minerals, and in 1953 the British Newfoundland Corporation (Brinco or Brinex) made its head-

quarters in North West River.[33] The Settlers who had given up trapping, many of whom had accompanied earlier expeditions, were now employed as prospectors and field guides for reconnaissance work. Prospecting in some ways compensated for the loss of the trapping lifestyle, because it had begun while trapping was still the predominant way of life and it built upon the bush skills and knowledge that the Settlers had amassed during their years as trappers. It was also seasonal, as opposed to the types of employment that began appearing with the construction of the Goose Bay Airbase and the operations of the International Grenfell Association in North West River. This seasonality gave the Settlers some time in which to trap and hunt, and, as prospecting occurred during the summer months in order to facilitate the various surveys, many prospectors were able to carry on some winter trapping.

After the initial prospecting, much of the inland resource development has occurred without significant effect on the Central Labrador population, with the exception of Churchill Falls. Few people moved to western Labrador in search of work; there most of the employees are from the island of Newfoundland. The Churchill Falls project, however, flooded an area more than half the size of Lake Ontario and destroyed a vast hunting and trapping area. The Indians and Settlers who lost traplines, hunting territories and equipment still have bitter memories of this develop-

ment, and many are loath to trust further development in Labrador. Little good came to Labrador from this hydro-electric project, since virtually the entire seven million horsepower output is controlled by Hydro Quebec, which pays less than cost price to Newfoundland.

The Goose Bay Airbase, built during the latter part of the Second World War (in 1941), brought air transportation and direct communication with the outside world to Labrador in the space of a few months. The impact of this was far-reaching, and the transition from one economy to another was not always smooth and painless for the inhabitants of Central Labrador. North West River Settlers remember the transition from trapping to wage labour vividly. The decline in trapping had left the Settlers in desperate need of economic security, and an alternative source of income was essential. While prospecting employed some of the men for some of the time, developments like the Airbase offered reliable full-time employment for a large number of people. The transition, then, was both welcomed and regretted. However, except for causing the relocation of part of the Settler population, work on the Airbase and other forms of construction and maintenance based in Happy Valley-Goose Bay have not been as significant in the development of North West River social structure as has the growth and decline of the International Grenfell Association.[34]

Begun by a visit paid to the Labrador fishery in 1891 by Francis J. Hopwood, a member of the British Board of Trade and of the Council of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, the International Grenfell Association as an institution grew to dominate the life of Central Labrador for the next eighty years. Because of his experience and success with the deep sea fishermen in the North Sea, Wilfred Grenfell was given the task of surveying the need for medical and spiritual services among the fishermen who visited Labrador in the summer. In 1892, he visited in the capacity of a Royal National Mission doctor, treating 900 people in that season. Returning to England via St. John's in his ship the 'Prince Albert,' Grenfell met with various St. John's businessmen and merchants who encouraged him to come back the next year in order to continue with his work. In return, he was able to elicit their financial support for this new branch of the Royal Mission to the Deep Sea Fishermen, and thus began Grenfell's career as the guiding light and charismatic leader of the International Grenfell Association.

Two hospitals were built in Labrador during the following two years, with money raised from St. John's companies. The first of these was built in 1893 at Battle Harbour by converting a house provided by Mr. W. B. Grieve, with money provided by Baine Johnston and Company. The second hospital, sponsored by Job Brothers, was built at Indian Harbour

in 1894. It can be seen by the location of these premises, and the mandate of the parent organisation that the International Grenfell Association was primarily concerned with the welfare of the 'floater' population, or those attracted by the Labrador fishery. The Mission's dealings with the inland and native populations did not come until later. The English doctor, Harry Paddon, perceived the need for the presence of a hospital and medical staff throughout the whole year, to supplement the limited capacity of the two summer stations. During the winter, he moved inland from his summer base at Indian Harbour in order to make use of a facility provided in Mud Lake. In 1915, the small hospital at Mud Lake was moved to a cottage hospital which had been built in North West River.

Grenfell was an extremely charismatic character, and the International Grenfell Association reflects his personality in its structure and recruiting patterns. "If an order in the way Grenfell perceived his Labrador Mission may be inferred from his actions, he was first an evangelical socialist...." (Kennedy 1985:13). Grenfell did not, however, describe his calling to Labrador as at all altruistic:

> Some of my older friends have thought that my decision to go [to Labrador] was made under strong religious excitement, and in response to some deep-seated conviction that material sacrifices or physical discomforts commended one to God. I must, however, disclaim all such lofty motives. I have always believed that the Good Samaritan went across the road to the wounded man just because he wanted to. I do not believe that he felt any

> sacrifice or fear in the matter. If he did, I know very well that I did not. On the contrary, there is everything about such a venture to attract my type of mind, and making preparations for the long voyage was an unmitigated delight (Grenfell 1919:114).

But he also had decisive ideas about the profession he had chosen. "It is not given to every member of our profession to enjoy the knowledge that he alone stands between the helpless and suffering, and death" (Grenfell 1919:122).

Grenfell had a compassion and admiration for his charges which did not disguise a paternalistic outlook, describing them as both "the Vikings of today," and "merry little people" who:

> Whilst a resourceful and kindly, hardy and hospitable people..... [they] are a reactionary people in matters of religion and education....Christians of a devout and simple faith. The superstitions still found among them are attributable to the remoteness of the country from the current of the world's thought.... (Grenfell 1932:142)

and the International Grenfell Association developed with a strong element of paternalism. This prevented the Settlers from wresting much control from the institutions which shaped their lives for nearly seventy years.

Although the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen tried to maintain control of its fledgling mission in Labrador, the International Grenfell Association increasingly came under the sole jurisdiction of Grenfell. Finally, after several altercations with his superiors, Grenfell left his position in the Royal National Mission in

order to devote his undivided attention to the Mission in Labrador. Such was his personality that he was able to attract the attention and the financial support of many wealthy families and concerns on both sides of the Atlantic.

Grenfell gradually spent less time as a doctor and spiritual guide in Labrador than he did touring in America, Canada and Britain. Here, he coaxed the money needed to run the Mission from sympathetic audiences of wealthy upper class people. "Hospitals," Grenfell once said, "are best run, we believe, everywhere, not by government departments, but by philanthropic bodies." (Grenfell 1902:119) On his tours, Grenfell met with the sons and daughters of businessmen and aristocrats, and with young people who were in medical and other vocational training. He made recruits from these people, and a steady stream of volunteers appeared at the International Grenfell Association stations in Labrador during the summer. Helping the Grenfell Mission in Labrador soon became an adventure sought by numerous medical students and volunteers from America and Britain. For these recruits, the experience of living in an adventurous environment was paramount among their reasons for being in Labrador. Although they often worked hard, and to good effect, this transient population created rifts in the social structures of the communities where they stayed. The staff and summer volunteers of the International Grenfell Association added significantly to the outsider and elite

subcultures which were developing in North West River.

Grenfell also frequently helped the people he came into direct contact with in Labrador and Newfoundland. In one of his autobiographies, he describes a relationship he maintained with a boy he had found as an orphan, who later became a long-standing employee of the Association. The man earned the title of 'the Mission's own Admirable Crighton and jack of all trades,' and his descendants were still employed by the International Grenfell Association in 1979. A family which had fallen on bad times in Nain were moved to North West River by Grenfell, where the father and subsequently several of the sons acquired jobs with the International Grenfell Association. Likewise, descendants of one of the first administrators of the North West River hospital, who came from Newfoundland, are still employed as administrative staff today.

The International Grenfell Association, then, was responsible for another influx of people to North West River. With the exception of the summer volunteers, who were themselves overwhelmingly from upper class families and often had some professional training, the majority of the International Grenfell Association staff arriving in the community were professionals. Their advanced education and training, and their position as administrators, kept them in a position of superiority in the social structure of the community. As Kennedy explains with reference to Grenfell

staff elsewhere:

> "International Grenfell Association WOPs [volunteers] and salaried staff often sponsored activities which they might have called social development. These included founding local chapters of boy scouts and girl guides, offering night classes and hosting "social evenings." At such social evenings, Grenfell staff advertised that they would be "at home" and welcome local guests. Visiting Nurse Anna Jones' description of one such evening at Battle Harbour illustrates the cultural distance between the affluent, educated and probably boisterous Grenfell staff and the shy and subdued local population. Jones writes:
> "We found the people had no idea of "taking part" in any games. The first half of the evening was spent by the staff's strenuous and solitary participation in games, such as "Going to Jerusalem", and and "Throw the Towel", to the silent and solemn astonishment of the audience. After considerable urging and actual shoving and pulling a small group were persuaded to take part; and to our joy, and probably for the first time in their lives, lost themselves completely with hilarious laughter in the game."
> Appreciating the diffidence and timidity still characteristic of the local people, I suspect the "hilarious laughter" Jones triumphantly witnessed was prompted as much by the nervous tension and social ambiguities of such a staged spectacle as by the games themselves.... These accounts provide some insight into the essentially colonial character of the Grenfell venture, the well-intentioned though patronizing perspective of Grenfell staff and the ability of Settlers to accommodate each summer's influx of these educated, energetic yet impatient representatives of Gesellschaft." (Kennedy 1985:21-22)

Grenfell's involvement in Labrador took him beyond the provision of medical services to attempts at improving the living standards of the local population. Several of his schemes for development were successful. He supervised the reintroduction of agriculture (which had declined somewhat after Donald Smith's departure) by creating farms and market

gardens, and the provision of education through boarding schools, and he developed, and found markets for, a local handicraft industry. His attempts to establish co-operatives to lessen the dependence of Settlers upon merchants, to introduce Saami reindeer herders with a herd of reindeer in order to teach animal husbandry to the local population, and to introduce fur farms at Cartwright, were not so successful. Despite the enormous effort involved in implementing many of these operations (both successful and unsuccessful), the Settlers never became more than peripherally involved in the management and control of them. In each case, professionally trained and skilled workers were brought in from outside to manage the experiments and administer the services. The Newfoundland Museum's 1986 exhibition of Grenfell Handicrafts, euphemistically entitled "Helping Ourselves," aptly illustrated the "extrinsic and colonial...nature" (Kennedy:2) of Grenfell's philanthropic experiments. The Mission hired artists and craft teachers from outside who then trained local craftspeople and produced designs for them to copy.

The North West River cottage hospital became the International Grenfell Association's medical centre for northern Labrador, including the indigenous populations who had at first been ignored by the Mission. But the acquisition of the American Forces' Melville Hospital in Goose Bay during the 1970s had alleviated the need for services from the

North West River hospital, and a majority of the immigrant Newfoundland population in Happy Valley-Goose Bay now used the Melville Hospital. At the time it closed in 1983, the hospital was run predominantly by outside professionals and by Newfoundland and Settler auxiliary staff who served the indigenous patients. The paternalism with which the International Grenfell Association was administered had percolated down from the professionals who ran the hospital and other facilities, to the staff, and the Settlers had become 'brokers'[35] between the Mission's elite and their patient-clients. A large number of North West River inhabitants had become dependent on the hospital and related institutions for the provision of jobs by the time the Mission withdrew from the community. Ninety jobs were lost immediately when the hospital closed, and several more were expected to be lost during the ensuing withdrawal of services from the community.

At its heyday as the base of the International Grenfell Association, North West River was a hive of activity, its numbers swelled with transient clients for the services provided by schools, boarding homes, and hospital. The presence of these temporary inhabitants boosted the local service economy, such as grocery stores and snack bars. At the same time, the social structure that the International Grenfell Association brought with it inadvertently crystallised the rift between outsiders and Settlers along the

lines of skilled and unskilled labour.

* * *

Despite a long history of European contact, Central Labrador has been slow in developing and is still sparsely populated. Even so, it has seen several changes in economic orientation. A depression in the Newfoundland fishery, caused largely by the disruption of seaways during the Napoleonic and American wars, resulted in the transference of several mercantile businesses from Newfoundland to Labrador. The first few pioneer Settlers to arrive in Labrador represented the northern tip of a crest of emigration from Europe, which was precipitated by the agricultural enclosures and the Industrial Revolution and which reached Labrador as a result of the depression in the fishery. The subsistence economy which the pioneer Settlers developed in Labrador made use of several ecological niches in the region, but, with the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company, trapping became the focal economy for North West River Settlers. Settlement in Labrador was encouraged by the Hudson's Bay Company, and this resulted in a substantial addition to the original pioneer population over the next hundred years. Scientific exploration of the Labrador interior during the twentieth century opened the way for mineral exploitation, and an airbase was built at Goose Bay towards the end of the Second World War. The International Grenfell Association arrived on the coast of Labrador in 1897, and

began centring its activities in North West River in 1915. It increasingly influenced the economic and social life of the community, especially after the Depression brought an end to the trapping economy, and caused yet another change in the community's economic orientation.

North West River is again in a state of flux. The transition to a sedentary life style, which spread over the space of a generation, has left the younger members of the community with limited knowledge of the bush environment or bush occupations. The Town Council and the local development corporation (Mokami Development Corporation) are planning, and reviewing suggestions for, alternative economic activities in the region. Following the formation of the Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1974, the indigenous groups in Labrador have made remarkable political progress, and Labrador Indians now have their own political organisation, the Naskapi-Montagnais Innu Association (NMIA), through which they are negotiating a land claims settlement with the Federal Government. The Indians of Central Labrador have also seceded from the municipality of North West River, and they formed their own municipal community of Sheshatshit in 1979.

The growth of political activity among the Indians has precipitated a flurry of self-reflective activities among the local North West River politicians, who are attempting to strengthen Settler, and community, identities. Settler

perceptions of Indian/Settler relations have also been affected by the desire to develop a stronger cultural identity. In the ensuing discussion, by juxtaposing the perceptions Settler have of themselves with the perceptions they have of Indians I hope to show how Settlers choose to select elements of their past in constructing a unique Settler identity, and also to illustrate how complex Settler identity has become.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. Copies of the ledgers and papers of both companies are kept in the Provincial Archives.

2. Thomas Hickson's account of his visit first appeared in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine 1825, and has since been reprinted in Arminius Young: One Hundred Years of Mission Work in the Wilds of Labrador (London: Arthur H. Stockwell, Ltd) 1931, which is the source I have used.

3. Keith Matthews: A History of the West of England - Newfoundland Fishery, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oxford 1968(a) and; The West Country Merchants in Newfoundland, Newfoundland Historical Society Lecture (1-12) 1968(b).

4. The exact meaning of the term 'planter' is disputed. Some accept it to mean the men who populated the fishing stations in winter, whereas other assume it refers to the owners of the stations. However, planter is the term used in documents quoted in Gosling to describe the men who over-wintered on the coast (see Gosling, 1910).

5. Matthews(1968b) notes that those merchants who were among the first to enter the fishery were, almost exclusively, those who remained at the end. These long established and comparatively stable family businesses had also become closely related by intermarriage as well as sharing a common geographical base in the Old World.

6. Possibly such names as Davis, or Davies, and Williams came out at this time.

7. For example, Mesher comes from Mercier or Messier, a Channel Islands name probably from St. Hellier, where vessels called regularly.

8. Among these would be the Blakes, Broomfields, Sheppards, and Groves.

9. Book number one of the Hudson's Bay Company Journals in the collection of papers compiled by P. T. McGrath and housed in the Public archives, St. John's.

10. Personal communication, 1984.

11. Patrick Bailey: The Island Series: Orkney (Newton Abbott: David and Charles) 1971, Eric Linklater:

Orkneys and Shetland: An Historical, Geographical, Social and Scenic Survey (London: Robert Hale) 1965, and John Shearer (et al.): The New Orkney Book (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons) 1967, all cover recent history comprehensively, but without depth. Ernest Marwick: 'Journey From Serfdom,' Unpublished manuscript (Orkney Archives, Kirkwall) gives a more detailed account.

12. Extracts from the Hudson's Bay Company Journals for North West River and Rigolet: 1834-1910, compiled by Sir Patrick McGrath for the Labrador Boundary Dispute, and kept in the Provincial Archives, St. John's.

13. Traders were in charge of one or two neighbouring posts, whereas factors were in charge of districts with several posts, which were individually run by the traders.

14. According to Goldring, the Indians in Ruperts Land were especially sensitive to class differences, and often refused to deal with ordinary servants in their trading transactions.

15. Their position as spokesmen may also have been because blacksmiths were more often recruited from urban rather than rural areas where they were more likely to have had the benefit of some education.

16. The Stromness well is recorded as having supplied water to Captain Cook's vessels in 1780 and Franklin's ships in 1845 as well as the Hudson's Bay Company ships from 1670 to 1891. The well was sealed in 1932, long after the ships had ceased to visit Stromness for either men or water.

17. Clouston says the first ship came in 1690, and Goldring mentions that the first man was hired in 1701.

18. Nicks has calculated that it cost between £40-60 to buy a smallholding (with the livestock and other expenses) in Orkney at that time, and:
"Tradesmen were able to save more in a shorter period of time than labourers; and both could accumulate capital more rapidly as wage rates rose in the early nineteenth century. Labourers in the first two cohorts (between before 1790 and up to 1804) had to work for eight years before their savings exceeded £60. Those in the third cohort(1804-21) could put by as much within four years. Tradesmen...from the first two cohorts could save over £65 in their first five years and those in the third cohort as much as £100 in the same period" (p.121).

19. In 1799 there were 530 men in Canada with the Hudson's Bay Company, four out of five were Orcadians (Shearer et. al. 1967:64). In 1800, approximately 390 out of 498 men employed by the Hudson's Bay Company were from Orkney (Nicks 1980:102). An estimated 2,000 men were employed by Hudson's Bay Company around 1821, before the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company with the North West Company (Goldring 1982:12) by which time less than 40% were Orcadian (Nicks 1980:102).

20. I have used two complementary studies for the following information. Nicks' study covers the period between 1790 and 1821, which is before amalgamation, and concentrates on the recruitment of Orkneymen from the parish of Orphir. Goldring's study covers the period between 1821 and 1900, which is after amalgamation, and deals with recruitment for Rupert's Land.

21. A large proportion of the recruits were the eldest surviving sons in a family; however, younger brothers were often recruited several years after their brothers had signed up.

22. The term Canadian, when used in Hudson's Bay Company historical documents, refers to French speaking 'couriers du bois,' who were recruited in Lower Canada.

23. Categories such as boatbuilder, fisherman and mechanic were used in this way, allowing for a change in title but not necessarily a change in duties.

24. Nicks describes three types of recruit: short-stay of 8-9 years, long-stay of 15 years, and career employees who stayed for 27-29 years on average. Most workers stay for eight or nine years, which is between one and two contract periods. However, this pattern was established before amalgamation, and may well have been different after 1821.

25. Two French Canadians who found their way to the North West River post in the 1830s, and a Norwegian recruit who arrived in the 1850s are possible examples of the Company's recruiting experiments.

26. Alan Cooke: 'L'Independence des Naskapis et le Caribou,' in Recherches Amerindiennes au Quebec vol. IX, nos. 1-2, pp.99-104, 1979 (reprinted in English by the Centre for Northern Studies, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec)
Georg Henriksen: Hunters in the Barrens: The Naskapi on the Edge of the White Man's World (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research) 1973.

27. The term Canadian used here probably refers to one-time North West Company employees who were recruited from Lower Canada. The Canadians filled the role of voyagers, or middlemen, - the canoeists on the inland voyages which were made in order to transport goods and men between posts.

28. The list of names of employees at the North West River post for 1836, recorded in the Hudson's Bay Company journal for that year, are as follows: James Brownley, John Clouston, William Craigie, James Delday, Bazile Dulic, James Jr. and Ignace McKay, Isaac and Gaspard Martin, George, Charles and Alexander McKenzie, Simon Jr. McGillivray, Jean Nolin, Henri and William Pinet, William Sinclair, William Sullivan, Benjamin St. George, Charles Tranquil, and John Voy. There are more than twelve men listed, and more than four of the names could be classified as Orcadian. William and Henri Pinet were mentioned by McGillivray as being Settlers who were hired by the Company (probably as common labourers) from the region of Rigolet.

29. Thomas Bird's business, established by his father (Joseph) in 1810, was based in Forteau, where he was one of the major traders for the cod fishery. Groves, likewise, probably intended to commit his efforts full-time to the fishery. These men were more interested in the fishery than the fur trade, and had possibly extended their activities to Hamilton Inlet for a few seasons in order to try salmon fishing.

30. Malcolm Maclean was involved in a dispute with the Hudson's Bay Company over fishing rights at Kenimish sometime during the 1880s, in which the Company wanted to bar him from netting the river. As he was an independent Settler by that time, who was supplied by the Hudson's Bay Company in return for part of his catch, the Company had no grounds on which to prevent him from fishing at the post. He retained his right to fish at Kenimish, where the McLean family still fishes today.)

31. John McLean, quoted in W. S. Wallace: John McLean's Notes of a Twenty-Five Year's Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory (Toronto: The Champlain Society) 1932.

32. Both Wallace and Hubbard give accounts of their journeys through Labrador: Mrs. Leonidas Hubbard: A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador (New York: The McClure Company) 1908, and Dillon Wallace: The Lure of the Labrador Wild (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton) 1915.

33. P. Smith has written an account of the development of the Labrador interior. Brinco: The Story of Churchill Falls (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart) 1975

34. There are numerous sources of information about the International Grenfell Association, both from the point of view of the activities it undertook, and from that of the people who undertook these activities. Grenfell himself was a copious writer, with several autobiographies and descriptions of his Mission's place in Labrador society to his name. I have used Grenfell's autobiographies to provide an insight into Grenfell's personality and the concerns which led him to establish a branch of the Royal Mission to the Deep Sea Fishermen in Labrador:
Wilfred Thomason Grenfell, A Labrador Doctor: Autobiography of Wilfred Thomason Grenfell (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company) 1919 and, Forty Years For Labrador (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company) 1932.
J. Lennox Kerr's biography gives details of Grenfell's life from a different perspective: Wilfred Grenfell: His Life and Works (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company) 1959.
The operations of the International Grenfell Association have been selectively documented in the Mission's journal, Among the Deep Sea Fishers. This gives insight into the people who ran the hospitals and nursing stations, as well as describing their activities and reporting on the progress of various projects.
Secondary sources of information about the International Grenfell Association which have been used here are:
John Charles Kennedy: 'Community Development in Labrador: The Grenfell Experiment,' unpublished manuscript, Memorial University of Newfoundland 1985.
and, Janet Moores' 'The Life and Death of the Grenfell Association in North West River, Labrador,' unpublished undergraduate paper, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1985.
My own experiences as a voluntary worker for the International Grenfell Association in 1974-75 and 1976-77 also furnish some of the insights.

35. The term 'broker' was first used by Robert Paine in his essay "A Theory of Patronage and Brokerage" (in Patrons and Brokers in the Eastern Arctic, 1976). For a full explanation of the term, I refer the reader to this book. I am using the term to summarise the negotiative middleman position that the Settlers found themselves in as administrators and providers of services to other (indigenous) groups.

-Chapter Three-

GEOGRAPHICAL ORIENTATION TO THE COMMUNITY

* * *

The aim of this chapter is to give a geographical orientation to the history of settlement in the Lake Melville area and the development of North West River as a community. The geographical pattern of early settlement was shaped by the requirements of a population with a subsistence economy, and the social networks and kin groups which developed did so in conjunction with these ecological constraints. The chapter first examines the distribution of the early Settlers with regard to ecological constraints and how these helped to affect the development of social networks. Secondly, the chapter examines the spatial organisation of the present day community of North West River, and how this reflects both the earlier geographical distribution of the population and the social structure in the community.

Initial settlement in Hamilton Inlet was scattered, as the pattern of seasonal subsistence activities required a number of home bases for each family, spread between the coast and the interior. All of the home bases had to be situated near the water, as the major means of transportation was along waterways both in summer and in winter. The types of subsistence activity that these pioneer Settlers were involved in also called for territories in which to

harvest, and so families based themselves at considerable distances from one another in order to maintain areas of almost exclusive harvesting. This was true for both summer fishing, in which one or two families fished from a summer settlement, such as Smokey in Grosswater Bay, and winter trapping, in which traplines led inland from the home base of a family.[1] A favourite site for a home base was a small river mouth, of which there are many along the northern shore of Lake Melville (see Map 2: Dispersed Settlement in the Lake Melville Region).

This distribution limited the opportunity that any family had of social contact with other families, and neighbours, often several miles apart, were the only inhabitants to be sought out for social visits or help. Some constraint on the formation of social structures was inevitable, and the constraint can be seen in several ways. Both genealogical data and the recorded diaries of these early Settlers show, in different ways, the effect of geographical distribution on the development of social structures. Whereas the diaries describe how the social activities of the early Settlers were often geographically curtailed, genealogical data is evidence of the limiting effect of geographical distribution, and a numerically small population, on the formation of kin groups.

An important social activity was that of visiting, as Lydia Campbell describes in her diary:

> Since I last wrote in this book I have been what the people calls cruising about hear (sic). I have been visiting some of my friends all though scattered far apart, with my snow-shoes and axe on my shoulders. The nearest house to this place is about five miles up a beautiful river, and then through the woods, what the French calls a portage....it is what I calls pretty. Many is the time that I have been going with dogs and komatik...up to North West River to the Hon. Donald A. Smith and family to keep New Year or Easter....I have visited last month, on my way up to Sebaskachu, a mountain near by, up to see my dear old sister, Hannah Meshlin,....My husband and me went up to see him (Hannah's husband), or them. Was not they glad to see the oldest couple in the bay besides themselves. We driving with two dogs and komatik, that was ten miles from them. (Lydia Campbell 1894:14-15).

Settlers showed great hospitality to those who visited on their way around the bay, and visiting in itself was treated as a festive event. The time expenditure that visiting entailed both made visiting a valued activity and limited the number of people to whom visits could easily be paid. The term 'cruising' is still in use today to describe a loosely structured form of visiting.[2] Several such visits are carried out consecutively, with some form of refreshment given at most stops (although the nature of this is related to the time of day it happens to be). 'Cruising' has both seasonal and more regular aspects to it. Cruising was most frequently done on Sundays. Since subsistence work and commerce were religiously prohibited on that day, Sunday afternoons were fairly regularly spent visiting neighbours around the bays in any particular locality. The dispersed members of family groups, divided up through marriage and the need to space themselves at a distance for harvesting purposes,

often gathered at their parental home on Sundays and for other, more seasonal, celebrations.

There were also occasions when more widely dispersed Settlers could meet in larger groups. Settlers often encountered one another in their movements when the change from one type of seasonal activity to another involved moving between bases, as they were usually travelling in the same direction. At such times it was possible to arrange to travel in the company of other Settlers. Moving from the coastal region to the interior or vice versa would involve trading the season's catch, and, with the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company post at North West River, seasonal visits to the post to sell and buy goods provided the opportunity for get-togethers. The staff and factor of the Hudson's Bay Company often planned to entertain Settlers on certain seasonal occasions such as Christmas, or the end of the trapping or fishing seasons. Except for these seasonal occasions for socializing, most Settlers were restricted in their visiting.

Early genealogical data (family trees, birth and marriage records) show that geographical location frequently circumscribed the formation of kin relationships. The pattern of inheritance customarily practised by the Settlers in Labrador was ultimogeniture, in which the youngest son, who was usually the last son to remain at home, became the heir and was expected to look after his aging parents when he

inherited the home, traplines and fishing berths. This practise meant that at least a part of the same family had been associated with a particular location over many generations, but that each family had also divided and moved to new locations with each generation, thus forming a pattern of family links and extensions along the lake shore. Eligible marriage partners were limited to a small, scattered population, where movement was constrained by time, distance and a rugged environment, and so liaisons between neighbouring families often developed into kin-based social groups. The association of particular families with particular locations is recorded in the many small graveyards scattered along the shore of Lake Melville, where a preponderance of one or two family names suggests that the site was the home of one particular family. Today many Settlers keep a cabin at the site of their family's original home where they frequently spend weekends or longer holidays during which they hunt and trap.

Increased development in the region, which culminated with the arrival of the Airbase at Goose Bay, gradually brought about centralisation and when settlement in the Lake Melville region became centralised, the social patterns which had developed earlier were, to some extent, transplanted into the community of North West River. The degree to which these early social and kin-based groups are relevant in the social structuring of North West River today

will be examined below.

The town of North West River is built on a series of sand spits, formed by moraines which divide Lake Melville from Grand Lake and the inland river system of the Naskapi, Susan and Beaver rivers. Each moraine is breached by the North West River.[3] The first breach forms the 'Rapids' at the beginning of Little Lake, and the second breach causes a constriction in the river, called the 'Narrows,' where the town of North West River is situated.

North West River gradually became a settlement as families moved there to make better use of the facilities afforded by the Hudson's Bay Company post, and later, by the International Grenfell Association. As we have seen, North West River first became the regional centre for the fur trade, and later the administrative and service centre for the International Grenfell Association. The Hudson's Bay Company post at Rigolet (the neighbouring community to the east) and Dicky's Lumber Company at Mud Lake (the neighbouring Settler community to the south) had also attracted families from around the Inlet. Most people, however, moved from their isolated homes to find work when Goose Bay Airbase was constructed. Each of these phases of development (Hudson's Bay Company, International Grenfell Association, and Goose Bay Airbase), besides causing centralisation, also attracted newcomers.

The town of North West River is divided into a series of sections (see Map 3: Residential Areas in North West River) which, to some extent, mirror the earlier distribution of the inhabitants along the shores of Hamilton Inlet. Water was still the focus of the Settlers' basically subsistence economy, and formed the main means of travel, by boat in the summer and by ice in the winter. For these reasons, early settlement in North West River occurred along the shoreline. The Hudson's Bay Company built its post at the Narrows and from this point the town is divided into 'Upalong', which is the part of the shore going upstream from the post, and 'Downalong', which is the part of the shore going downstream from the post. Downalong is a term used to differentiate the rest of the town from Upalong, but is itself divided up into a number of sections. The 'Beach', the 'Eskimo End', and 'Baikie's Point' are all considered to be part of 'Downalong.' In addition, the term 'Downalong' can also refer more specifically to the stretch of road (or river bank) which runs directly behind the Hudson's Bay Company buildings, between the point where the bridge has been constructed and 'Baikie's Point.'

The east end of the town faces east along the length of Lake Melville. This part of the town, known as the Beach, is an extension of the Lake Melville shore and terminates at a point in the sand spit called Powderhouse Point, or more recently, Baikie's Point, because that is where most members

of the Baikie family live. Along this stretch of the shore there are Settlers who once lived around the northern edge of Lake Melville, between the present site of North West River and the town of Rigolet. The Groves, Campbells, Chaulks, Whites and Baikies all lived at river mouths such as Sebaskashu, North West Islands, Mulligan, Pearl River, and at a small cove called Lowlands (see Map 2).

The 'Eskimo End' of town was built in 1959 to house five Inuit families who were being resettled from Hebron, Nutak and Sagalek in the north. It lies behind the Beach area, and terminates at a small Moravian church building, erected to serve the new inhabitants.

Along the south-facing edge of the sand spit, between Powderhouse Point and the Narrows, there are families who had originally settled across Lake Melville on the southern shore of the lake, at places like Kenimish and Kenamu, where they ran the salmon fishery for the Hudson's Bay Company.

Upstream from the Hudson's Bay Company post there are families who had trapped from river mouths flowing into the Hamilton River or on one of the Grand Lake rivers. Of these families, the Blakes and the Montagues had had houses on either side of the Rapids, and the Michelin family had trapped from Traverspine, on the Hamilton River system (see Maps 2 and 3).

The centre of the town grew around the site of the old Hudson's Bay Company post. This is where the new Hudson's Bay Company store is built, the old post buildings being maintained for storage and warehousing. The store manager lives on an adjacent plot of land. The International Grenfell Association acquired land next to the Hudson's Bay Company area for its hospital. Extensions were periodically added to the original hospital structure, and new facilities were built on the plot of land that was used by the International Grenfell Association. The Mission's activities, including children's homes and housing for hospital staff, took up a large area in the centre of the town. Now, since the closure of the hospital in 1983, these buildings are gradually coming under the jurisdiction of the town council for community use.

Land grants were issued to private individuals in 1950 by the Department of Crown Lands, after the Airbase was built at Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Land was granted to Settlers who were already occupying it. These early grants were sizeable enough to subdivide when the children of the occupiers formed independent households, and the sons and daughters of the original owner were often given a section of the land for their own use in building a house. In other cases, families who were linked through marriage often shared land. All the land around the shore edge was taken early in this period, and since then has only swapped hands

through kin groups. In this way, the original land grants were broken up into smaller holdings, and the social group living on each land grant was kin-based (see Map 3).

In sum, the dispersed settlement pattern is repeated on several levels in the community of North West River. Not only do the sections of town mirror an earlier geographical distribution, but within each section, the already established kin-based groups are perpetuated. To begin with, families moved from scattered settlements to particular areas of the town, so that the sections of the town roughly correspond to an earlier scattered settlement pattern. Families who were neighbours when they lived spread along the shores of Hamilton Inlet are still neighbours in town. Each section of town, then, is inhabited by families from the same part of the Inlet, who have also become linked through preferential marriage. The sections in town represent kin-based groups. And the subdivision of land grants amongst family members subsequent to their settlement has perpetuated this pattern.

The physical dimensions of the town have helped to perpetuate a segregation between the sections. A plan of the town (see Map 3) shows that each section is built along a pathway which leads to the central area, where the store, clinic and bridge are situated. In the normal course of events there is little reason to go from one part of town to another unless it is specifically to visit friends. The

various sections of town resemble street communities. A member of one such community may not know the place of residence of someone from another part of town, or be aware of housing developments at the other end of town. Friends may be visited in other parts of town, but, for various reasons which will be explored later, friendships have always had a tendency to develop in relation to already established kinship and geographical patterns, and since the families of friends have been likely to live in the same part of town as the friends, there has seldom been reason to visit other parts. The geographical and social division is particularly marked with regard to Upalong and Downalong. Upalong lies upstream of the centre of town, whereas the rest of town is downstream of the centre, and, as I have said, there have been few kinship links established between community members living in these two sections of town.[4] It has often been the case that those who marry out of one area into another have lost close contact with the kin they have left behind.

Newcomers[5] are a recurrent feature of Hamilton Inlet life; they have arrived (and are still arriving) at specific times to fill specific needs in the community as the latter developed. We have seen that the Hudson's Bay Company brought Orcadians to the area during the fur trade, many of whom stayed on after their contracts were completed. Likewise, the International Grenfell Association attracted peo-

ple to the town. The International Grenfell Association employed most of its professional staff from outside the community, and although many of these specialists were only temporary residents, a number of families and individuals have stayed in the community. International Grenfell Association employees were often given housing on part of the Association's land grant, and so have become members of a town centre subcommunity.

However, because of population pressures, these patterns are being disrupted, and contemporary North West River residents are seeing many changes in the community's traditional social and geographical patterns. The original land grants are now fully occupied and children born in the third generation after these land grants were made are forced to look elsewhere for land on which to build their homes. Land close to the rest of the family is sought wherever possible, but this is increasingly becoming full also. Now grants to Crown Lands are made through the town council, and new areas are being prepared by the council to meet the request for land grants. The new development areas are removed from the shoreline and the size of a grant is suitable for one house only. This has ruptured the kin-based pattern of the town's geography. These areas are not geographical extensions of the areas already in existence, and so far, have not become extensions of kin groups, either. Identification with particular sub-groups in the community has weakened with the

move inshore. In relation to the kin-based sub-communities that had developed previously, the new residential areas are becoming 'no man's lands.'

Some of the buildings erected by the International Grenfell Association are now being used to house community offices and a clinic, but others are unoccupied. The Hudson's Bay Company retains and uses the original post buildings, the store building and a house on a plot of land for the store manager and family. Brinco (the British Newfoundland Corporation) withdrew its activities from the community concurrently with the International Grenfell Association, and it has also left buildings unoccupied in the town. The construction, in 1979, of the bridge, which crosses the river and enters town just to the west of the Hudson's Bay Company area, has curtailed the activities which were once associated with more co-operative methods of crossing the river (to be discussed further in Chapter Seven). The slackening pace has meant that there is a quietness owing to inactivity in this once busy central area.

Recently the town council upgraded the community's roads - from snowmobile paths to wider gravelled roads - in order to keep up with the development of the paved road to Goose Bay and the bridge which give outside vehicles access to the community. In connection with the upgrading, they named and signposted all of the community's roads and paths.

Whereas, before, each section of the town was known by a local name such as Downalong, these terms are falling gradually into disuse while the road names are increasingly used. At the same time the town is spreading into newly developed residential areas which cannot be categorised as belonging either to Upalong or to Downalong. This difficulty with categorising springs as much from the nature of the social groups that occupy the new areas as it does from a geographical problem, and the earlier pattern of social networks is gradually being eroded.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. Later, as the traplines spread further along the main inland river systems, the families spent the winter at one of the developing communities of Mud Lake or North West River whilst the trapper worked from a main cabin at the beginning of his fur path.

2. It refers to visits paid by groups of family members on other families at home.

3. The North West River is a term seldom used, but refers to the part of the river system which collects the above-mentioned rivers and feeds them into Lake Melville.

4. The establishment of kin groups is the topic of the following chapter.

5. To be dealt with in detail in the next chapter.

-Chapter Four-

KITH AND KIN:
The Analysis of Kinship Patterns in North West River and their Effect on the Formation of the Oldtimer-Newcomer-Outsider Social Character Continuum

* * *

This chapter begins by using genealogical information to explore the formation of kin-groups in North West River,[1] and then goes on to describe the development of the 'oldtimer' social character in relation to the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider.'

The social character of 'oldtimer' is built upon the ability to trace descent to the first pioneer Settlers to arrive in Hamilton Inlet, and is used by all members of long-established families, regardless of the person's age. The claim of descent from one of the pioneer families has two implications for Settler identity. Firstly, the original European Settlers in Hamilton Inlet married Inuit, so to claim descent through these families implies native status. Secondly, the original Settlers represent the beginning of European settlement history in the region, so the claim of descent is also a claim to superior historical association with the region. The political use of superior historical association with the region is similar to the political use of 'occupation since time immemorial' used by indigenous populations in the process of claiming land from the Federal

and Provincial Governments. The claim is that a group's right to exercise rights and privileges in an area grows proportionally with the length of time that group can claim to have been associated with the area. The concept of 'oldtimer,' then, is similar to the concept of aboriginal in the eyes of the Settlers. Indians and Inuit gain prior rights through claiming to be the aboriginal descendents of the region, who have occupied Labrador since 'time immemorial,' whereas individual Settlers can gain status through claiming descent from one of the original European pioneers in Hamilton Inlet, and so are established as long-term residents in Labrador. Thus, to be an 'oldtimer' is to claim both hereditary native status and the privileges that are assumed to come by merit of being descended from the region's original pioneers.

Although there were several pioneer Settlers in Hamilton Inlet, most oldtimer families recognise a common ancestor - an Englishman named Ambrose Brooks. This recognition can be attributed to the fact that his daughter, Lydia Campbell (1980), kept a diary of her life with her family during the early years of settlement in Hamilton Inlet. Publication of the diary has made knowledge of these early years accessible to the community and has focussed attention on the part played by Lydia and her family during that period of history.

The absorption of newcomers has always been a facet of the kin-groups structure of the community. Despite this absorption, the main kin-groups tended initially to be endogamous because of isolation and a limited population, and many of the inhabitants are able to trace descent from Ambrose Brooks through some branch of their family. However, Ambrose Brooks is seldom mentioned as an ancestor, and descent is traced more frequently through his daughters, especially Lydia. He had three daughters, only two of whom survived. Descendants of these two women have formed separate clusters of kin within the larger Brooks-related kin-groups of the community, and these also tended to be endogamous. Among other things, the division between the kin of the two daughters is partly responsible for the formation of Upalonger-Downalonger differences in the contemporary community (see Chapter Seven). Murdock gives the term 'deme' to a locally endogamous community.[2] He points out that the practice of endogamy is a transitional phase in the case of the deme, and cannot be perpetuated for any length of time because of problems arising from the incest taboo. And indeed, marriages between first cousins and other closely related kin were common in the community's past.[3] Murdock's definition of deme does not apply precisely to the situation in North West River because he states that endogamy cannot be considered to be a pattern of kinship if it is the result of the isolation of a group from other groups. However, despite the fact that endogamy began

because of isolation, it persisted in Hamilton Inlet when the population was no longer isolated and when the families of Lydia and Hannah divided. Thus, I found the concept to be useful in analysing genealogical information collected in the community, and I have used the term to describe the kin-groups which were formed by Lydia and her sister Hannah.

Both of Brooks' daughters married twice and produced families with each marriage. Hannah, born in 1813, was the older of the two. She married William Mesher from Grosswater Bay in the 1820s. William's father, William Mesher senior, came out to the Labrador coast from the Channel Islands as a fisherman.[4] He married an Inuk and settled on the coast. The Meshers must have been contemporaries of the Brooks.' William junior and a brother of his, John, are both mentioned as 'planters' in the Hudson's Bay Company journal for North West River (then called Fort Smith) in 1836. Hannah was fifteen when her first child, Robert, was born. Robert married and raised a large family on the coast. Hannah's daughter by that marriage, Esther, married and settled in Cartwright, but remained childless, as did her second son, Ambrose, who was crippled. The Hudson's Bay Company journal mentions the death of a young boy, Peter Mesher, who may also have been the son of William and Hannah. There is no record of William Mesher's death, but Hannah married again and had three sons.

Her second husband was a French Canadian called Marcel (or Mersai) Michelin, who came from Trois Rivieres in Quebec in 1834. Descendants of their sons still inhabit North West River. Hannah's son Peter Michelin married Rebecca Blake, the daughter of Lydia's brother-in-law (John Blake), and their descendents either moved away or became absorbed into the Blake family. Her second son, John, married twice. The children of his second marriage remained in what later became the Michelin deme, but both daughters of his first marriage became Blakes. Joseph, the youngest son, also married twice. Two daughters survived from the first marriage; one married John Montague, an Orkneyman who came to work for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1873, and the other married John's son, Robert Montague. Joseph's second marriage produced several sons, two of whom married Montagues. Michelins and Montagues have intermarried frequently since then, thereby creating the core of the Michelin deme, and descendants of John and Joseph Michelin and John Montague still live in Upalong.

Ambrose Brooks' youngest daughter Lydia (born in 1818), married William Blake, the son of another pioneer family, and her descendants belong to the Blake deme. William Blake's father, William senior, arrived as a fisherman with the Slade's Company, and may have come from southern Devonshire, where the name Blake is common. In an affidavit for the Labrador Boundary Dispute,[5] William's grandson

claims that the Blake family had been in Hamilton Inlet for 140 years. The claim was made in 1910, which would date William senior's arrival on the coast at around 1770. It is more likely that he arrived during the 1780s, since Slade's were not active in the region before that date.[6] William Blake senior had other children besides William: John, who married and settled in Rigolet, George[7] and Esther, (who may have been husband and wife rather than siblings), but very little is known about William senior. William and his brother, John, are both mentioned in the 1836 North West River Hudson's Bay journal as 'planters'. The Blake family Bible records that John married Sarah, and that they had nine children between the years 1832 and 1857. Their daughter Rebecca married Hannah's son Peter. The origins of John Blake's wife, Sarah, are unknown, but Lydia mentions three sisters-in-law and a mother-in-law in her diary, and so they must have been living in the 1830s. Lydia and William junior had several children, but only two survived to adulthood: Susan and Thomas. Susan married a Captain Irving and moved to Sept Iles, where she died, leaving one son and her husband. Thomas lived to the age of 95 and became a renowned figure in the Inlet, marrying four times. These four marriages only produced four surviving children, however, and it seems that a majority of the Blakes still living in Hamilton Inlet must be the descendents of John, William's brother.

Lydia is called 'widow Blake' in the 1845 Hudson's Bay Company journal, by which time she had already remarried. Her second husband, Daniel Campbell, was a cooper for the Hudson's Bay company who had come out to North West River from Orkney in the 1840s. Their daughter, Margaret, also married a Hudson's Bay Company worker called Thomas Baikie, who came from a wealthy Orkney merchant family.[8] Of the Campbells' five sons, John and Alexander survived to adulthood, and both married and settled on the coast in order to pursue the fishery. Most of the Campbells in Labrador today are in Cartwright and vicinity. Descendants of John and William Blake, Lydia and her daughter, Margaret Baikie, form the Blake deme, who live in Downalong, Baikie's Point and the Beach areas of North West River.

The family names of Blake, Baikie, Michelin and Montague have gained attention because of their preponderance among other names in the community, because of their occurrence in Lydia Campbell's diary, and because of the tendency of the descendants to have settled in North West River rather than another community. These are not, however, the only names which confer oldtimer status in North West River. Family names such as Best, Groves, Oliver, Shephard and Rumbolt also confer the status of oldtimer, but although they still exist in other Labrador communities, these have largely been lost through marriage in North West River.

In the section above, I have outlined the establishment of oldtimer families in North West River. Below, I shall describe how traits from the experiences of oldtimers and oldtimer families are drawn upon to create the 'oldtimer' social character. The 'oldtimer' social character has developed in opposition to social characters which have evolved out of the experiences of the community's newcomers and outsiders, and so the following discussion contrasts the experiences of the latter with those of the oldtimer families, thus tracing the development of 'newcomer' and 'outsider' social characters also. Quotation marks are used to distinguish social characters from people in the ensuing discussion.

The pioneer families of the West Country fishermen and their Inuit wives form the historically first layer of the heterogeneous North West River population, from which the social character of 'oldtimer' arises. Oldtimers (and old trappers) form the mainstream of North West River society, and are granted by other community members a familiarity with the customs of Labrador life, by virtue of being long-time inhabitants. Knowledge of kinship networks and the changes which have shaped the development of the community are also part of the 'oldtimer' social character. The 'oldtimer' social character, then, is vested with the affiliations of an extensive kinship network, and interests in and ties to Labrador as a homeland and place of origin, both of

which characteristics apply decreasingly to the experiences of newcomers and outsiders.

The 'oldtimer' character is placed in contrast to the characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider,' which are also formed from the experiences of community members. In the discussion below, I wish to explore the distinctions between newcomers and outsiders in the community, and how traits from the experiences of both newcomers and outsiders have been used in the formation of social characters. People arriving in the community are seen by other community members as being either newcomers or outsiders, and the distinction depends upon the situation and origin of the new arrival. Generally, both the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider' can be placed in opposition to 'oldtimer' social character; however, each of the former categories has its distinguishing characteristics. Newcomers are people who have moved permanently to the community but are not members of the oldtimer families. Outsiders are those who are sojourning in the community for employment reasons, and constitute a number of professionals (e.g. teachers and nurses) who intend to move on after gaining adventure, and experience or variety in their work. Thus, the traits pertaining to the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'oldtimer' are drawn from different experiences.

The line between actual newcomers and outsiders fades when newcomers and outsiders marry into the community and,

in some cases, become part of an oldtimer family, although this in itself does not endow an individual with oldtimer status. However, the traits pertaining to the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider' do not fade. Thus, an individual who arrived as an outsider, and who then married into the community - thus becoming a newcomer, can retain the traits and perceptions which mark the 'outsider' social character - therefore espousing the social character of 'outsider.' The distinction between newcomers and outsiders therefore rests in the selection of traits and perception used in the espousal of the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider,' rather than in the differences between people.

Like the 'oldtimer' social character, which, as I have said, can be espoused by the young and old members of oldtimer families alike, the social characters of 'outsider' and 'newcomer' can be espoused by Settlers who are not new to the community, or considered to be newcomers or outsiders by other community members. The occasions upon which the social characters of 'oldtimer,' 'newcomer' and 'outsider' can be espoused by Settlers who have not had the relevant experiences are limited both by the social situation and by the other participants in the social interaction. For instance, an oldtimer can make jokes about Indians like a newcomer, as long as the perceptions implied by the jokes are later qualified by the Settler when s/he assumes another

social character with different perceptions of Indians. The social character of 'outsider' can likewise be espoused by other Settlers in certain social situations.

English, Scottish and Newfoundland newcomers formed separate sub-groups in the community's past, beginning with the first major influx of newcomers attracted by the Hudson's Bay Company, and these sub-groups have become associated with the different sets of traits and perceptions which form the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider.' As I have said, the fundamentally class-based social structure of the Hudson's Bay Company created an early elite of outsiders who sojourned in Labrador as well as introducing newcomers who married and remained permanently in the region. The family names that date back to the influx of Hudson's Bay Company workers from Orkney are considered to have oldtimer status for several reasons. More often than not these Orkneymen married into the pioneer families already settled in the region, and they eventually outnumbered the original pioneers. Their influx, in conjunction with the economic influence of Hudson's Bay Company, caused a significant change in the economic and social structure of the community which has since helped to shape and colour Settler identity. However, the Hudson's Bay Company officers who sojourned in North West River retained the status of outsiders, and continued to form an elite.

More recently, the International Grenfell Association has caused people to migrate to North West River. Many of the Mission's professional workers were drawn from Britain (particularly England, but also mainland Scotland). Most of these workers sojourned in Labrador, and were instrumental in bringing about further economic and social change in the community. Sojourning professionals were rarely considered anything but outsiders to the community, since they usually arrived as family units or married outside the community, sent their children away to schools, and eventually returned to their countries of origin. These International Grenfell Association professionals associated with, and gradually absorbed the old Hudson's Bay Company elite, who were also of English origin.

However, trained workers were increasingly drawn from sources closer to North West River. These newcomers seldom joined the English-related elite. Nursing and teaching staff moved from other Newfoundland and Labrador communities which were engaged in International Grenfell Association operations, and some married into the North West River community. People who are relatively new to the community, but who have come to stay have frequently formed into sub-communities of newcomers, which are based upon place of origin, and Newfoundlanders are a case in point.

The International Grenfell Association has introduced many Newfoundlanders to the community during the last few

decades, and there are Newfoundland family names which span one or two generations in North West River, but they have not yet achieved full oldtimer status. Their arrival in the community has been incremental rather than overwhelming, and so they have not had the social and economic effect that the influx of Hudson's Bay Company workers had. Recently incorporated Newfoundlanders still form a separate social group in North West River, as my experience of Christmas jannying illustrates.[9] I was invited to go jannying by three Newfoundland women, two of whom had originally come to North West River as nurses from the hospital in St. Anthony, and had since married into the community. Jannying is seen by Newfoundlanders as a Newfoundland custom, and one of the women explained that they (the St. Anthony women) had often wanted to go jannying before, but had not because they felt that there were few people in North West River who would understand jannying. In the present context, however, jannying was also used to reinforce group feelings between the various Newfoundland women who had married into the community.

We began the evening by planning a route around the community which would allow visits to be paid to as many friends of the three participants as possible. Visits were suggested and either added to the itinerary or vetoed, according to the expected response of the visitees. Typical comments were: "Sure no, girl! They wouldn't know what to

do with a bunch of Jannies!" or; "Now, they'll invite us right along in!" This form of selection was not always foolproof, since some of the persons visited were Labradorians and supposedly not familiar with the practise of jannying, and others were Newfoundlanders who chose not to respond in the anticipated fashion, but nearly all the visits we made as jannies that evening were to the houses of Newfoundlanders. What the expedition did prove, however, was that Newfoundlanders form a distinct group in the community in both their own eyes and those of the community.

The pockets of newcomers in the community, such as are formed by the Newfoundland group, and the oldtimer community members, are distinguished from each other by their social characters, which are based on the different historical and cultural experiences of each group. The social character of 'oldtimer' provides Settlers with elements of social and ethnic identity which are based upon the two claims of historical superiority (long-term residence), and of native status through Inuit ancestry. Since the social character of 'oldtimer' is based upon the claim to long-term residence in, and familiarity with, Labrador, then 'oldtimers' can also claim to have a familiarity with Indian culture, which has been gained through the past experiences of trappers. None of these experiences, which are crucial elements in Settler identity, are shared by newcomers to the community, and this has the effect of separating newcomers, and the

social character based upon the experiences of the newcomer, from the mainstream of North West River society.

The experiences of newcomers separate them from mainstream North West River society in several ways. Firstly, in not having Inuit ancestry, newcomers forego the claims to native status which Settlers make, by espousing other social characters, in order to express security in, and affinity with, their environment. Secondly, it allows newcomers to perceive Indians as unconflictually separate from their own cultural identity. Hence, the perceptions they express about Indians are much more open in their prejudices and lack of familiarity. A conversation I held with a Newfoundland shopkeeper in the community illustrates this point.

The woman had been a workmate of mine during a previous visit and I often visited her shop both to talk and to purchase goods. During one such visit I asked her whether many Indian customers used her shop, and she replied that she saw a few. She went on to explain that she did not trust them, although they had not apparently given any cause for this mistrust. She also explained that Indians would never do as assistants in the shop because they were not reliable. I asked her why she thought that they would be untrustworthy, and she replied by reminding me of an Indian acquaintance with whom we had previously worked:

> "Sure, girl, you remember Mary-Jane? She never showed up for work. Out of the three months that

she worked for us, she was there for about three weeks!"

Other negative responses, such as "Indians don't deserve special status or special rights," "they bring their problems upon themselves," "they're lazy and deceitful, and "there are people, and then there's Indians," were also almost always made by newcomers and Newfoundlanders. When other Settlers spoke negatively about Indians they prefaced or qualified their statements with positive remarks. This is because their perceptions of Indian/Settler relations, unlike those of newcomers, are compromised by references to shared Indian or Inuit cultural traits.

The social character of 'newcomer,' then, is constructed by juxtaposing the experiences of newcomers with those of oldtimers, as is outlined above. As a result of their lack of affiliation with the land and region and their lack of association with native cultures and ancestry, the social characters of 'newcomer' and 'outsider' reject Indian cultural traits and Inuit ancestry. In social interactions, this rejection of Indian and Inuit cultural components of Settler identity often puts them in conflict with the 'oldtimers.' This is the primary basis on which 'oldtimers' stand in contrast to 'newcomers.'

A further extension of this dichotomy is given by the social character of the 'outsider.' In order to examine the development of the 'outsider' social character, and its

juxtaposition with 'oldtimer' and 'newcomer,' I shall draw upon an early experience in my fieldwork. Before moving into North West River, I spent a day wandering around in the community in search of possible lodgings. Rita was one of the first inhabitants I met, and she and her husband offered to take me round the community to look for lodgings. Rita directed us from one home to the next, and the occupants of the homes she selected shared several traits. The people she selected were usually the professional staff of the International Grenfell Association and other institutions, who were living alone in houses with amenities such as spare bedrooms, central heating systems, televisions and electric stoves. None of the people she selected were from North West River, or elsewhere in Labrador, but came from either Britain, mainland Canada or America. Rita had, in fact, taken us to the homes of outsiders. She had two reasons for selecting the homes of these people out of other possible lodgings in the town. Firstly, she explained that they lived alone and so might welcome someone else to live with. They also had room to spare for another occupant, a luxury not shared by many of the Settler families. Secondly, she had classified me as part of this group, and felt that I would have more in common with a fellow outsider than I would with a local resident.

The category of outsider is well illustrated by this example. Outsiders, like newcomers, do not rely upon tenu-

ous links with indigenous cultures in maintaining and manipulating social identity. They constitute a group of people attracted to the community for reasons of work, but who do not intend to stay for more than a few years. This means that they bring with them a style of living which is alien to the rest of the community and, in maintaining this style of living in the face of considerable odds, they form a ghetto within the community. The phenomenon is described in various studies of the north. Both Riches and Koster describe the groups of white Euro-Canadian outsiders that form in the arctic, and the outsider group in North West River is essentially the same.[10]

Traits which mark the 'outsider' social character include elements from the lifestyle maintained by visiting professionals, and one of these traits is an interest in collecting various artifacts produced in the north. Artifacts collected in North West River include rare old books on various expeditions undertaken by European and American explorers during the nineteenth century, and a vicarious interest (in the case of outsiders) in the history of the region has developed in conjunction with the interest in rare old books about Labrador.

Outsiders frequently act as patrons to both Indians and Settlers. This is because, through their work, they occupy relatively prestigious and powerful positions in the community, and they are also able to maintain contacts with the

outside world. Many outsiders are also active in local politics, and this also coincides with the fact that most of the outsiders are in the community as professionals. The effect of this coincidence is that the local elite is infiltrated, if not constituted, by outsiders. It also means that the traits of the 'outsider' social character are shared with members of the elite, and the 'outsider' social character is frequently espoused by the latter in their social interactions. And so, the self-perceptions associated with the 'outsider' social character include those of patron, guardian and local historian.

Both 'outsiders' and 'newcomers,' then, are in contrast with 'oldtimers' for different reasons. Neither shares the cultural and historical experiences that make affiliation with the indigenous population part of their cultural identity, and yet this separation from the mainstream of North West River community life is approached in contrasting ways by outsiders and newcomers. In sum, the traits which symbolise the 'newcomer' social character, and separate it from the social character of the 'outsider,' are: 1) the distance from and, 2) the rejection of the Indian and Inuit components of the Settler identity. The traits which separate the 'outsider' social character from mainstream North West River society, and from the social character of 'newcomer,' are: 1) the maintenance of an identity which is divorced from mainstream Settler society, which allows for 2) objec-

tive interests in the surrounding but separate cultures, and 3) affiliations with the elite and political groups in the community. Elements of these distinct approaches to North West River community life, and the perceptions which arise from them, come into play as social characters in the juggling of Settler social identity.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. I have used the information that I gathered from informants in the field, and the Bibles and other privately owned documents of these informants, as well as the records of birth, death and marriage which are kept by the United Church in North West River and in the Provincial Archives in St. John's, in order to construct genealogies for the families in North West River.

2. George Peter Murdock: Ethnographic Atlas (Pittsburgh: University of Pitsburgh Press) 1967: "Deme: Communities revealing a marked tendency towards local endogamy but not segmented into clan-barrios [neighbourhoods]." (p. 48); and, Social Structure (New York: The Macmillan Company) 1949: "The [large bilateral kin-groups] is most clearly observable in the endogamous local community which is not segmented by unilinear consanguineal groupings of kinsmen. By virtue of the rule or strong preference for local endogamy, the inhabitants are necessarily related to one another through intermarriage, although they cannot always trace their exact kinship connections. They are consequently bound to one another not only by common residence but also by consanguinity, as is, in fact, usually specifically recognised. Within such a social group the only social structuring is commonly into families, which may be of either nuclear, polygamous, or extended type. Except for family ties, the strongest sense of identification is usually with the community as a whole, which is viewed as a consanguineal unit in relation to other communities in a manner quite comparable to the attitude towards one's own sib in a unilinear society.....[We] shall regularly employ "deme" for an endogamous local group in the absence of unilinear descent, especially when we are regarding it as a kin-groups rather than as a community. The widespread tendency to extend incest taboos throughout any kin-groups naturally does not leave the "deme" unaffected. On the basis of the tradition of common descent among its members, exogamy can and does extend, in many instances, from the kindred to the deme, as from the lineage to the sib. When this occurs, local exogamy replaces local endogamy, and the constitution of the deme is fundamentally changed." (p.62-63).

3. I found that many of my informants were extremely defensive about the community's kinship background because they considered some of the marriages to have been in contravention of the incest taboo.

4. William Mesher possibly came out to Labrador with the DeQuetteville Company from Jersey. The company had a base in Blanc Sablon.

5. Documents for the Labrador Boundary Dispute, which took place between Newfoundland and Quebec in 1927, when the present Provincial boundary was settled upon, were collected by Sir Patrick T. McGrath, and are kept in the Provincial Archives in St. John's.

6. William Blake senior is listed in the Slade's Company ledger for the years 1792-98 and again in 1802-09. William Blake junior first appears in the ledgers in 1794. The ledgers record goods traded out to men over-wintering along the southern Labrador shore. It is possible that William Blake had moved into Hamilton Inlet to over-winter.

7. George Blake is mentioned as a 'planter' in the Hudson's Bay Company journal for 1845.

8. The Baikie family were originally 'Odal' landowners of Norse descent, and once owned Tankerton House which now houses Orkney Museum. However, it is unlikely that the branch of the family from which Thomas Baikie came were wealthy since he came out to Labrador in search of work with the Hudson's Bay Company during a relatively prosperous period in Orkney history.

9. That Newfoundlanders form an ambiguous group in the community, and are able to espouse both 'newcomer' and 'oldtimer' social characters in different situations, is also illustrated by several other examples from my fieldnotes. Members of the women's darts team for which I played often broke into alcohol induced tirades against Newfoundlanders which were nevertheless interjected with comments affirming the place of Newfoundlanders in the community. Conversations between community members would suddenly become heated when the role of the Newfoundland Provincial Government in Labrador affairs was discussed. I was also told on a number of occasions, in response to a question about the low rate of marriages between Settlers and Indians, that only Newfoundlanders would be silly enough to marry Indians. Despite such displays of 'otherness' on the part of community members, Newfoundlanders have been marrying into the community for generations, and many North West River inhabitants can claim (and sometimes boast of) part Newfoundlander ancestry.

10. Ditte Koster: 'Why is He Here?: White Gossip,' and David Riches: 'Neighbours in the Bush: White Cliques' in Robert Paine: <u>The White Arctic: Anthropological</u>

Essays on Tutelage and Ethnicity (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research) 1977.

-Chapter Five-

THEM DAYS:
The Significance of a Trapping Past to the Shaping of Settler Identity and the Formation of Social Characters in North West River

* * *

As I have previously stated, social characters represent nodes in a volatile social environment, which coalesce around perceptions and identities which are grounded in different social experiences. The intention of this chapter is to trace the development of the 'trapper' as a social character, and to point out elements in trappers' descriptions of the trapping way of life which have been used to symbolise the 'trapper' in contemporary social interaction in North West River.

The social character of 'trapper' has evolved out of the occupational role of the Settlers who trapped with the Hudson's Bay Company for a living, and who will be referred to as economic trappers (or trappers, without the use of quotation marks). The social character of 'trapper' makes symbolic use of certain activities associated with trapping. Trapping as the major economic activity occupied a period in the history of the community recent enough to shape and colour the memories of many of the community's older people. It represents an adaptation to the environment which contrasts North West River Settlers with the Settlers of other

coastal communities where the major economic activity had become fishing, and where Inuit maritime harvesting skills had been adopted rather than the bush skills associated with Indians. North West River Settler culture is also unique in a more general comparison of Canadian Settler cultures because trapping had become the domain of the central Labrador Settlers in contrast to being primarily an Indian activity, as it was in the rest of Canada.[1] Thus, the social character of the 'trapper' symbolises a unique and colourful past for contemporary Settlers, and is of great importance to the formation of Settler identity.

The way of life imposed by the fur trade gave trappers a significant social arena away from the community. In the social environment of the 'bush' patterns of social interaction developed which were peculiar to a trapping lifestyle, and it is with particular reference to these activities, which took place outside the community, that the character of the 'trapper' has been built. 'Trappers'' perceptions of Indians are embedded in a complex matrix of symbols which are used to represent an adherence to the values of the trapping lifestyle when they are expressed in contemporary social interactions. An appreciation of both the differences between Indian and Settler bush skills, and the hospitality, commensality and interdependence between Settlers and Indians in the bush, are the perceptions which symbolise the 'trapper' social character. However, the 'trapper'

social character carries with it many perceptions about Settler identity other than those specifically about the Settlers' relationship with Indians.

The descriptions below come from three Settlers whom I interviewed individually about their lives as trappers, and show the richness of the cultural heritage that the trapping lifestyle affords North West River Settlers. Elements of the three conversations have been arranged in order to give as full an account as possible of the trappers' activities while maintaining both the integrity of the individual contributions and the emphases which the Settlers themselves place on certain activities and social interactions.

Alfred Dunn, 74, lives in Downalong. He cut his own trapline along the Drunken River valley in the Mealy Mountains when he was a young man, during the peak of the fur trade. He spent many years trapping in that area before turning to prospecting when the Depression made trapping unviable. His contributions give the most detailed descriptions of the trapper's activities in the country. Jerome Scarlet is an Upalonger in his late sixties, and trapped for seventeen years before the Depression forced him to seek another occupation. George Beech is a Downalonger in his mid-fifties, who trapped for a few years with his father, and now works for the Federal Government Department of Crown Lands. He was a boy of thirteen when he first set out alone to trap on his father's trapline, to the north of the

community.

The descriptions begin with George relating his experiences on the first trapping journey he made alone. The first trip out alone is a 'rite of passage'[3] for trappers, and many of those I spoke to showed pride in stressing their young age and ability to overcome the fear that grows out of isolation during that initial season. George:

> "(I began trapping) when I was about twelve or thirteen years old. Lonely! First time I went in (sic) Nepishish[4] with my father, trapping....starting 25th September, 'n' I came back in January. I was six weeks on my own that time. All by myself, without seeing my father. That's a long time to go. I never got frightened. Lonely, though! Especially if you're laid up in bad weather and that, not doin' nothing - tired.
>
> "The Indians was always out in the woods, them days, always in round Nepishish. I'd see them in the winter. (They would) come to your cabin, sometimes in the night time. Not a person around, and all of a sudden, a knock at your door! Heh? Three more Indians. I was in there one time, my first year in there, and I got the biggest fright of my life! In the tilt and not a soul round, then all of a sudden round pulls the tarp 'n' in crawls 'n Indian! Ha ha heh! Stayed an' had a cup of tea, and talked and took off again, that night, to his camp, nine hours away! He'd been hunting, chasing some caribou down across and had come across my track and chased me! He came in for a cup of tea! That feller Selma - he died last year - Philip Selma, a tall feller. He used to be my buddy! He'd visit every year - come across from Snegamook. (He would spend the) summer in that area and he'd always come across. A long way, they'd come. Awful good, them Indians, to help. They'd do anything for you! You'd go across to their tent, camp - where they had their tents and that - and they'd do anything for you. Offer you anything to eat, cup of tea and anything, eh?"

Alfred:

"I trapped over towards the Gulf of St. Lawrence, over that way, see? Well, I'd meet up with the Indians over from the Gulf of St. Lawrence way, Quebec. They used to come over every year. They'd come over to Traverspine and then they'd stay there until about February, I guess. When it got a bit warmer to take the families back, then they moved 'em' back - all the way back to the Gulf of St. Lawrence again! They just come to Traverspine, that's all! The men'd come down 'ere, sell their fur, and take their food back to Traverspine. Then they'd haul it all back in the winter - so far, and get back to where they were and trap then, see? Stay there and trap, and hunt the caribou. We wouldn't see Indians until they came up from the Gulf of St. Lawrence. And then, chance time you'd see them. Oh, you would see them at Traverspine - same crowd, over from the Gulf of St. Lawrence. There were a lot of them then. Quite a lot. Some of the men [would visit], but they were just passing through, then, on their way out. They had their families with them, you see. [They would] travel with their families. I s'pose 'twas good for them - the Indians - but then they had to hunt all the time, hunt meat. Try to get meat for the family. That was a lot of work. Trap and get meat! [The women used to] cut wood, clean the meat, make snowshoes - everything like that. Clean the caribou skin. It was hard work for them all. Imagine all them little small children out before daylight! 'Twas cold, you know. They were well dressed, though. They worked in slow, they took their time. With them - with the Indians - wherever they were caught was home. They trapped different from us, you see, they might be one place one year and pass on to another place the next year. But we had our same trapline. All our traps was there."

Jerome:

"[The Indians] may be trapping and hunting as they go, you see. [They] stay awhile in one place - trapping, and then go on for another old deer or something, and stop, and go on to another place where they want to stop for a while. And then they stay there until they want to move back again, you know. But they used to have hard times. They'd get down pretty low on food - low down on food and hungry and that kind of stuff, you know. When they come out, they wouldn't have nothing left, only their pipe! They'd be chewin' on their pipe! Ah ha!"

Alfred:

"(I used to trap along) Drunken River. They used to pass there a lot. Some Indians used to come out just by where I have to go, just below. Different places, they used to come. Some of them would come from Natashquan. Some more from Musquaro. Some from St. Augustin, Mingan, Seven Islands. All up that way, with the little small children. Little tiny things walking, you know! We'd visit them when we were passing like that.....they might be right up on our trapline, eh? We had to pass them, you know, go in their tent, talk with them, have something to eat. Good. Very good. Awful kind! Good people. Wonderful kind people. If you go to their tents they couldn't do enough for you.

"I almost always bought my sled [and snowshoes] from the Indians - the ones from St. Augustin or the ones in Mud Lake. There were a lot of Indians in Mud Lake.[5] That's where I'd buy 'em. They were good to haul, smooth. Some of them [snowshoes] had little small beaver tails, you know. Oh, that was good snowshoes! Light, and they were better to walk. They was really close-knitted - the bear[paw] ones. But those long-tailed ones were no good to us people, not a bit of good. When you're haulin' a sled, you've got to get close to the sled, eh? Right close to it. But with the long-tailed snowshoes you couldn't have 'er close because the nose of the sled would be on top of the snowshoes the whole time. No good, you see? When you're hauling, you trip yourself all the time with that! But the short ones - wide and short - they were the best.

Jerome:

"They [the Indians] were good old fellers, you know! A lot of fine old fellers and all of that kind of stuff. We always used to help them out in the country. They wanted something from us, and we would give it, as long as we had enough. You can't always, though - you'd have nothing left for yourself, you know. But they was good in the bush and that area. If you needed something and they had it.... And it would go like that. But, uh! That's the only way you can survive in the country - one man to another, and stuff like that. Even going up in canoe - 'e might tip over 'n' you'd lose a lot of your food. I know of some times....we'd give a little bit of this and a

little bit of that, everybody'd give a little bit of this and a little bit of that, you know! Then he [the person with the upset canoe] got enough food. You see what I mean, eh? -- Well, you know, getting wet. Flour is O.K. It dries out and just gets hard. Then you've got a flour bag like plaster! Inside or outside, it couldn't get any wetter! You could [eat it] if you had to. If you ran out, you'd have to. All you have to do is get some hot water and mix it up and make flour soup! Ha! -- And that's the way it works, 'cause a guy could lose every damned thing, eh? Case like that, you might have to come back - give up and start over again. That was the way it worked!"

Alfred:

"'Twas a wonderful life though, trapping! If I had my life again, I'd do it. We lived on the meat [we caught]. We start eating meat in the fall and we eat meat until we get home! Oh, we couldn't take too much, you know! Used to take flour and baking powder and stuff, you know. Little dried things like raisins, and perhaps sometimes some apricots. Something like that, you know. We ate little of that, though. Few raisins, rice. Rice is good. I mean, rice - you could make a good pot of rice soup, then - takes a very little rice. Up through Kenamu River to Drunken River. We had to portage six miles up the side of a hill, until you get up on the top! You get up on the top, and you get a long slope down to the river. That was good, going down gradually. That was awful good to see, like the battle was over. But it took about five trips. You do it in five trips -- that's with four loads of the food, and one with the canoe. Heavy loads, though! All you could take there."

George:

"Find your way through, blaze a tree every now and then....that's all! Follow water, more or less. In the end of it you make a path [trapline]."

Alfred:

"Every man had his trapline, and nobody bothered another man's trapline. Oh no! Might take a skin of fur and hang it up there for you, if you're passing. Might see a skin of fur in somebody's trap, you'd hang it up and set the trap again. But you wouldn't go no closer. I mean you

wouldn't go no closer to the trap, because, if you did, perhaps the other trapper might not know why you come there, where his trap is. Very particular, you see. That was your trapline. That was the way you had to make money. That was it. No whys and bothers...enough of that! And that's how it should be yet!

"You were busy all the time, you know! You had to bake bread every night. Cook your meat and bake your bread. And then skin your furs. Some nights you'd be up perhaps 'til after twelve o'clock! Then up again around four, get ready for the next day. Have breakfast and get ready. You keep all the fur just skinned, and put it in a bag and hang it outdoors all the time, until you get back to the main cabin. And then you put them out on the boards, you see. You had to be careful how you thawed your fur, too. That was something you had to be very careful about. On account of heat, eh? If there's too much heat, then it makes your furs curly, see? But if you thaw it right you don't get that. Best way is to thaw it is in a bag. Put it in a cotton bag and let them thaw that way. Not too much heat, a good way from the stove.

"Working hard, coming out every day. You had to travel every day. You had a lot of traps, you know. You didn't just have a day - 'twas over and over, day after day. I had a lot of traps! Early in the morning, there I was, camping in my tent, or in tilt, too. You'd never let the fire go out. You'd sleep in between the fires. Then when you get up in the morning, your stuff was properly dried. Take down camp and move somewhere else. Cold, some mornings, breaking camp. Cold and cold! But it's all right, after. 'Twas cold, but after you get off hauling a little bit, you get right warm. Then you had to dig out the traps, you know. Take them out of the snow and re-set them. Lots of them! Let me see now - one, two, three...four, five, six! That was all the way round. I had six tilts. But then I had days off besides that. I might have a day off another way, you see. Back to one tilt, two nights at that place. There was always....everybody, I think.....had in their path, the trapline, a day off. Take a whole day to go out and come back. That was in the old martin days. In the old days when I trapped, the martin was plenty - like now. They went away. Well I s'pose there was so many trappers as well. Well, you take it, now - people trapping right from here, right over the bay, and

right up, way up past Churchill Falls. Trapped right the way through - a path on one side of the river and perhaps a path on the other side - all the whole ways up, so there was a lot of fur caught. The trappers went right in to trap. Go up there 'n' boys used to go in there in September and not come out 'til the middle of January. Oh, yes! There was a lot of trapping. And a lot of fur caught, too! Lots of fur.

"It must have been in about 1950 I s'pose, later than that I guess [when trapping slackened off]. About thirty five years ago. The price of fur went down - went right down, rock bottom. Cats, lynx - everything. Went right down. That was around the Second World War, just after that, eh? That's why everybody gave it up. Couldn't do nothing with it."

Jerome:

"Well, what changed everything was when the fur went right down to nothing - couldn't make a living on it, see? That's the reason a lot of people were giving up, you see, because they couldn't make a living on it. Myself, I couldn't make a living on it, and keep the family, you know. I worked at it, and then, one winter, I went up the river and I got quite a bit of fur. You couldn't make no money on it, you couldn't make a living.....so you had to give it up, or [starve]. The base was here then, see, and I started working on the base. And, in the spring of the year, they [other Settlers] would go duck hunting.....and we were in there workin', and - Oh! God! - I wished the hell I was out there too, you know! .(Laughs)

"You get over that after a while, you know! Yes, I got over that - trapping. Oh! And then it's not so bad. I was making some good pay - not too much at the end, but it seemed like a lot of money! You could buy a lot for a little money, anyway. Now, you got to pay a lot of money for a little, eh?" (Laughs)

Alfred:

"None of my sons ever saw it [the trapline]! The price of fur went right down. Low price, very very low - $2 for a mountain cat stick. Well, since then - I was too old to go back then. Oh, it was by far the best [way of life]! Still is for me, but I can't do nothing about it now - a man 74

years of age.....I don't know what to say about it, but it was a wonderful life. But trap right! Go and stay in until January or sometime like that, you know. Stay all fall and come out in the winter. Go in by canoe and come back on snowshoes. No radios or nothing....like we used to go. Might get a letter once in a while, you know. If we were lucky, if someone was coming up behind you, you might get a letter in October!

"Oh, yes! [People trap these days], but you can call it a little bit! That's all it is.... You don't go off these days unless you go off on skidoo! What I think I'd rather be doing is walking! I trapped a long time. Started when I was thirteen, going with my brother, eh? That's a long time. Some years I'd get some fur, some years I'd get nothing. Everybody was like that. But most often the minks. Sometimes the martin, or the fox. Martin was a better price than a fox. Not as good as the minks, though. And martins, they were good too. But I don't know. I know nothing about it this year."

Jerome:

"Yes, it's like that now [people using snowmobiles]. At one time, it wasn't like that, eh? The only ones who know what it was like when you wasn't trapping with skidoo, you know - all that kind of stuff, is the people that did it. Now, you can go off on skidoo, and as long as you don't break down, it's like a pleasure trip, if the going is good - the weather and all that kind of stuff! In a couple of hours, you're up to my cabin up there! I remember going up from Red River. It took three days to get up to Naskapi River, hauling heavy loads, you know, and that's the difference!"

George:

"No. No one goes out that far. No one uses the country now - not that far, no. No one goes in the country nowadays. No one traps for a living any more....."

The descriptions given above highlight certain activities common to Settlers who worked traplines. It becomes apparent from the descriptions above that the trapping way

of life was, and still is, appealing to the Settlers of North West River. To be associated with this tradition earns the respect of all of the Settler community, and trapping imagery is a strong element in the development of contemporary Settler identity. Several of these trapping activities have become pertinent to the social character of 'trapper.'

The older members of the community who trapped remember that differences between Indian and Settler harvesting customs were recognised and respected during the early days of trapping (for example, the main activity for the Indians was hunting rather than trapping, and vice versa for Settlers, the Indians moved over large areas in different seasons and from year to year, while the Settlers were attached to one trapline, and the Indians travelled with their families rather than alone, or with other hunters). This respect was seen by the trappers as symptomatic of a relationship of interdependence between Settlers and Indians while both groups subsisted in the country, and it was symbolised by commensality and hospitality. Settlers relied on Indians to provide tools, such as snowshoes, toboggans and knives, and to prepare caribou hide for leggings, boots and mitts, all of which were essential for trapping. Indians increasingly relied on goods traded from Settlers in the country or from the posts. Supplies were limited by the fact that the journey into the country was made by canoe and foot, and it was

often necessary to share these meagre supplies with others who had run short or lost their supplies through some misadventure. Indians frequently traded hides and skins for food when they met trappers in the bush, sometimes using the Settlers they met regularly as middlemen traders, thus averting the need to travel out to a trading post.[6]

Likewise, during the long periods spent in the country, neighbouring Indians and Settlers provided necessary support in difficult times for otherwise isolated individuals. Hospitality was important in a sparsely inhabited country, and the visits of people trapping and hunting in the vicinity were welcome highlights in an otherwise lonely existence for the trappers. The visits of 'buddies' who were on their way between the Post and their camps usually meant an exchange of news and goods. Friendships often formed between certain Settlers and Indians who frequented the same districts in the country, and a pattern of visiting developed between neighbours in which the time of day was a less important criterion for visiting than was the proximity of a tilt or camp to a route being taken by journeying trappers and Indians.

Familiarity with this form of social interaction, and the friendships ensuing from it, have become features of the 'trapper' social character which are displayed in social interactions among Settlers in contemporary North West River. Indian 'buddies' are mentioned in conversations

between individuals who wish to espouse a 'trapper' social character, and, in turn, the 'trapper' is seen by the other Settlers who are taking part in the social interaction as displaying an affiliation with a tradition which is important to Settler identity. Knowledge of the particular skills associated with trapping, and of 'bush' skills in general, are also discussed among those aspiring to be seen as 'trappers' in contemporary social contexts.

Settlers with trapping experience gained during the fur trade take pride in knowing how to "trap right" - that is, without such mechanical aids as snowmobiles, aircraft and radios. This form of trapping is thought to be outmoded by those Settlers who trap for recreation nowadays, and the preference for using or not using such mechanical aids creates a distinction between the older trappers and Settlers who trap today. The older trappers mourn the loss of a way of life which has been denied to the younger members of North West River. This way of life gave the participants the opportunity to conform to a set of cultural ideals and express values which were culturally important. Cutting and working a trapline was a test of strength and endurance for young men whose lives were shaped along their fur paths, and the whole community celebrated the seasonal events and activities dictated by the trapping way of life.

By espousing the 'trapper' social character, younger community members are claiming an affiliation with the past

through which they can strengthen their contemporary social identity. They lay claim to the social character through the experiences of their fathers, and also by virtue of the fact that many of them trap for recreation, so have some knowledge of trapping as an activity. Thus, the social character of 'trapper' can be espoused by those who did not partake in trapping as an economic activity, and, as will be seen in the following chapter, the role of the economic trapper becomes divorced from the developing social character of 'trapper.'

The aim of this chapter has been to show how the economic activity of trapping has provided the ingredients for the development of the 'trapper' social character. The analysis has shown how the social character of the 'trapper' carries with it symbols of a past which is seen as unique and colourful by contemporary Settlers. To encode the symbolism of the 'trapper' in social interactions, then, is to invoke sentiments about the past which define Settler identity in terms of a trapping existence, and which, through the experiences of the trapper, coopt Indians as friends and comrades in an arena outside the community. The trappers' perceptions of Indians as friends become important in this context, and the complex nature of ethnicity in Settler social experience becomes apparent.

The change in occupation, which led to a more sedentary existence for the Settlers, created changes both in their

perceptions of Indians and in their relations with Indians. The transition from a bush-oriented, transhumantic economy to sedentarisation is explored in the next chapter.

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ENDNOTES

1. In Labrador, Indians did not trap on a regular basis for the Hudson's Bay Company, and certainly did not make trapping their means of earning a living, as the Settlers did. As we have seen, te Hudson's Bay Company encouraged settlement and encouraged settlers to trap, as they were more readily manipulated to suit the needs of the Company than the nomadic Indians would have been. See chapter above.

2. All names used henceforth are pseudonyms.

3. I am not using this term in the strictest sense which van Gennep intended, since there are no specific ceremonies associated with the trapper's first trip inland, other than the celebrations which usually marked the beginning of the autumn journey inland, (their departure was accompanied by the firing of guns), and their Christmas return (when there were square-dances in the community), and teasing by seasoned fellow trappers. Women, often sweethearts or sisters, would make small items associated with trapping, such as a 'prog bag' (a small decorated pouch for carrying shot, tobacco, twine etc.) or gun case, to give as gifts, although this was not necessarily for the trapper's first trip.

4. A lake north of the community, but the name is also used to refer to the hunting and trapping country around the lake.

5. The small Settler community of Mud Lake was often the first stopping-place for trappers on their way to traplines along up the Hamilton (or Grand) River. Outward-bound trappers took stock of their supplies here, and it signalled the end of the journey for returning trappers, often providing much-needed food and shelter. The Indians passed through the community on their way to the North Shore of Quebec.

6. The Settlers who had cabins along Grand Lake bought furs from the groups of Indians who passed on their way south, and traded these furs in with their own furs when they next went to the post at North West River.

-Chapter Six-

BRIDGE APART:
The Effects of Sedentarisation and Occupational Change on Perceptions of Indian/Settler Relations in North West River

* * *

The present chapter examines changes in Settler perceptions of Indian/Settler relations which occurred as a result of the change undergone by Settlers from a trapping way of life to a town-based lifestyle with administrative and service-oriented occupations. It contrasts the perceptions that have evolved from the lifestyle of the trappers, which were explored in the last chapter, with those that have developed since sedentarisation and the changes in occupation. This contrast can be made on two levels. Firstly, as a result of sedentarisation, the perceptions that the older community members (who once trapped) hold of Indians of the past are different to those they hold of Indians of the present, and these changes in perception are examined. Secondly, intergenerational differences in perception between older and younger members of the community are explored.

Several consequences follow from the transfer of occupation from outside the community to within the town. Most economic activity during the fur trade period took place in the country, whereas nowadays the economic and social

activity of the community is confined to the town. Sedentarisation, then, has meant a significant change in the arena of both economic and social activity for the older Settlers and the bush arena, which represented the area of economic and special social activity for the trappers, has been lost to those whose occupations keep them within the town. This has resulted in a change in the patterns of social interaction between Settlers and Indians. Visiting, hospitality and commensality, which were characteristic of bush life, do not occur between Indians and Settlers in town.

The change in the economic arena has effected both the perceptions of the old trappers, and the perceptions of the younger community members. In their perceptions, the trappers refer to their former trapping lifestyle, whereas in the perceptions developed by the younger Settlers, who have seldom experienced the social relations which went with a trapping way of life, no such references are made. The change in perception due to sedentarisation, then, can be traced throughout the lifespan of the older members of the community (when they reflect upon the differences that they perceive between the Indians of today and the Indians they once knew in the country), and it can also be traced with reference to the generational differences in perception which are expressed by older members in contrast to younger members in the community.

The loss of the 'bush' environment as an arena for social interaction (between Settlers and Settlers, as well as between Indians and Settlers) represents one side of the change due to sedentarisation. The gaining of the town environment for social interaction represents the other side of the change. Sedentarisation for both Settlers and Indians has meant that both groups are in year-long social contact which is no longer based solely upon the pursuit of economic activities and the concomitant skills, which was the case in the country. In fact, the physical proximity of the two groups has resulted in an increased sense of separation between Indians and Settlers. The potential for inter-group tensions has increased now that both Indians and Settlers are sedentarised year-round. Rather than become a combined and heterogeneous community, the two groups have sought to retain and exacerbate their distinct cultural identities. In the context of the town environment, the physical separation of the two communities (Indian and Settler) by the river also became an important symbolic separation, and the building of the bridge has focussed attention on this symbolism. Whereas the possibility of conflict between these two distinct groups sharing an environment remained implicit in many of the country activities, the tensions have become much more overt within the town environment, and the bridge represents a breach in an otherwise safe boundary between the two groups.

In the conversation below, Alfred, the Downalong trapper who was introduced in the last section, reminisces about conversing in Innu Aimun[1] with the Indian friends he had in the past. Since both Settlers and Indians have become sedentary, he has lost contact with these friends:

> "I used to talk one time, years ago. But I can't talk to no one no more. It's different since they got..(settled)...I don't know. They seem to speak different or something. It's the same Indians, but there's some of them from Davis Inlet who speak quite a bit different - quite a lot different.[2] But I talked to the old people, and they spoke different. I mean, perhaps they spoke different because it was me, eh? Because I was talking to them. But I could sit down and talk to the old people very good, you know! Anyway, I've been away from them all. I don't know any now, just a few old people. Those young people across the river, I don't even know who they are! See them in the store, that's all. Chance one will come and speak to me that I know. Old people, I can talk to them. But there's a very few left. I speak to the older ones, not the younger ones. I don't mix with them very much, you know. I don't go over there. But the old people was awful friendly, you know. Awful friendly people. If I sees them, or anything like that, (they are) awful glad to see me. Still glad to meet me. I'm glad to meet them, too! Chance time a man might come to the house to see me. I was reared up and played with them, you know. Playing all day long, only had time to eat. Shooting with the bow and arrow, and football. Then baseball, had that an awful lot. It was different then. Plenty of fish and trout, salmon."

Alfred is translating the change between past and present forms of interaction that he has engaged in with Indians - previously, with Indians in the bush, and now, with Indians in the community - into the difficulty he has in speaking Innu Aimun with Indians in the present (in the community) compared with the ease he experienced in speaking

Innu Aimun in the past (with acquaintances in the bush). He rarely sees an Indian in the community today, whereas he played with them as a child and they were bush companions when he trapped. Thus, his perceptions of old Indians differ from his perception of young Indians, and his perceptions of Indians of the past are different to the perceptions he has of the Indians of today. If these differences are examined more closely, it is possible to trace them to a difference felt in the sharing of values to do with similar occupations. Oldtimers such as Alfred developed relationships with Indians who were using the same district of the country and, to some extent, the same resources, in order to earn a living at a time when hunting and trapping were the only occupations possible for a majority of people, as is shown in the chapter above. He "speaks to the older ones, not the younger ones" because the grounds for developing such a relationship no longer exist with the younger ones who do not, and never did, hunt in the country. His casual socialising with the "older ones" has, for him, an element of nostalgia in reminding him of his past as an active trapper.

The point that the oldtimers' perceptions of change are based on the perceived differences between old and young Indians is supported by the next conversation with an elderly woman. Elsie was married to a trapper, and lived at Pearl River for a number of years until she and her husband

and family moved to the Downalong district of North West River. She is now seventy-six and one of the community's renowned storytellers.

Each of the following pieces has as its theme the perceived change in the relationship between Indians and Settlers. The first section is a reminiscence of the past, in which Elsie describes a pattern she recognised in relationships between Settlers and Indians during her youth. This pattern involves the seasonal visiting of the Indians as they travelled between post and hunting grounds. Extolling the virtues of Indians as hard workers is inextricably linked with describing them as friends of the Settlers because it is equally part of the hunting and trapping lifestyle and a part which gained the respect of the Settlers as fellow toilers on the land. She also compares this past relationship with the absence of such a relationship in the present:

> "When I hears the people say that the Indians don't work hard, I have seen them work terrible hard, (those) who used to come over to our house, this is before I was married, with their loads of things, and carrying their children, and hauling their children. They'd be wet sometimes, half up to the waist. The poor women, and the man besides, used to work terrible hard. I know it because I saw it. And I really like the Indians, who are really nice people. And I still do, but I'm not used to Indians now like I used to be then. Once the Indians used to be my friends. And I still likes them yet. But I don't know how they gets along these days."

The next piece illustrates that visiting between Indi-

ans and Settlers seldom occurs in the community. Again, the distinction between the old Indians and the younger ones is made and it is with the old Indians that social contact, if any, is maintained:

> "They'd stop in. Well, I also said it was in my early days, you know. Early days I was talking about. Yes, but those later days I don't know nothing about those Indians, I never see them. But real often, there used to be a wonderful old lady, she used to come round and see me down there (Pearl River) and sew and do everything in the house and even have (some of) the supper cooked, and all that kind of thing. But I never sees that up here (North West River). Poor things, they're all dead. (I) don't know the younger ones.

The final piece gives Elsie's perception of the younger Indians, and the resultant lack of social contact between Settlers and Indians:

> "Then the government gives 'em help. Well, what a thing! Then all they have to go on drinking, and they bring a whole lot of beer. All this stuff from Goose Bay, just to give 'em a go. Sell for a big price. And all (of) them drunk. And, oh heavens! That's all I hears about them now and I don't even ask about them! But you could see them dressed up and ready to come across. They used to. Don't even see them now, I don't get over and see them anyway!

Elsie's description of the younger Indians emphasises the contrast which is perceived to exist between relations with the older Indians and relations with the younger ones. The relationship between Settlers and Indians in the country developed from a point of common interest in a lifestyle or occupation. This point of common interest is precisely what is missing in Elsie's description of the young Indians of

the present.

These segments of conversation from oldtimers in the community show that they perceive a change in the relationship between themselves and Indians which has occurred during their lifetime. The next few segments of conversation will attempt to show that generational differences in perception have also arisen as a result of sedentarisation.

The following conversation introduces a person from the generation below that of Alfred and Elsie. Rita is in her fifties and has spent most of her life working for the Grenfell Regional Health Authority as an auxiliary nursing aide. Her husband began his working life as a trapper but soon gave this up and has worked steadily in a series of government departments associated with the care and maintenance of Crown Lands. Here, Rita is talking about the visiting she engaged in as a child, and compares it to the lack of visiting done by present-day children in the community:

> "Oh! Gosh, yes! We'd go more them days than they would now. Glad to see the Indians! They were really good, eh? We'd go over a lot more than they do now! (They) used to sell deerskin shoes, and make things. whatever they had made, you know, snowshoes 'n' stuff, (they would sell). They weren't really our friends. They were more our father's friends, eh? They (Indians) trapped with my father, eh? That's all! So, old (Indian) trappers used to come down from their trapping grounds and come up along the lake where I was, you know. (They would) always come in, in the house, and have a cup of tea. They were pretty clean, them days. Much cleaner than what they are now. Well, some clean ones, some not so clean."

The conversation shows several things. Firstly, like many other Settlers of her generation, Rita mentions that the Indians visiting and being visited were friends of her father's and not of hers directly, so her reminiscences of visits between Settlers and Indians are from her childhood when the social contact was maintained by her father. Social contact by proxy (through parents), then, is considered by the children of oldtimers to be a form of relationship with the Indians, and so the social character of 'trapper' can be espoused by more people than just those who are trappers.

Secondly, the remark: "We'd go over a lot more than they do now" suggests that this form of social contact (by proxy) is one that does not exist in the present: 'We' (as youngsters) would visit a lot more than 'they' (the youngsters of today) visit. People of Rita's generation have some perception of Indians as friends through the contacts that their parents maintained. Such contacts by proxy do not exist for members of younger generations whose parents never had such social contact with Indians.

Rita is also describing visits she, as a child, paid the Indians who were camped across the river. During this part of her life Rita lived in Upalong with her family. She is recalling a period when Settlers from around the Hamilton Inlet region were moving to North West River, but the Indians were still nomadic and only visited North West River in

the summer. Visits were looked forward to as much because they were a form of entertainment for the Settlers as they were because the purchase of goods was anticipated.

A yet more striking cleavage in inter-generational perceptions is found when talking to the generation represented by Rita's children. This generation, which consists of the adolescents and school children of present-day North West River, has no memory of the social patterns of life in the country. The further separation of Indians and Settlers into the distinct communities of North West River and Sheshatshit occurred within the lifetime of this generation, and there are not even the old acquaintances of parents through which to remember the social interactions of the trapping way of life. Far from recollecting occasional summer visits to the Indians across the river, these children have a cognitive picture of separation between Indians and Settlers which certainly inhibits visiting. This sense of the separateness between Sheshatshit and North West River also preceded the division of the former community.[3] As the unknown territory of the neighbouring town, Sheshatshit is full of mystery and instils fear into the children of North West River, and I would often be teased about "getting lost" if I crossed into the unknown territory across the bridge.

The example cited below illustrates the absence of visiting between younger Settlers and Indians, and represents an interesting example of many similar instances

when the topic of visiting across the river was discussed. Early on a winter's evening, as I was on my way to pay a social visit to Indian friends living across the river, I was joined on my walk along the main road in North West River by a young Settler. Pam is a thirteen year old who lives in Upalong. We talked about the weather and the activities of the recently re-formed youth group in the community, of which Pam was a few months too young to become a member. She showed surprise and interest when she discovered that I planned to visit in Sheshatshit, and said that she would come with me. We resumed our talk of the youth group and other social events in the community until we reached the centre of town and then Pam asked me more questions about who I was visiting and why, asking whether I really intended to walk across the bridge and through Sheshatshit on my own in the dark. I replied by asking whether she was still interested in accompanying me, and she giggled and looked shocked. She said that she had no intention of crossing the bridge with me, and that she had never been on that side of the river anyway. As we approached the bridge, which is where we would take separate directions to reach Sheshatshit and Upalong, she attempted to persuade me to visit people in Upalong with her, as I have often done, rather than carry on across the bridge. When I responded by trying to persuade her to visit across the bridge with me instead of going on to visit in Upalong, Pam ran off into the bushes at the side of the road in order to hide,

shouting after her that she was too scared to even go near the bridge, let alone walk across it and into Sheshatshit. I continued across the bridge on my own.

There are several points to be made about this interaction. The bridge and the area around the bridge is a place fraught with meaning for most members of the community. There are many reasons for this. The bridge has meaning because it is the place of geographical contact with the neighbouring community of Sheshatshit which is otherwise cut off from North West River by water. However, the symbolism of the bridge will be discussed more fully below, and I shall return here to Pam's response to the idea of visiting in Sheshatshit. I want to make two points about this. Firstly, the idea of visiting with people in Sheshatshit, or with Indians at all, is alien to her. Secondly, the idea of visiting on the other side of the river is also threatening to her, not only because it is a visit to another neighbouring community with which there might be some sense of rivalry,[4] but because the bridge represents the breach in an otherwise 'secure' boundary between the two communities separated by the river. This is a reversal of the idea prevalent in the oldtimers' perceptions of the past: that visiting was the focus of Settler and Indian social interaction and was the main way of displaying hospitality.

In order to explain this striking change in perception more clearly, I shall turn to another example, taken from

the transcript of a discussion held at a meeting of the North West River United Church youth group. That the youth group is run under the auspices of the United Church is not particularly significant in the selection of young people attending the meetings, since membership is restricted solely by age as a criterion, (fourteen years to eighteen years of age). Likewise, the volunteers running the group are not members of the United Church; at the time under discussion they consisted of myself, two Mennonite missionaries and several Katimavik workers.

At the time of the discussion, the youth group comprised members from most sectors in the North West River community, mainly because it was a new and novel social event and so all the eligible youngsters in the community sought to attend meetings during this initial period of the club's operation. Also, there was no other form of social activity open to this age group in the community at the time, and outdoor activities were severely inhibited by the noisome January weather.

The meetings had developed a pattern whereby the beginning of the meeting consisted of organised activity of some sort, followed by a period of discussion on some theme. This was the procedure followed on this occasion. A formal, or planned, discussion took place on the theme of 'racism,' primarily because of my presence in the group.[5] The theme of racism was taken up by the Mennonite leader, who prepared a

set of questions to encourage the discussion of racism and neighbourly love. Although questions of any kind can act to inhibit a free discussion or shape the responses of participants, these questions posed initially to the group very soon became irrelevant, such was the strength of feeling about the subject of Indians.

The discussion period began with the leader reading out her questions one at a time and asking each member to write an immediate reaction to the question on a piece of paper. The group was then divided arbitrarily into four smaller groups in order to discuss everyone's responses to the questions. The groups then reconvened and a spokesperson for each of the smaller groups read out the joint responses of their group's discussion of the questions. Finally, a general discussion ensued concerning various aspects of different questions. The section of transcription below starts with the beginning of the general discussion:

Maria: Question: Name four ways of downplaying or eliminating racism, if you had such a problem in your community.
Danny: Use the same school![6]
Mary (leader): What would happen, the first couple of days, if everyone got together in the same school?
Ken and several others:[7] Everybody'd have a big fight! After a few days everybody would ignore them.
Others: Ignore them!
Mary: Why?
Several: Because we don't like them!
Mary: Why don't you like them?
Sheana: I don't know!
Danny: You guys (the girls) don't like 'em 'cause we don't like them!
Mary: Who would start the fight?
Ken: We would!

Darlene and several others: They would.
Ken: We don't know! It would develop.
Mary: It develops because, what? You hate each other?
Several: No....
John: We don't get along together.
Mary: Why don't you get along?
Bridget: Racism.
Darlene: Because they're Indians and we're not!
Several: Because they're different.
Mary: They're different?
Ken: And we're not!
Laughter.
John: They're different from us and we're different from them.
Lucy: My Mum told me not to play with them (tongue in cheek).[8]
Laughter.
Mary: So therefore you can't get along because you're different? Right?
John: Not really, we just don't want to get along.
Danny: Yeah, we'd get along if we wanted to!
Mary: So the problem, basically, is that you don't want to get along?
Ken and others: Right!
Darlene: You've got it!
Barry: They stick to their ways and we stick to ours.
Mary: So you can't mix because you're different?
Barry: No. We didn't say that. We can mix, but it's not much use.
Ken: We can mix if we want, but we don't want to!
Danny: We don't have no reason to.
Evie: Why is there no reason to mix?
Ken: What reasons are there?
Evie: Because you live in the same part of Labrador...
Ken: That's no reason!
Danny: But we don't belong to the same town.
Mary: You are neighbours.
John: But we don't live in the same town. We don't go to the same school...
Sheana: They are all across the river.
Danny: What reason do we have for going over there?
Ken: What reason do they have for coming over here?
Mary: What reason do you have for becoming the friend of anyone in this youth group?
Danny: I don't know!
Mary: Because it's kind of good to have friends, isn't it?
Several: Yeah!
Danny and others: Because we were brought up together!
Ken: Yeah! We were brought up together.
All: We were raised here. We were brought up here. They were raised over there.
Mary: Okay, you guys. Take this example: There is this

gorgeous girl who moves into town and she is nice!
Ken and boys: Wow! Hot, man!
Mary: She was raised, let's say England. She didn't have anything in common with you. She lived over there....
Several: She would live in this community, not across the river!
Danny: Let's hear the story!
Mary: Okay. She moved into this community and she had nothing in common with you except that she now lives in North West River and so do you. And the fact she's a gorgeous female....Are you going to get to know her?
Chorus from boys: Yeah!
Danny: But no one over there is gorgeous.
Ken: Yes they are! Still no reason to go over.
Mary: Okay, but you've just told me you can't get along with those over there because you've got nothing in common! You could get along with that gorgeous female!
Several: Yeah!
John: That's because you want to, there's something to get along for!
Danny: There's interest!
Ken: No!.....there's something you want!
Tim: No, there's a barrier between us.....like, eh...
Ken: The bridge!
Danny: There's a barrier between us.
Mary: What kind of barrier?
Barry: Hostilities!
Ken: Hostility through the ages!
Mary: So you guys are telling me that you have to stick to tradition all the time and if tradition is hostility, you're not going to change it?
Barry: No, not really. Not really....
Several: Not really.

The general argument running through the discussion soon becomes tautological, but, in relation to other discussions that the group has had, in which the usual response to discussion is slow, this discussion serves to show an extraordinary amount of hostile feeling. As the debate unfolds, it becomes obvious that Danny's remark about sharing schooling between the communities, made at the beginning of the discussion, was not made to be taken seriously. The im-

mediate response to the suggestion is that there would be a fight between Indian and Settler children, or that the Indians would be ignored by the Settlers. This does not come from the imaginations of the children, but rather, from the experience of seeing other attempts at cooperative activity between the groups dissolve into overt conflict.[9] The reason given for this response (to the suggestion of cooperation which would lead to a certain amount of socialising) is an unequivocal "we don't like them!" This theme is elaborated upon by arguments that the Indians are different, that the Settlers have no reason for developing friendships with Indians because they share nothing in common: "they stick to their ways and we stick to ours," "we don't live in the same town, we don't go to the same school," "we were brought up here and they were brought up across the river....." Finally, the children say that there are "barriers" to their making friends or socialising with Indians, and that these "barriers" are "hostilities through the ages."

It becomes apparent that there is a great deal of peer pressure being exerted by the group upon individual participants in the discussion. This gives rise to a 'team spirit,' and the formation of a 'team North West River' social character. The children are drawn into increasing statements of mutual support against the outsiders or other team, which, in this case, is represented by the Indians. Danny's statement that the girls are hostile towards the Indians be-

cause the boys in their peer group are hostile is an illustration of this pressure to conform. The 'team North West River' social character comes into play also in debates about Rigolet, a neighbouring Settler community which has been considered a rival of North West River since its inception during the pioneer period in the history of settlement in Hamilton Inlet. It is also espoused by adults in their discussions about North West River as a community in opposition to other communities in Labrador. Notably, Settlers engaging in discussions about the secession of Sheshatshit espouse the 'team North West River' social character in an attack on the decision taken by the Indian community, a decision which is seen as hostile to North West River.

A number of differing and pertinent points can be drawn from the general theme of the children's spiraling argument. Firstly, the perception that Indians are different has changed in this generation to one which excludes the idea of an interrelationship, and in fact it becomes the reason for the lack of contact. This was not the case with the oldtimers, since they sought to make use of the Indian skills which were different to their own. Indians and Settlers no longer share interests based on similar occupations or situations, however pervasive this similarity might be. Secondly, the territory of the town defines social space, but not in the way that trapping and hunting districts did. Settler children see the symbolism of the river as a

separating entity, and, as I have said, even before the division of North West River, they saw their community as separate from the Indian community across the river.

The site of the river crossing is a complex part of the community's geography. It is both the economic and social centre of the community, and the interface between North West River and Sheshatshit. It is one of the few places in North West River where Settlers are likely to meet with Indians. It is also the only place where Indians and Settlers are likely to meet outside the domain of either. Since the bridge was built, the ambiguity around this part of town has increased. People would often exchange pleasantries whilst waiting for the cable car, and before the advent of the cable car people used a ferrying system which required cooperation for sharing canoes; Settlers ferried people from the north bank south and Indians ferried people from the south bank north. The bridge requires neither cooperation nor the social contact which is likely to ensue from such cooperation, and so nowadays it is possible to pass people on the bridge and not acknowledge their presence at all. It is also interesting to note that the building of the bridge coincided with the secession of Sheshatshit from North West River. In the act of seceding, the inhabitants of Sheshatshit expressed a desire to be considered an independent community, thus dispensing with the need for the nominal communication between the two communities which was re-

quired when the two groups acted as one municipality. Similarly, having the bridge as a means by which to cross the river did away with the need for nominal communication.

In recent years, the bridge has been the site of 'rock fights' between the children of North West River and Sheshatshit. These short-lived skirmishes between Indian and Settler children occur in the summer, and Settler children have boasted of them to me on a number of different occasions. It is significant that the oldtimers recall from their childhood summer activities such as playing football and wrestling with Indian children. These activities, which also took place at the site on which the present bridge is built, have given way to rock fights in this generation.

The final point I wish to draw from the above transcription concerns the children's perception that the barrier they perceive between themselves and the Indians arises from "hostilities through the ages." This contradicts the memories of the old trappers who remember friendships made through extending and accepting hospitality in the bush environment. The significance of this contradiction is twofold, and it brings together the points made above. There is a marked difference between the social behaviours of people in the confines of the community and outside the community in the 'bush'. There is also a marked difference in perception which is related to occupational changes and to concurrent changes in the situation of the individual in re-

lation to the broader situational changes of the community and the role filled by that community in a wider context.

* * *

This chapter has attempted to explore the effects that sedentarisation has had on the development of social characters. Sedentarisation has changed the nature of Indian/Settler relations by changing the arena of social and economic activities from that of the bush to that of the town. Rather than providing greater opportunity for social interaction between Settlers and Indians, the year-round proximity brought about by the sedentarisation of both Settlers and Indians has caused a decline in social interactions, and the two groups have become more distant. The bridge has become a symbol of the change which has occurred with the transfer of economic and social activities from the country to the community.

The effect that the change in perceptions, which has resulted from sedentarisation, has had on the development of social character is three-fold. Firstly, those Settlers who trapped as an economic activity carry with them the perceptions that developed from the relationships that they maintained with Indians while they were trapping and hunting away from the town. These perceptions are no longer appropriate to the situation which has developed within the community, in which there is a lack of social interaction

between Settlers and Indians. In response to the change, the old trappers have developed a new set of perceptions of the young Indians who live in Sheshatshit, and the relationship that the old trappers have with these young Indians, and this new set of perceptions has become part of the social character of 'trapper.' Thus, as the old trappers have become detached from their past experiences in the role of economic trapper, so they have espoused the social character of 'trapper' in its stead.

Secondly, at the same time that the social character of 'trapper' has become detached from the economic role of the trapper through the transference of economic activities from trapping to the sedentary occupations of the town, the social character of the 'trapper' has become the property of Settlers other than those who were economic trappers. Those Settlers whose parents trapped claim the status of trapper by proxy, and these Settlers espouse the social character of 'trapper' by displaying an appreciation of trapping which they have gained from their parents. To a lesser extent, Settlers can also espouse the social character of 'trapper' by virtue of having had some trapping experience through their own recreational activities as trappers.

Thirdly, since occupations which have arisen within the community are of a different nature to those which occurred in the bush, the levels of social interaction possible between Settlers and Indians are also different. Younger

members of the community have different perceptions of Indian/Settler relations which have arisen from the different nature of social interaction between Settlers and Indians in town. Substantive social characters have yet to emerge from the experiences of the young community members, although peer pressure does have the effect of causing the youngsters to share two perceptions: 1) that the community of Sheshatshit is in opposition to their community, and 2) that the culture of the Indian residents of Sheshatshit is alien in comparison to their culture.

I have not fully analysed the paradox that increased physical proximity has increased social distance between the two groups, nor have I been able to explore the full meaning of the part that the bridge plays in this paradox. This paradox needs more attention at some future date. What I hope to have done is to have shown that the paradox exists, and that it has significantly altered Indian/Settler relations, and hence, Settlers' perceptions of Indian/Settler relations. The alterations in Indian/Settler relations and Settler perceptions thereof are reflected in the development of the social character of 'trapper,' as well as in the traits of the social characters which arise in opposition to the 'trapper' - namely the 'newcomer,' the youngsters' 'team North West River,' and social characters which pertain to the local elite, which will be explored in the next chapter. The different occupations which have arisen from the

transfer of economic activities from the country to the town are also an integral part of the change which has occurred in Settler perceptions of Indian/Settler relations, and the effect of these occupational changes will be discussed in the next chapter.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. Innu Aimun is the Cree/Montagnais/Naskapi dialect of the Algonkian language which is spoken by the Indian, or Innu, population of the Labrador peninsula.

2. There are three variants of Innu Aimun, one of which is spoken by the Indians of Davis Inlet. However, here Alfred is referring to the same group of Indians he recognises from his trapping days in the Mealy Mountains, and they speak the same variant of Innu Aimun as he remembers from the past.

3. In 1979 I collected maps by Settler and Indian children, drawn during geography classes held in their respective schools, as fieldwork data towards an undergraduate honours dissertation (Nin Ume Ntassi - This Land is My Land: Conflict Over Land Between Settlers and Indians in North West River, Labrador Unpublished Honours Dissertation: Oxford Polytechnic, 1980). The maps of the Settler children covered the north bank of the town, stopping at the river bank by the cable car shelter. Likewise, the maps drawn by Indian children showed only the south bank of the town, despite the fact that I asked them to draw the town of North West River, which at that time included both Sheshatshit and North West River.

4. Rivalry is an element of the relationship between neighbouring communities which can be separated from ethnicity. There is rivalry between North West River and the Settler community of Rigolet, its neighbour to the east.

5. At an earlier meeting, I had suggested the theme of ethnic relations as a possible topic for discussion. The term racism was substituted because nobody in the group had heard of the term 'ethnic relations.'

6. There was a trial period in which Indians attended Lake Melville High School, the high school attended by Settler children in North West River. The attempt at amalgamating the two groups for the purpose of schooling failed, and the reason given was that the Indian parents wanted their children to attend a Catholic school. However, from the comments of a few people who were part of the scheme, both Indians and Settlers, it would seem that the Indian children were never accepted by the Settler children.

7. I have put 'several' in cases where a similar response was given simultaneously by several people. When

counter statements were made by a group of others in the discussion, I have used 'others.'

8. Lucy's mother is Indian.

9. The example of the attempt at amalgamating the Indian and Settler schools is a case in point.

-Chapter Seven-

UPALONG-DOWNALONG: The effect of Differences in Occupation upon Social Organisation and the Formation of Social Characters in North West River

* * *

In this chapter, the pattern of residence within the town, which was explored in Chapter Three, becomes the starting point for the exploration of the community's segmentary nature, and the resulting social characters of 'Upalonger' and 'Downalonger.' To recapitulate, the present-day town of North West River is divided up into residential sections which represent groups of kin and, to some extent, reflect the earlier pattern of settlement found along the shores of Lake Melville. Land grants which were made originally to individual Settlers when they moved to North West River have since been divided up among their descendants, and the clusters of houses which occupy single land grants are often found to belong to brothers, sisters, parents, children and other relatives. Land grants have also been shared among families related through marriage, and adjacent plots of land often house people originally from neighbouring settlements along the Lake Melville shore. Residential areas in the community, then, have formed into enclaves of kin and networks of friends, although the inhabitants of North West River superficially form one community.

Where a community member lives can also become a measure of social status, since the formation of enclaves based on kinship has facilitated more than just the selective inheriting and sharing of land. Access to economic security and to prestigious occupations which confer status and power in the community are controlled and manipulated through kin-groups and networks, the development of which was described in Chapter Four. The kin-based system of patronage which ensued limited access to resources and opportunities to a few inhabitants, while others seldom profited.

Patronage, in the form of selective job opportunities, was at its peak while the International Grenfell Association was established in North West River. As we have seen, the International Grenfell Association began its operations by recruiting professional staff from abroad, and supplementing this staff with workers drawn from the communities in which it operated. The Association's patronage was attracted to certain families in these communities for a variety of reasons, and once members of the community were favoured by the International Grenfell Association, they were able to safeguard employment opportunities for themselves and their fellow kin-group members.

In its early days, the Mission in North West River was not solely the provider of various services, but was also the focus for many different forms of development in the

region. Grenfell entertained businessmen, explorers and the ambassadors of wealthy families in his attempts to develop Labrador. As a dynamic catalyst for development, the International Grenfell Association controlled interests in a number of activities, and so it wielded considerable influence. This meant that, even if jobs (and hence security), were not forthcoming with the Association itself, jobs elsewhere in the community were to be had with the backing of the Mission. Thus, nowadays, families which have members working for the International Grenfell Association seem also to have members involved in other prestigious activities in the community (for instance, the running of stores and government offices and other businesses).

The patronage system set up by the International Grenfell Association was responsible for the formation of underprivileged groups in the community as well as for the creation of an elite, which was (and still is) regularly supplemented by incoming professionals of various descriptions. Recently, the elite has become involved in political activities which entail the manipulation of Settler ethnic identity. As local politicians, the elite are trying to mobilise Settlers as 'Labradorians' in order to gain access to Federal Government programmes, whereas some of the less powerful groups have come to represent a more traditional Settler identity, such as 'trappers' and 'oldtimers,' which the local politicians wish to mobilise. Association with

the different parts of town has become integral with the evolution of these groups, the members of which are, in turn, vested with certain perceptions, and thus form a number of social characters.

Since hired staff of the International Grenfell Association and the Hudson's Bay Company were frequently given housing close to the centre of town on land which was granted to the Association and Company, many of the community's elite live here. The town expands from this central point, following the river bank upstream along the shore of Little Lake, to Upalong, and downstream along the edge of Lake Melville, to Downalong. Upalong is a relatively small section of the town, whereas Downalong can be divided into a number of residential areas. Some of these areas are less pertinent than others in the social structure of the community, yet most represent the hubs of kin-groups.

Of the residential sections in the community, Upalong and Downalong are the ones most frequently mentioned and, in terms of community social structure, Upalongers and Downalongers form mutually exclusive groups. As we have seen in Chapter Four, these kin-groups devolved from the family of one of the first pioneers to settle in Hamilton Inlet. Their devolution into separate kin-groups has facilitated the differentiation of past experiences between the two groups, and Upalongers have become the marked case.[1] It is among the Upalongers that the only marriages between Indians

and Settlers in North West River have taken place; two Indian women are married to Upalong men, and both families live in Upalong. Upalongers do not constitute a powerful group in the community; they have no representation on the town council or other political groups, nor are there entrepreneurs amongst them, except for one man who runs a small convenience store.

During the period of the fur trade Upalongers ran traplines at various points along the inland waterways of the Hamilton River and Grand Lake, and are frequently mentioned in the Hudson's Bay Company journals of the time. Many Upalong oldtimers are well-known for the trapping and prospecting exploits that they undertook when they were young men during the time of the fur trade and the development of the Labrador interior; stories of their renown have added a lot to the contemporary image of the trapping way of life. Of these oldtimers, a good number continued to trap at least part-time after the decline of trapping as the community's main economic activity, and have only stopped as a result of infirmity and old age. On the other hand, Upalongers, unlike other members of the community, have seldom found employment with the International Grenfell Association to supplement their bush-related incomes.

Downalongers entertain distinct perceptions about Upalongers. These perceptions are both positive and negative, and thus flexible to social advantage. In general terms,

Downalongers see Upalongers as people who know about the trapping way of life, who have woodsman skills and who have not completely made the transition from a trapping economy to wage labour, whereas both Downalongers and Upalongers see Downalongers as those who have made a transition from a trapping economy to a wage economy, and therefore have surrendered their knowledge of the land for more prestigious occupations with steady hours and a secure income. As will be seen below, Downalongers also see the traits which have devolved upon Upalongers as being intrinsically Indian traits. Thus, Downalongers see Upalongers as being culturally identifiable with Indians in some situations, and this is a perception which Upalongers reject.

Several things arise from the pattern of segregated identities discussed above. Upalongers in contemporary North West River are assumed, by Downalongers, to have a higher level of skills pertaining to the bush environment, and the former are frequently called upon by the latter for their perceived skills as woodsmen and knowledge of the bush environment. An example of this assumption was shown at a meeting of the Town Council which I attended during my stay. The Council had made plans for a 'make-work' project to be implemented during the following spring season, which involved cutting and clearing a track through part of the surrounding countryside to make cabins more accessible, and this was the main topic of the meeting. The availability of

certain Upalongers for the work became an integral part of the planning for this project. It was argued that these Upalongers were the best woodcutters in the community and, if the project was to be well executed, these woodcutters should be employed. It was not known when the Upalongers would be available to work on the project, and some thought was given to the problem of making the implementation of the project coincide with the availability of these workers.

A trapping lifestyle exists only for a handful of older community members who have never stopped trapping, and of these there are as many in Downalong as in Upalong. However, although they do not live in a trapping economy or experience trapping as a way of life, in possessing bush knowledge, Upalongers are seen by other Settlers as embodying a specifically Settler culture which is being lost. Thus, for other community members the Upalongers become representative of a colourful past, images of which are in the process of being mobilised in the symbolism of the present-day local politicians. (Them Days magazine is an example of the mobilisation of trapping images with the aim of strengthening Settler identity). They are, however, the bastions of a declining Settler culture not necessarily from choice, but rather because of the relative lack of job opportunities afforded them.

Their association with the land and land-based occupations link Upalongers not only to the trapping lifestyle of

the past but also to the nomadic and bush-oriented lifestyle of Indians. During my visits around the community, when I asked for information about trapping experiences and for stories about how trappers got along with Indians in the country, I was frequently redirected to an Upalonger. I was told by Downalongers that "they all speak Indian up there (in Upalong)" and had plenty of stories about the Indians. Community members who were, or who had been, employed as firefighters also explained to me that Indians made the best firefighters because (like Upalongers) they were good woodsmen and knew how to act in the bush, where to fell trees and the like, but that they were unreliable and not always available for work. These firefighters assumed that Indians were seldom recruited by the firefighting service because of this unreliability.[2] Comments like: "they can't seem to hold their drink" were repeatedly made by other community members about both Indians and certain Upalongers.

Upalongers, then, both augment traditional Settler cultural identity and threaten its integrity through their perceived shared identity with the Indians of today. The 'Indian-like' identity that Downalongers perceive Upalongers to possess becomes an ethnic identity within the broader Settler ethnic identity, and elements of the former can become stigmatised. In response, Upalongers attempt to draw themselves back into the broader Settler community by alternately rejecting the 'Indian' role attributed to them, and

by attempting to play it as a useful social strategy, as will be seen in Chapter Eight.

The distinction between Upalong and Downalong creates fertile ground for the formation of social characters in the community. Downalongers perceive Upalongers as having certain traits, and the Downalongers' espousal of perceptions about Upalongers has the effect of pushing the perceived Upalonger into the social character of 'Upalonger.' Thus, Upalongers can be periodically trapped in a social character by the perceptions of other community members. An example of this can be drawn from my fieldwork.

Shortly after Christmas, I was passing the community hall when people leaving after a dance attracted my attention. On entering the hall, I noticed that there had been fighting, some of which was still in progress when I entered the hall. An Indian couple were fighting in the porch of the hall, but they stopped as I approached and came into the hall with me. A Settler from the 'Eskimo End' of town was standing up with his shirt torn and his nose bleeding, waving a half empty beer bottle in the air. The bar license had been granted through the Lion's Club which had opened in the community just after North West River had separated from Sheshatshit, and a few of the Lion's Club committee members, a majority of whom were from Downalong, were escorting some Indians out. Troublesome Settlers from both Upalong and Downalong were being encouraged to leave by their friends

and family members, and there were general attempts to clear the hall. I noticed comparatively few fights occurring between Indians and Settlers at the dance. Most were between Settlers and Settlers, with a few between Indians and Indians.

People were standing round in groups amongst scattered chairs and tables littered with beer bottles. The groups mostly consisted of onlookers, with a few aggressors in some of the groups, and every now and then, a fight would flare up. I was standing with some Downalong friends and neighbours, with their relatives when a fight ensued between four women in our group. At first the fight was between two of the women, and the other two intercepted, taking sides, and then joined the fight. The women yelled at each other, three taking sides against the fourth. When the three began to physically attack the fourth, several others in the group pulled them apart by wrapping their arms round the women's torsos, pinning their arms to their sides, and lifting them away from each other. The intercepters this time were male friends of the women involved, and an Upalong woman who was not part of the group. The fighting women were addressed by their intercepters with comments such as: "Enough is enough", "stop being so bitchy", "calm down", "get on home and sleep it off".

A short distance away, I saw a fight between two Indian girls being intercepted by an old Upalong male whose voice

could not be heard above the noise. He was shortly joined by some of the Lion's Club members who were organisers of the dance. Between them, they lifted the girls from the floor, and put them out into the porch. This was no easy feat, as the girls, intent on finishing their fight, resisted and grabbed at anyone or anything to anchor themselves. Most of the comments made by the intercepters in this case were addressed to their fellow intercepters rather than to the aggressors:

> "Take them to the porch, Bill. Let's get them out of here!"

To the girls, they said very little except for comments like "Now, now!"

Another fight began between an Indian woman and an Upalong woman. This was intercepted by women relatives of the Settler, and all comments were addressed to her. The style of these comments was not uncommon in everyday interactions between the same people, only, in this situation they were said with more vehemence:

> "Ya blood of a bitch, cut it out will you! Stubborn whore, come on home!"

Later, when a group of Upalongers were leaving the hall, they found their way blocked by an Indian woman who had passed out in front of the door. One of the women in the group came forward and said:

"Excuse me! This is how you get out....walk right over, like the sidewalk!"

And she walked over the prostrate woman in order to get out.

I noticed a pattern emerging in the way that the fights had been managed, and two aspects of this pattern are pertinent to my analysis. Firstly, the fights were being intercepted by different people in different situations. Fights between Settlers were being intercepted by family members or friends, and fights between Indians, and between Indians and Settlers, were being intercepted either by Upalongers, or by the organisers of the dance. Secondly, the interactions between the intercepters and the aggressors varied according to the ethnicity of the fighters. While the intercepters spoke directly to the fighting Settlers, they did not do so to Indians. Language difference may provide part of the reason for this, but does not necessarily explain why comments about the Indians and addressed to other Settlers should be derogatory, as in the comment likening the Indian woman to a sidewalk.

The example cited above shows how Upalongers act when put in a situation which reinforces the perception of other community members that they possess a high degree of Indianness. The role of intercepter put these Upalongers in close contact with Indians and Settlers who were in conflict, and demanded that they mediate. They were seen as being well qualified to mediate because Upalongers are thought to share

some characteristics with Indians. The response of the intercepters was to diffuse the situation, both in the physical sense of being intercepter, and in re-establishing which side of the Settler/Indian boundary they were on. While the rest of the community expressed the feeling that the Upalong intercepters were closer to the community's perception of Indianness, the intercepters made sure that they expressed allegiance with the other Settlers in the situation, and not with the Indians. The intercepters communicated directly with Settlers, which they rarely did with Indians, and the comments addressed to the Settlers made them into allies. For example, the woman who left the hall solved the problem of the blocked door from the point of view of a Settler who wished to get out, rather than from the point of view of the prostrate Indian, who needed to be lifted out of the way.

The problem of showing allegiance to Settlers rather than to Indians becomes acute for the children of Indian/Settler marriages in Upalong. Two instances from my fieldwork illustrate this point. While gathering genealogical information about the community, I met with a group of North West River high school students who had collected their family trees for a class on local history. One of the students, whose mother was Indian, had chosen to compile only that portion of her family tree containing her Settler ancestry, thus rejecting her affiliation with Indians in

favour of her Settler identity among her Settler classmates. In addition, I discovered that the perpetrators of the 'rock fights' that occurred between Indian and Settler children[3] were the children from the mixed marriages, who chose to show their allegiance to Settler culture by throwing rocks at the Indian children coming across the bridge. It seems that the further removed a person becomes from direct association with Indians and Indianness, the easier it becomes to manage an ethnic identity which shares traits with Indians and Indianness.

Upalongers are caught by the perceptions of other Settlers in the social character of 'Upalonger.' They are the retainers of an ethnic identity rather than its brokers, and are thus not as able to manipulate certain cultural traits as are the brokers of the identity. As can be seen in the following excerpt from an interview I conducted, 'Indianness' is borne as a stigma by Upalongers, even though it is seen by others as part of Settler cultural identity:

Evie:

> You were telling me what you felt about being Metis?

Jerome:

> About being Indian or Eskimo? That's right! I always said that, and I told lots of them on the base about that - if they're going to call me Indian or Eskimo, treat me like one! I wouldn't have to pay no taxes, working for the American or Canadian government. And they call me Indian or

Eskimo! I said, if you treat me like one, you can call me anything you want to! That's true, that is!

Evie:

You mean that you'd have certain rights or privileges?

Jerome:

Yeah, well, I'm a white person! And I wants to be respected that way. If they call me Indian or Eskimo, they disqualify me down from my own to another grade, let's say. And if they're going to put me in that category, Okay! Don't charge me no tax, and I'll live with that as long as I live.

Evie:

You wouldn't mind that?

Jerome:

Not a damned bit, because I wouldn't have to pay no taxes! Whatever money I make, I wouldn't have to pay no tax! And who's going to grumble about paying no taxes? You? Eh?

Perceptions espoused by the community's elite are of a different nature. The elite are the politically active members of the community, and they are in the process of establishing a distinct Settler cultural identity in which Indians are seen as allies. They perceive themselves as belonging to a culture possessing an Indianness which is permitted as a result of their past cultural contact with Indians, and which is exclusive to Settlers as Labradorians, giving the Settler population legitimate rights in Labrador. The following extract from an interview I held with an

entrepreneur and one-time councilor in the community illustrates this point:

> "We did [have native status as a community] at one time...this was all native at one time. We were all natives - all the people of this area was natives. when it came to the government to collect taxes, then they turned around and said we were white Settlers. I think that a majority of people in this area - long time Settlers here - are partly native, and I feel that we do have some reason to have some part native status....."

Local politicians and entrepreneurs are more able to reject the stigma attached to Indianness because of their economically and politically secure positions in the community. As the brokers of ethnicity, therefore, they can choose when to espouse a traditional Settler identity because it is not, for them, stigmatised and it does not trap them into the same set of perceptions and responses as it does Upalongers.

The example given below shows how the social characters espoused by the local political elite shape their interactions with Indians and among themselves. It is again drawn from events taking place during a Christmas gathering, but this time the party took place in the Town Hall offices and was for all municipal workers and other users of the Town Hall building. As was no doubt anticipated, some guests became drunk and caused confrontational situations. The first of these was perpetrated by an Upalonger who, after persisting in his attentions to various women, was summarily

asked to leave, and escorted from the premises. This resolution of the situation was in contrast to the resolution of a similar situation involving an Indian woman, which occurred later.

I was sitting and talking with two Settler friends, when the woman, who was known to us all, approached us. Josephine was noticeably drunk, her movements were clumsy and her speech was impaired. She pointed to me and said:

"Hey, you! My friend. I want to talk to you!"

A Settler woman who was with me turned to Josephine, aggressively telling her to go away and not be so rude, because I was already involved in a conversation which she had interrupted. Josephine replied to this by addressing the three of us with the statement:

"I hate you!".

At this point, the other Settler, a man, recommenced with the conversation we had been engaged in previously, addressing me and the other Settler but ignoring the Indian, who left us after a little while.

I watched several interactions between this woman and other people. Her interactions were mainly with people with whom she was familiar, and they were invariably members of the Downalong elite and outsiders. She addressed them in a manner similar to which she had previously addressed my

group, reaffirming friendships and then declaring that whites hated Indians, and that the people whom she was addressing hated her. Their response was usually to reassure her that they were friends with her and did not hate her. During these interactions, I overheard several comments from bystanding Settlers, mostly Upalongers, to the effect that the Indian woman should be evicted from the party.

Later the party thinned out, leaving a small group composed of the organisers, who were drawn almost exclusively from the community's Downalong and outsider elite, and a few of their friends and acquaintances. By this time, Josephine's interactions had become more tense. She approached one Settler woman saying:

"You hate me!", and started to cry.

The woman she had approached took her to a quiet alcove in the hall and tried to pacify her by reaffirming friendship and assuring the woman that her problems were understood. The Indian woman was only briefly pacified by this and similar interactions.

Whilst these interactions were taking place, the remaining participants, including myself, had seated themselves in another alcove and were chatting about Labrador. We began a game, taking it in turns to ask obscure questions about Labrador, and debating various answers. The Indian

woman joined this group. By now, she was approaching people in a very aggressive manner, hitting the people she approached, and yelling at them at close range:

"I hate you, whites!"

The members of the group carried on with the game, even addressing the people who were being attacked by the Indian woman, as if nothing was happening. Eventually, a member of the remaining group lost his temper, and grabbed hold of the woman's wrists, shouting:

"Now that's enough!"

Immediately, the attention of the whole group was on the scene. The Indian woman stopped her rantings, and the angered person relaxed his hold on her wrists, telling her that she should go home and 'sleep it off.' Several offers to see her safely home ensued, and were discussed among the assembled group, culminating in someone driving her home. And so the evening ended.

The set of social interactions described above is quite different from the interactions encountered in the description of the dance, revealing that there are different perceptions at play. In this instance, the distance between Settlers and Indians is underplayed by the Settler participants. As local politicians and managers of ethnic identity, the Settlers perceive Indians as allies, and as the

administrators of social and medical and educational services, the Settlers perceive Indians as their wards and clients. In the social characters of 'ally,' 'guardian' and 'patron,' the Settlers in the situation can do very little to stop the disruption. However, when someone does attempt to confront Josephine with her disruptive behaviour, the other participants are anxious to see how the situation is handled. Although relief is felt when the situation is diffused, the loss of temper is not seen as an acceptable trait for the social characters espoused here. And so this method of handling the situation is soon dropped, and Josephine is extended the protective custody of her patrons and allies.

Social situations, then, bring about the espousal of social characters which are appropriate for the individual in a particular social context. The individual is, to some extent, trapped in these social characters by the expectations of fellow community members. Even so, the individual is still able to manipulate ethnic identity by responding selectively to social characters. Upalong Settlers are able to manipulate the 'Upalonger' social character to their advantage when the Indian qualities of Upalongers symbolise Settler identity, but they also have to maintain an ethnic distance from Indians when these same qualities become equated with the cultural traits of Indians. 'Downalongers,' on the other hand, strengthen their ethnic identity by empathising with Indians in the latters' role as a

politically active group, rather than by expressing shared cultural traits, and they do this by assuming the roles of patron and guardian towards Indians, who pose no threat to the Downalongers' social identity.

* * *

This chapter has dealt with two issues in the discussion of social characters. The first is the relative rigidity of certain social characters, and the second is the way in which elements of an identity can become stigmatised.

As social characters represent the different experiences of different sectors of the community, then not all elements of all social characters are universally shared by all Settlers. In the case of the 'Upalonger' social character, certain traits which compose that character are stigmatised by other Settlers, and the interchange of 'Upalonger' with other social characters often becomes defensive on the part of the stigmatised 'Upalonger.' The espousal of some social characters, therefore, is seen as less desirable than the espousal of other social characters. and all social characters are to some extent limiting in their ability to be manipulated, as can be seen by the traits of the 'Downalonger' social character.

The 'Upalonger' social character represents an ethnic identity within the more general and pervasive Settler ethnic identity. Elements of the Settler ethnic identity have

assumed negative connotations, but at the same time, these stigmatised elements also help to symbolise a traditional Settler lifestyle. The Settler lifestyle of trapping came about through a hybridisation of Indian, European and Inuit cultural traits, and it is this quality of shared cultural traits which simultaneously both threaten and bolster Settler ethnic identity. This is because Settler ethnic identity is being established in relation to the ethnic identity of Indians, who are the closest neighbours of North West River Settlers, and so Settler identity must be seen as significantly different from that of the Indians. North West River Settlers do not construct their ethnic identity in relation to the Inuit, and so the latter do not pose a threat to the management of Settler ethnic identity. As Kennedy (1982:106-7) has pointed out, the Settlers in other coastal Labrador communities, which are shared with Inuit, find it easier to coopt Indians as friends while maintaining social distance from the Inuit of their own communities, and I suggest that it is because these Settlers are constructing their ethnic identities in relation to the Inuit.

In this chapter the relationship between occupation, status, and social characters have been examined, and occupational differences, which represent relative social status in the community, have been translated into different social characters. The following chapter explores the ways in which social characters can be manipulated in a conversa-

tion, when the different participants wish to express their ethnic identity in relation to Indians in different ways.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. Because Upalongers form only a small section of the population, they are a more noticeable group than Downalongers, and Downalong values and perceptions are more widespread.

2. Zimmerly (1975:237-238) describes a similar phenomenon in his discussion of the impact of wage-labour on the trapping economy brought about by the construction of Goose Bay Airbase. He quotes Findlay from an article in Maclean's Magazine for June 1943: "Employment of Montagnais/Naskapi Indians was almost nil. 'The contractors tried to hire them to work without much success. They would work a couple of days and then drift away'..."

3. See previous chapter.

-Chapter Eight-
LEEMOS!:
Social Characters and Social Interaction in North West River

* * *

The intention of this chapter is to analyse a conversation between seven people in North West River, three of whom are major participants in the conversation and four of whom are peripheral. Through the analysis I wish to draw attention to several things. The social environment in present-day North West River creates an ambience in which different social characters come into existence in response to each other in different situations. In the course of the conversation, the three main participants each espouse several separate and contrasting social characters. Each social character comes into being in the context of the group, and also through the conversation and issues discussed in the conversation; and the different perceptions of Indians thus expressed show the fragmentedness of ethnicity in the social lives of the participants. Perceptions or cliches about Indians are taken up by the participants in response to the requirements of the social situation, and are manipulated in order to define and redefine ethnic differences between the Settlers and Indians.

Among the social characters taken up at different times by different participants in the conversation are 'Settler,'

'trapper,' 'oldtimer,' 'Upalonger,' 'Downalonger,' 'newcomer' and 'outsider.' Other social characters occur in other social situations, but the conversation here is typical of conversations held between the individuals represented, and typical of the social characters they normally espouse in this particular social setting. Conversation, as a medium for the exploration of social characters, has several merits. It is a passive means of interacting, and the espousal of social characters can be followed through the exchange of verbal clues and symbols. For the fieldworker armed with a tape recorder, such interaction offers the means to closely scrutinise and analyse data.

Two topical threads run through the conversation, and three debates form around these topics, unfolding in an 'ABA' arrangement as the discussion between the participants progresses. Each debate changes the parameters of the conversation, and the participants espouse different social characters as the relationship between the social characters changes. Influences of past economic activities become apparent in the perceptions espoused in the conversation, the most noticeable being that of trapping. The three debates focus in contrasting ways upon the boundary drawn between Settlers and Indians. One of the issues around which the debates focus concerns land claims, in which Indian claims exclude the Settlers and therefore put them in opposition to the Indians. In the first debate, the

Settlers perceive themselves to be disenfranchised by Indian land claims. The other issue, differences between Settler and Indian land use and harvesting practices, is taken up in the second debate. In this debate, Settlers define themselves in relation to Indians by using differences in land use and lifestyle, and in this case, Indians are needed as a 'sounding board' for Settler identity. In the final debate, the participants return to their position as opponents of the Indians through their opposition to the Indians' land claims, but in doing so, they draw upon their Inuit heritage, an allegiance which they consider gives them claim to native status, and through this, added claim to Labrador as their home (or territory).

The conversation takes place in the home of two of the participants over some beers on a weekday evening. I had asked to interview one of the hosts and had been invited to join them for a drink and carry out my interview at the same time; hence, I am one of the peripheral participants. The extract used below comes from the later part of the evening, after several beers have been consumed and spirits are high. By this time, too, the participants are less aware of the more formal aspects of the interview. The members of the group are all known to each other, and have various connections to the community of North West River. Of the three main participants, one, Jones, is a relative newcomer to the community, and two, Toby and Frank, are from long-

established North West River families. I am present as researcher, and of the remaining three, two , Alec and Mary, are related to Toby and the other, Sam, is friend and workmate of Jones and Toby.

Toby, the host, in his late thirties, is a Downalonger from a family who had been in the region for nearly two hundred years. His forebear had been a 'planter' and independent trader in Hamilton Inlet, his great-grandfather and grandfather had been trappers and his father a local entrepreneur. Toby works as a linesman for the province's hydro-electric company but also has access to traplines and cabins along Grand Lake which he makes use of at weekends and over holidays, and which he shares with other family members. His wife and brother are both present as minor participants, his brother, Alec, often echoing the sentiments of other participants. Alec is one of the local wildlife wardens, and as such is turned to occasionally for information about animal populations and the environment.

Frank, in his early forties, is also from a longstanding North West River family but, unlike Toby, he is an Upalonger. His forebear came out from Orkney just over a hundred years ago to work with the Hudson's Bay Company and was one of the first men to settle in North West River, on the Upalong bank. His great grandfather and grandfather were trappers with the Hudson's Bay Company, and his father still traps. Frank works full time as a fireman on the Goose Bay

Airbase, but also spends much of his spare time and his planned holidays trapping with his brother and father. As such, he can be said to have two occupations--that of fireman and that of trapper. As a bachelor, Frank often forms friendships with the incoming staff of the International Grenfell Association and other outsiders. He also has an interest in the history of the region and collects old books written about Labrador by various scientists and adventurers who have passed through the region in the past hundred years. This hobby is both fed by, and gives access to, the outsider elite that is forming in the community. He and Toby grew up together in North West River and are close friends.

Jones is in his late twenties. He grew up in North West River after his father moved to the region as a construction worker; thus he does not have the connections to North West River that Frank and Toby do, nor does he have 'trapper' or 'oldtimer' status. He works as a linesman with Toby and with Sam, a minor participant in the conversation, who is from a North West River family but who now lives in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and is paying a social call.

Jones: Who's claiming the land? I mean, nobody owns the land!

Sam: They [the Indians] only moved there! Jesus!

Jones: Whether it's white people or Indians, I don't think anybody owns the land. Land is land! I mean, whoever travels and uses it, eh? (Assent from the group).

Jones: But the fact is, I don't think anyone should cut in on somebody's territory who's been using [the land] there for such extent of time.

Toby: They didn't used to stay in one place. They were moving all over the frigging country, right? They can't go claiming something just because they've moved back to North West River - because they're settled here now! Because they were all over the place before. Spread out, see?

Jones: They were nomadic. That's the way they were, eh, boy?

Toby: Just because they settled here, why should they try to claim the land round North West River? 'Cause this was only their place for coming to get a piece of grub and sell a bit of fur, and they'd be off back in the country again.

Sam: If they were like they were, years and years ago, and still use the land, maybe I'd see a little bit of it. But not now! Because, Jesus Christ, they're flying in and.... Uh!, Oh Christ, they're not usin' the land!

Jones: They use the land less than the white man does....

Sam: .....using the land mostly for a holiday now!

Toby: You talk to the older guys, the real old guys, and they'd only see the Indians perhaps once a year - come and get some supplies, sell a bit of fur, and they were gone again. How can they claim the land round this area?

Evie: Well, they're not. They're claiming inland!

Sam: Yeah! They're claiming half of Labrador!

Jones: But how can they claim inland when there's a lot of Caucasian trappers been out there? Trapping for years and years and generations?

Evie: How many generations have they been there?

Jones: I don't know. Well, I couldn't give you an exact 'mount, but I'd say there's been about....oh! More than five generations!

Toby: I wouldn't know that one!

Evie: No! You don't span five generations! But, you know, they also flooded the best hunting area, didn't they?
(General assent).

Sam: For so many Indians, but not all the Indians. There were so many unaffected, you see.....

Frank: That was the Indians' main area - up around Michikamau! That was their .....

Jones: They also flooded Cowie's land....

Sam: That was their main stomping ground....

Frank: Yes, well. That was all Indian land. People just went up there and took it, in the nineteen hundreds. There wasn't a white man up there until nineteen hundred and something.

Sam: The people..... There was no problem with the Indians until they went up the 'Height of Land,' and then the trappers got into the Indians up there, but before that, they never.... they never....

Frank: They kept pushing the Indians back and back and back. And it was in the 1900s before any white man went up there trapping. Old Uncle Bob, and them. They were the first ones up there trapping. And Grandfather Mustard, and Uncle Bert, and three or four more. They were the first.

Evie: What did they find when they went up there?

Frank: Pardon?

Toby: Fur!

Evie: What did they find? That the Indians were hostile?

Frank: Well, eh. They only went up to make a new trapline, because the people were getting more plentiful and everyone claimed a piece of land, and they would just keep going, more and more, and...

Toby: Moving into the country. Yeah.

Frank: ... running out of land! That's all! They had to go further back.

Toby: To catch the furs, to make a living for the family, right! There was more people. That's all!

Evie: Yes, but how did this affect the Indians?

Frank: There wasn't a piece of land, maybe for sixty or seventy miles!

Evie: How would that affect the Indians if they were supposed to be hunting out there?

Jones: They were still doing the same as they were.

Evie: Still hunting?

Toby: Well! No! T'would affect the Indians somewhat, like Frank said. The Indians would probably move on to 'nother area.

Frank: Yep. And, like Alec said. They didn't retaliate that much, they retaliated a little, eh?

Alec: No, uh....

Evie: Like what did they do?

Frank: I think they cocked a gun 'n' that, they....

Alec: Burned somebody's tilt and that. It wasn't a big lot.

Sam: You're talking of going into Churchill Falls, and on beyond that, eh?

Frank: That was always a main trapping area, though, eh? That's the caribou main area, [the] herd area.....

Toby: Indians never trapped, see?

Evie: No?

Toby: They never ever trapped! Not proper! They catch a few skins - mink and beaver - and they'd walk down a fox rather than set a trap for it. Hit on a fresh track, and they'd walk 'im down in snowshoes, and they get 'im that way, eh? And then they'd get a few skins and come back in and trade 'un in for supplies and then they'd be gone again.

Evie: They would rather walk a fox down than trap it?

Toby: That's the way they done it!

Frank: And the same way with otters, that's the way they used to hunt otters a lot too. They'd get their feeding places, and know where they were going to be in the evening and that, eh? Like a little bit of water where they would come up and feed 'n' eat. They knew all those places, where the rapids were - under the ice, 'n' where the otter travels across. Otters and beavers 'n' that was their main animals...

Toby: Water animals, eh? They never go at cats or foxes - regards with traps, eh? Like a fox! I know! I talked with old Michel Pasteen, and he says they get a fresh track and they walk 'un down, eh? Or run 'im down, or whatever, eh? Then shoot 'un.

Frank: I don't see why Alec didn't run - or walk - that one down the other day, up Grand Lake! (Laughter).

Toby: That's what he told me, anyway! He's an old guy, he's still living yet, but I mean he used to salmon fish, well, living across the Bay and I was over there salmon fishing. I dunno how old I was. Eighteen, I s'pose, when I used to go up there. I stayed over there myself, camping, and I'd visit them, you know? Michel Pasteen!

Evie: They used to eat beaver meat?

Frank: Oh yes. They'd eat beaver, porcupine and caribou. That's what they nearly lived on, eh?

Jones: There's nothing wrong with beaver!

Frank: And they'd get a few skins of fur and then buy flour and other necessary foods.

Toby: That's what they were doing, eh? Just surviving, eh?

Jones: Living off the land, that's all the Indians used to do.

Evie: They can't do that from North West River, though, can they?

Sam: Well, they never used to live in North West River that long. They'd just come into town to pick up supplies and then go back in the country again, eh? Then they were back in their own country and doing their own thing on their own again, eh?

Sam: That's the difference.....

Jones: No one can live off the land now, anyway.....

Evie: Why not?

Toby: There's nobody really lives off the land, but there's white people who live off the land more than the Indians do, eh?

Jones: Because they can't. Can you imagine every person who wanted to go and trap, and hunt? Every man just go out together? I mean, not together but just go out and do it. Nobody would make anything! There's not enough land, I mean. No way! Okay, you've got guys here with traplines. That's good. Nobody's gonna interfere. Here, so far, it's good. Here. On the coast people don't respect traplines any more, but here they do.

Toby: But on the coast, Jones, they never had no big traplines. Nothing like that, either. They were living off of fish, selling cod and that was their main stability.

Jones: Let's put it this way, then! Let's say that everyone went out and trapped. And we had the same line as you did. Okay?

Toby: Okay!

Jones: And everybody went out and trapped like you did. And everybody went out and hunted the same damned thing. Now, do you think - honest opinion - could you make a living off o' your fucking traps and furs? What you haul in on trapline, could you make a living on that?

Toby: I'd be living up Grand Lake, somewhere by myself in my tilt, to make it through.

Jones: Would you do it, though?

Toby: Would I do it? No! I wouldn't do it, but you probably could.

Jones: Okay. You could, but that's YOU. And you got half of Grand Lake! Now, if everybody wanted to do that....!

Toby: Without a snowmobile.....

Jones: Just imagine if everybody wanted to do that. If everybody went up there and tried to do that. It would not be possible! Definitely not be possible! Blue (Toby) could go up there! He could make a living. Sure, he'd survive. But he wouldn't be a rich man. And he wouldn't be as well off as he is now!

Toby: I wouldn't have a snowmobile....

Jones: Yeah! He wouldn't be as well off as he is now! Like he said, he wouldn't have a snowmobile.

Toby: Might have a canoe or something for paddling round in the lake!

Jones: There you go, you see! It can't be done!

Toby: Evie, eh. You talked to a lot of Indians, I s'pose, eh?

Evie: Not much, this time!

Toby: Do they think they can live off the land?

Evie: I don't know any more. The last time I spoke to Indians about it was 1977....

Toby: What did they think then?

Evie: They thought they could, but I think they've changed their minds....

Jones: Well, I don't think they could. I don't think they could then. As far as I'm concerned, right here - Frank and Tobe trapping, and Alec - they're doing as good as anybody else. As good as anybody I know. And Frank, Frank is far ahead of anybody else when it comes to that, eh?

Evie: (to Frank) You reckon you could make a living, trapping?

Frank: Well, if you made a living, you'd have to go back in around the 'Height of Land' or something. Have all your equipment and everything and operate that way. Couple of fellers could make a lot of money.

Jones: To yourself?

Frank: Well, there's a bunch of them in there now - 25-30 trappers there...

Jones: Wouldn't it have to be to yourself. 25-30 trappers now, then?

Alec: No! No. Let's see, now. Last year, doing it part-time, you made a half decent wage!

Frank: We made $7000 in two months last year! And the last year, we made $30,000 doing it part-time! And there's thirty to forty trappers trapping the same area as we are! Exactly the same! There's three or four traps in the same area!

Jones: Now, let's say a bunch o' potential trappers would like to go trapping but can't, like myself! I'd like to go trapping - I'd love to trap, but I can't! I don't have nowhere to go, right? You just say, everybody like myself, who had the same feeling as myself, was to go in there. That would cut your territory down. Cut down everybody and next thing you know, you're down to about $1500 a year and...

Frank: I know! I know there's not room for everyone to trap. That's only simple! But it is possible to make a living off of it now, for a certain amount of people. The land can only do so many people, there's only so many skins of fur!

Jones: That's exactly true!

Evie: How many people do you reckon?

Frank: Oh! That's hard to say.....

Alec: You could never be able to tell. I mean, you could say - there's so many studies done....

Toby: And you don't know the price of fur.

Frank: The price of fur might drop.....

Toby: The price of fur might drop.... Like I was saying, a man in there with a cabin and a canoe would probably survive for the rest of his life - the price of fur would have to go down an awful lot to affect him.....

Sam: Like, in there there's mostly martin. Martin and fox...

Toby: It's life whether the price of fur goes up or down, eh? It would have to go down an awful lot to affect you if you were just living off the land, eh?

Frank: Like, you may as well say, like the Brauns down here, lives off the land all right!

Alec: Yep! They're the only ones left!

Sam: You take those guys, for example, and that's exactly what they done!

Toby: ...and they don't have snowmobiles....

Sam: They don't get a whole lot, either, you know. Trapping in winter and fishing in summer.....

Jones: As far as I'm concerned, the longer we hold on to this trapline situation, the better it is!

Evie: Why?

Jones: Let's for example say that Tobe Dunn owns a trapline right up to, just above Cape Caribou, on the north and south side. Okay, let's say that I go cut in there, and then somebody else goes cuts in there, and somebody else, and so on. Okay, you're talking about four ways now! You're talking a four-way cut on all the furs! But I think [that] as long as we hold on to the trapline situation [then] there's this person, he's got his trapline. Why should we invade it? Why should anyone invade it? That person has a trapline. It's his trapline through tradition! Not through law or nothing, but through tradition. But it is his....

Frank: The Indians owned it first!

Jones: Yeah, okay!

Toby: But do the Indians trap up there, though?

Sam: The Indians used to trap up there.....

Jones: But they were so nomadic, you didn't know where they were going to be next.....

Toby: But how can you prove they used to trap in Grand Lake?

Frank: Records say, Hudson's Bay Company records say that they were trapping right round here!

Toby: It does?

Frank: Oh yes.

Sam: But how much did the Indians trap? They only trapped a few water animals!

Frank: 'Twas only a couple of white men setting traps here first. It's only lately that the trapping got going. The white people started breaking off from the Hudson's Bay Company and started trapping - few traps here and there....

Toby: Yeah, but! The Indians only ever trapped water animals!

Frank: Yeah. But I mean that they trapped and used the land, and they'd get what they could and that.

Toby: Yeah, well they still do eh?

Frank: Even the old store manager here used to go up and force this feller out and that feller....

Jones: You don't believe everything you read, eh?

Frank: Well, the Hudson's Bay Company records are very good and straight!

Jones: Just like their prices and their evaluation of furs! I don't believe in the Hudson's Bay Company!

Evie: Yes, but it is obvious that the Indians were here first! I mean, you can't dispute that they were here first!

Jones: I don't know. I'm not really sure about that...

Evie: The Europeans that came here found Indians....

Toby: Maybe they were here, but I don't know about in their numbers....

Jones: Can you honestly say that?

Sam: I mean, you don't know how long they stayed here....

Evie: No, but they were here first....

Jones: They were nomadic!

Mary: How can you say that the Indians were here first?

Evie: Because the first white men here found Indians, and archaeological sites all over the place date them as being here before white people. I'm not an archaeologist, but there are sites....

Toby: Maybe they just passed through here?

Frank: But that's mostly what they did! They passed through everywhere, eh? They usually followed the caribou. That's where they were - they stayed round the caribou!

Jones: You can't expect them to come in and dirty some place up and then come back and try to claim it!

Sam: I don't think they should get anything from their land claims!

Jones: I don't, either!

Mary: Even if they were here first, I mean, God! We all got to live somewhere!

Jones: They come through and dirt [sic] this place up!

Sam: It would be all right if they were living the way they used to, but not the way they're living now! They don't deserve it!

Jones: They dirtied this place up....

Evie: They dirtied it up?

Jones: The Indians came through. They lived in this place until it got so bloody dirty that they moved on to the next. That's why they're nomadic, as far as I'm concerned! And I talked to a few older people and they told me - 'Well, this is where I came from.' They told me that they stayed in one place until it got so dirty that they just moved on.

Toby: You think they should get money, Evie?

Jones: I don't think they should get any money....!

Evie: I'm asking you guys. You live here, I don't!

Jones: But, there's a thing...you've got to think of another thing! Whether it's using the land or abusing the land.

Sam: If they were still using it, then I could see....

Frank: It's changing all the time, between the Indians. You can see it. Used to be a time when everyone.....oh, it's changed an awful lot. You can see it changing all the time. Even when we were little fellers. Used to know all the Indians by name and everything one time. Now I hardly know any of them.

Sam: Because there's so many!

Toby: Now they want to claim the whole of Labrador!

Alec: They've only just moved in in the last couple of years!

Jones: Yes, but what happens to us lot in the middle?

Mary: We came from the Eskimos for God's sake!

Evie: You should be Metis....

Frank: Everyone is Metis here....

Jones: That's what I put on my job application form - Registered Metis!

Toby: Jeese! I got Eskimo blood in me all over the place! We're half 'limeys' and half 'skeemos!'

Jones: S'true, yeah....'leemos!'
(Laughter).

Following the conversation through the contribution of any one participant produces an often chaotic and contradictory set of arguments. However, if the participants are seen as contributing fragments of

conversation which embody perceptions from several different but overlapping social characters, then the conversation gains an interesting form of coherence.

The continuum most noticeable at work in this conversation is that of the 'oldtimer' versus the 'newcomer.' Remember that 'oldtimers' are members of families whose roots in the community go back to the pioneer settlement of the region, in some cases as much as two hundred years, but more commonly back to the early days of the fur trade in the mid-nineteenth century. The 'trapper' social character is based upon the experiences of the older members of the community who worked as trappers towards the end of the fur trade in Labrador. Both characters share elements of a more general Settler identity, because many of the oldtimers were trappers and because the fur trade shaped a significant part of the community's past, making the trapping way of life seem particularly representative of Settler culture. Thus, 'oldtimers' and 'trappers' can be seen to overlap but not necessarily coincide. The term 'Settler' becomes an umbrella term which is used by older Settlers as well as non-Settlers for both 'oldtimer' and 'trapper,' and refers to those born in Labrador with some Inuit ancestry, but the term 'Labradorian' is used more frequently nowadays by Settlers when referring to themselves. The term 'Labradorian,' however, has interesting connotations, since it was initiated by

politically active community members who aimed to consolidate Settler identity for political reasons, and it does not necessarily indicate Inuit ancestry. Rather, the term implies an identity based upon place of residence, and it is therefore used by newcomers and certain outsiders as well as by Settlers. These characters - 'trapper,' 'oldtimer,' and 'Settler' - are placed in contrast to 'newcomers' and 'outsiders,' who also form part of the community. Although individuals are tied to particular sets of social characters in the context of the conversation, they are still capable of swinging between social characters, and they thereby maintain a fluid social identity.

Social characters come into existence in particular social settings, and in response to other social characters. Since social characters operate in juxtaposition to other social characters, the espousal of a social character and the concomitant range of perceptions by one participant draws other participants into the espousal of complementary or contradictory characters and perceptions. This can be seen in the conversation above, when Toby and Frank become Downalonger and Upalonger in relation to each other. The social characters represented in this conversation also display a 'nested,' or recursive interrelationship: Labradorians can be Settlers, Settlers can be oldtimers, and oldtimers can be Upalongers (but need not be). Each of

these overlapping characters, growing out of each other, are marked by changing perceptions.

The three main participants espouse a number of social characters which draw upon a reservoir of perceptions both complementary and contrastive. Jones is a newcomer who wants to be part of the Settler community. Throughout the conversation he swings between the social characters of newcomer, Settler and Labradorian, alternately drawing the others into social characters in opposition to him - as Settlers versus outsiders, as oldtimers versus newcomers and as trappers versus non-trappers - and then as allies (when he acts as a Settler in opposition to Indians, and as a disenfranchised Labradorian middleman versus other ethnic groups).

As an aspiring Settler, he begins the debate on land claims with a series of statements which co-opt the other Settlers into expressing resentment towards Indian land claims:

> Jones: Who's claiming the land? I mean nobody owns the land! Whether it's white people or Indians, I don't think anybody owns the land. Land is land! I mean, whoever travels and uses it, eh?
>
> Toby: Just because they settled here, why should they try to claim the land round North West River?
>
> Sam: Oh Christ, they're not using the land!

Later, as newcomer, Jones is excluded from the conversation

while Toby and Frank, as oldtimers and trappers, discuss the relative merits and differences between Indian and Settler harvesting practises. He then reintroduces the theme of trapline rights several times, explicitly as an outsider to trapping culture:

> Jones: Now, let's say a bunch o' potential trappers would like to go trapping but can't, like myself! I'd like to go trapping - I'd love to trap, but I can't! I don't have nowhere to go, right?

This allows Toby and Frank to expound on the trapping way of life, and show their knowledge and expertise in that area, specifically as trappers and oldtimers in contrast to a newcomer.

In the concluding debate, Jones finds a way of becoming focal in the conversation again, by changing from the social character of 'outsider' to the social character of the disenfranchised 'Labradorian' resident. In this guise he is able to draw the others into agreement with him.

The social characters Toby moves through in the course of the conversation include 'Settler,' 'trapper,' 'oldtimer,' 'Downalonger' and 'Labradorian.' He is at first drawn into Jones' tirade against Indian land claims, but then switches characters to join Frank as an 'oldtimer' and 'trapper,' leaving Jones as the naive 'newcomer' and non-trapper. As 'trappers' and 'oldtimers' discussing

harvesting practises, Toby and Frank develop their Settler identity by contrasting their Settler methods with Indian methods. Within this context of 'trappers' and 'oldtimers,' Toby and Frank become social characters in contrast to each other. Toby is a 'Downalonger.' He doesn't spend much of his time trapping, and tends to romanticize the trapping way of life as an 'oldtimer':

> Toby: I wouldn't have a snowmobile.....might have a canoe or something for paddling round in the lake!

This is in contrast to Frank, an 'Upalonger,' who traps as a secondary occupation and talks about the logistics of modern day trapping:

> Frank: Well, if you made a living, you'd have to go back in around the 'Height of Land' or something. Have all your equipment and everything and operate that way. Couple of fellers could make a lot of money.

'Upalongers' and 'Downalongers' form yet another continuum in North West River social life. Toby, as an 'oldtimer' reminiscing about salmon fishing as a young man, invokes the memory of his friendship with Michel Pasteen, an old Indian. This adds to his social character of 'trapper' and 'oldtimer,' and gives weight to his perceptions of Indians in response to the more detailed information Frank, the 'Upalonger,' offers:

Toby: Indians never trapped, see.....they'd walk down a fox rather than set a trap for it.....

Frank: And the same way with otters, that's the way they used to hunt otters a lot too. They'd get their feeding places, and know where they were going to be in the evening and that, eh? Like a little bit of water where they would come up and feed 'n' eat. They knew all those places, where the rapids were - under the ice, 'n' where the otter travels across. Otters and beavers 'n' that was their main animals...

Toby: Water animals, eh? They never go at cats or foxes.....I know! I talked with old Michel Pasteen...

Later in the discussion, Toby leaves his 'oldtimers' dialogue with Frank and again joins Jones, who is reintroducing the trapline rights argument, and he and Jones become 'Settlers' in opposition to Indian land claims:

Jones: ....That person has a trapline. It's his trapline through tradition! Not through law or nothing, but through tradition. But it is his....

Frank: The Indians owned it first!

Jones: Yeah, okay!

Toby: But do the Indians trap up there, though... ..how can you prove they used to trap in Grand Lake?

Frank: Records say, Hudson's Bay Company records say that they were trapping right round here!

Toby: It does?.....Yeah, but!.....

Finally, Toby teases Jones about his espousal of Metis identity, and they are both able to joke about their 'middle-men' situation in the politics of ethnicity.

Frank is the last of the main participants to join the

conversation, and begins by offering some historical information about Indian land use before the Settler trapping era got underway. His espoused social character of 'outsider,' with the concommitant perceptions of an historian in support of Indians is, in part, in response to my presence. It also reflects his interest in the history of the community and his friendship, through this interest, with the outsider-newcomer elite forming in the community.

He is soon drawn into conversation with Toby, however, in the character of 'oldtimer' with knowledge of Indian harvesting patterns. During this part of the conversation, Frank, in responding to Toby, reinforces their common identity as longstanding residents of North West River who experience an affinity with Indians. He and Toby both do this by displaying an understanding and appreciation of the differences between Indian and Settler harvesting patterns.

A little later on, Frank is drawn back into the conversation, this time as a 'trapper' who is seen by the others as relatively successful in the present-day situation. At first, he espouses the social character of the experienced Upalong trapper and is able to provide the others with accurate information about trapping conditions above the 'Height of Land,' where he traps. But he then uses the example of some well-known and respected old Downalongers who, in his opinion, actually live off the land as full-time trappers in contrast to himself, a part-time

trapper. Frank's use of the 'Downalongers' as an example of Settlers who trap is in contradiction to his 'Upalonger' social character, since 'Upalongers' are supposed to possess more bush skills than are 'Downalongers.' It illustrates Frank's ambivalence towards being the 'Upalonger.' On the one hand, he uses the character to augment his Settler trapper identity, while on the other hand, he backs away from his identification with it.

In response to Jones' reintroduction of the trapline debate, Frank switches back to his character of the 'outsider' historian. He states that the land belonged to the Indians before Settlers took it over for trapping, and he again offers information on land use, this time from a source (the Hudson's Bay Company records) which he has appreciated through his association with the incoming elite. This source of information is not readily recognised by the other participants, since it has currency in social situations to which they are seldom party. Later, in order to gain ground again as a Settler, Frank vehemently supports his fellow participants by agreeing with their analysis of Indians as nomadic, which lessens, in Settlers' eyes, their claim to the land around North West River.

Having established that there are a number of social characters at play throughout the conversation, I wish to examine what the fragmentary nature of social interaction in

North West River society has to say about ethnicity in the community.

The changes in conversational content and social characters cause significant changes in the participants' perceptions of Indians and Indian/Settler relations. As modern 'Settlers,' North West River inhabitants perceive the now-resident Indians as constituting a threat to the Settlers' access to land around the community:

> Jones: Who's claiming the land? I mean, nobody owns the land!
>
> Toby: They didn't used to stay in one place..... They can't go claiming something just because they've moved back to North West River.....
>
> Sam: If they were like they were, years and years ago, and still using the land, maybe I'd see a little bit of it. But not now!
>
> Jones: They use the land less than the white man does....
>
> Sam: Yeah! They're claiming half of Labrador!
>
> Jones: But how can they claim inland when there's a lot of Caucasian trappers been out there? Trapping for years and years and generations?

In these fragments of the conversation, the participants accept 'white man' and 'Caucasian' identity in contrast to the Indians. And yet, they use the same argument that Indians use in making land claims - that of long-term residence and of the importance of the environment as an integral part and expression of their culture.

As 'oldtimers' and 'trappers,' North West River inhabitants use Indians in several ways to support Settler

identity:

Toby: Indians never trapped, see.....not proper .....they'd walk [the animal] down in snowshoes, and they get 'im that way, eh?

Frank: And the same way with otters, that's the way they used to hunt otters a lot too..... I don't see why Alec didn't run - or walk - that one down the other day, up Grand Lake!

Toby uses his friendship with Michel Pasteen to give weight to his argument about Indian/Settler harvesting differences. The Indian 'Michel Pasteen' is different to those Indians criticised earlier for claiming land. In this case Toby finds it socially useful to claim personal knowledge of 'Indians,' whereas to claim friendship during the debate about land use and land claims was inappropriate. In calling upon an old friendship, or knowledge of Indians, Toby is stressing his 'oldtimer' Settler identity by showing how different, within a narrow range of land users and occupiers, Settlers are from Indians. Hence, 'Indians' become a resource for Settler identity maintenance. Similarly, Frank is able to joke about the differences between Indian and Settler practices when he 'wonders' why Alec was unable to catch himself a fox by simply spotting the animal's tracks. In both cases, Indians are seen as complementary to Settlers, and, in fact, are needed in order to form Settler identity.

More subtly, Toby, the Downalonger, and Frank, the

Upalonger, perceive Indians differently. Frank uses his Upalonger knowledge of Indian practices--details of their hunting methods - and explanations of how and why they hunt that way, whereas Toby uses an historically distant perception of Indians as bush companions, a perception which has grown out of a romanticisation of the trapping way of life. From Frank's point of view, Indians display a logic towards their environment and occupation which he, as a practising trapper, is able to appreciate. 'For Toby, the 'Indian' becomes part and parcel of a way of life which he does not practise, but which has nevertheless shaped part of his identity.

In the final debate, the conversation focusses upon yet another twist in Settlers' manipulation of identity. The distinction between Inuit and Indian is well known to the Settlers, and they are able to side with the Inuit when Indian land claims distance them from any affiliation with Indians.[2] In fact, their recognition of the ethnic distinction between Indians and Inuit creates an anomaly which enables them to juggle the two sides of their identity - as a group with some claim to nativeness through part Inuit ancestry, with a distinct culture, and as a group in opposition to the Indians with whom they share a similar adaptation and environment. This use of the situation, I suggest, can only be maintained while there is sufficient actual distance between Settlers and Inuit.[3] In other

contexts, both Indians and Inuit are comfortably joined together in Settler perceptions.

Through their perceptions of Indians, Settlers' perceptions of themselves fluctuate--from 'native Labradorian Settlers' (a threatened minority), to secure white, Canadians with a sense of history and destiny. Because of their particular situation in the Canadian arctic, as middlemen between indigenous native minorities and mainstream European Canadians, North West River Settlers can afford, or even need to have, a fluid ethnic identity. For them, ethnicity does not exist outside any particular social situation. No social character is more 'real' than another, and no ethnic identity is more 'true' to Settler identity than the one that emerges in any particular social context. Depending upon the social situation and the economic climate in which they find themselves, then, Settlers draw upon aspects of their identity and relationship with Indians as a resource, as a social expedient, and, indeed, as a 'native' game.

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. Interest in ethnic and political identity has grown over the last two decades in Labrador. The Settler elite are aiming to strengthen Settler identity by consolidating it.

2. Kennedy makes this point in reverse when he describes Settler responses to nearby Inuit as opposed to distant Indians. Makkovik Settlers define their ethnic identity in referrence to Inuit, and their distance from the local Inuit is sometimes contrasted with their friendship towards the more distant Indians (ibid;106-7).

3. Most Inuit live in neighbouring communities at some distance from North West River. Of the Inuit families living in North West River, two form mixed marriages between Settlers and Inuit. They are from the neighbouring community of Rigolet, and they migrate between their home community and North West River. However, one Inuit family remains from the 1959 resettlement of the northern communities (when three families were moved to North West River from Nutak.) This family speaks no English and is isolated from mainstream North West River society. An informant explained the disappearance of the other Inuit families who had been resettled in North West River: 'The poor souls didn't last long here. They all died because they could not get enough fresh seal meat this far inland'....! Most Inuit have settled on the coast, and therefore are not so noticeable as a culture to North West River Settlers.

-Chapter Nine-

CONCLUSION

* * *

In the introductory chapter at the beginning of this thesis, I outlined three points that I wished to make in the ensuing discussion of social characters. These were: 1) that ethnic identity is self-referential, 2) that changing social environments cause a fragmentation of social identity, and 3) that, given the fragmented nature of social identity, ethnicity becomes a resource to be manipulated in the creation and communication of social identities. The aim of the concluding chapter, then, is to address these points in the light of the discussions in the thesis.

I wish to make the following two points in addressing the first of the above statements. Firstly, the important criterion in ethnic identity is the <u>defining</u> of differences between groups, and not necessarily the <u>content</u> of those differences. And, secondly, the difference in identities between groups only becomes apparent when groups are in juxtaposition to each other. In this thesis, I have argued that Settler ethnic identity depends upon Settlers referring to Settler perceptions of Indian ethnic identity in order to extrapolate the differences by which they define themselves as Settlers.

The Settlers of North West River use cultural adaptations, which they have acquired over a period of 200 years, in their creation and management of a Settler ethnic identity in juxtaposition to Indians. The Settlers are the colonists of lands which do not belong to them as a special social group. Neither their language nor their religious practises separates them from mainstream Canadian life. In fact, they rest their claim to ethnic uniqueness, and thus, identity, upon a short-lived cultural hybridisation which gave rise to a distinctive lifestyle. And yet, they are able to create and maintain an ethnic identity by referring to the differences that they perceive between themselves and another group which has defined itself 'legitimately' (in the eyes of the Provincial and Federal Governments) as an ethnic group.

The hybrid nature of Settler ethnic identity is complicated by the fact that Settler identity is, in part, the acculturation of Indian cultural traits, while, at the same time, Settler identity defines itself in opposition to Indian ethnic identity. The contradiction in Settler ethnic identity is shown in the relationship between the social characters of 'Upalonger' and 'Downalonger' which is explored in Chapter Seven. The social character of 'Upalonger' forms an ethnic identity within the broader Settler ethnic identity because other Settlers see 'Upalongers' as sharing cultural traits with Indians. On the one hand,

these shared traits are expressive of Settler identity and on the other hand, they threaten its integrity as a distinct identity.

In his work on ethnic groups and boundaries, Barth (1969) postulates that ethnic interaction is much more noticeable and definable when it takes place at the perimeters of the group than within the group. In other words, maintenance of group identity requires the maintenance of a boundary between that group and other such groups, and it must be borne in mind that no such perimeters would exist if one group was not in proximity to another.

In North West River, sedentarisation - of the Settlers since 1944 and of the Indians in 1961 - has meant that Settlers and Indians are now in year-round proximity of each other, and, as can be seen from Chapter Six, this proximity has caused a change in Settler perceptions of Indians. Since sedentarisation, there has been a substantial rise in the ethnic and political consciousness of both groups. The Naskapi/Montagnais Innu Association (NMIA) was formed in 1975, and the Settlers are in the process of forming a Metis Association. Thus, for my purposes, ethnicity is the social and political outcome of diverse historical experience.

I will turn to the development of social characters for a discussion of the second point stated above, that changing social environments cause the fragmentation of social iden-

tity. I wish to say three things about the development of social characters, all of which bear upon the fragmentation of Settler identity. Firstly, social characters develop in response to past experiences of certain Settlers, and they are, in turn, used to express contemporary identities. Secondly, because social characters emerge in response to the particular past experiences of certain Settlers, they cannot represent the experience of every Settler. Therefore, some social characters are less manipulable than others, and limit the fluidity of certain Settlers' identities. And, thirdly, the fragmentation of social experience is also reflected in the recursive nature of social characters.

Each of the later chapters, while exploring the formation of social characters in the community, also brings to light a theoretical complication in the development of the idea of social characters. Chapter Five follows the evolution of the social character of 'trapper' from the economic activity of trapping and the reality of the trapping lifestyle. It is difficult to isolate the point at which the social character emerges from the economic reality of trapping because the ingredients of the social character of trapper are drawn from the past experiences of the Settlers who pursued trapping as a career. Moreover, the trappers are themselves embedded in the idea of the 'trapper,' which no longer exists as an economic role, and so they are also espousing the social character that they have helped to

create through their own reminiscences.

Chapter Six shows that social characters are espoused by those who have not directly experienced trapping as a way of life. As soon as the idea of the 'trapper' is taken up by community members as a valid expression of social identity, then the social character is created out of the historical reality. Also, once it is removed from its historical context and becomes a social expedient, the development and progress of the social character is no longer in the control of the Settlers who have provided the ingredients of the character through their experiences. The traits are selected as much by those using the social character as by those who provide the ingredients. The extent to which the social character of 'trapper' is espousable by non-trappers bears directly upon the problem posed in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven reveals the extent to which social characters are not freely exchangeable between individuals. The social characters of Upalonger and Downalonger are limited in their applicability in that they are not appropriate social characters for all Settlers. Upalongers cannot become Downalongers, nor can Downalongers become Upalongers, but the idea of social character includes the possibility of certain social characters being non-exchangeable. Certain social characters have the quality of limited accessibility because they evolve from experiences which are unevenly distributed throughout the Settler population. If the traits

expressed through a social character were universally shared, then there would be no function for the social character, and it would not evolve as something to be espoused. And because social characters, at their moment of separation from historical reality, slip from the control of those whose experiences they express, they can take on negative, as well as positive, attributes.

The final problem, which is related to the questions posed above, and which comes to light in Chapter Eight, is that social characters proliferate. Within the fragmented historical experiences of the community of North West River lies the possibility that multiple social characters may be created, and these are not necessarily separate from each other. In fact, many of the social characters are recursive, with smaller, or lesser, social characters evolving out of the larger coalitions of experiences represented by other social characters, much like a Russian doll. For instance, 'Settler' can be considered to be the generic social character of the North West River population, out of which all other social characters flow. Thus, 'Labradorians' can be 'Settlers,' 'Settlers' can be 'Downalongers,' 'Downalongers' can be 'trappers,' and 'trappers' can be 'oldtimers.' At each level, the social character has distinguishing characteristics, but, at the same time, it cannot exist separately from other social characters. Thus, 'Settlers' can be oldtimers, but an 'oldtimer' is a

'Settler.' For the same reason, it is difficult to analyse the boundaries between individual social characters, since social characters often spill over into one another, and are often espoused in tandem. So far, social characters have displayed the extent to which Settler identity has become fragmented by the changes that Settlers have experienced in the past. However, in developing the idea of social characters, certain problems have been posed, and these remain unsolved.

The third and final point stated in the introductory chapter was that, given the fragmented nature of social identity, ethnicity becomes a resource to be manipulated. As can be seen in Chapter Eight, Settlers are continually in the process of constructing and disbanding social identities. Since Indian culture and identity are both formative, through acculturated traits, and referential, through the comparison of differences, then Settler perceptions of Indians are prominent in Settler social interactions. Settlers use their perceptions of Indians to create and manipulate Settler identities in order to strengthen and define their perceptions of themselves. Thus, Toby finds an old Indian friend that he can refer to in his conversation about trapping, and this perception of Indians as fellow woodsmen builds upon Toby's self-image as a 'trapper' and 'oldtimer.' But, equally, Indians can be perceived as a threat to Settler identity, as when Toby and Jones discuss Indian land

claims. Ethnicity, then, becomes a resource for Settlers in the management of their own identity, both among themselves and in a wider context.

Ethnic identity emerges, then, as a political and social resource because it occurs in reference to another ethnic group. From within the morass of possible identities, North West River Settlers have to construct and maintain a distinctive ethnic identity. For them, the 'native game' involves retaining sufficient distinctiveness to maintain individual and communal identity but also expressing enough affiliation with Indians to qualify for some kind of native status in the eyes of the outside world.

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