LORD SELKIRK'S BALDOON EXPERIMENT

by

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INTRODUCTION

The defeat of the Jacobite supporters in Scotland at the battle of Culloden, 1745, brought about the disintegration of the traditional clan system. Prior to 1745, the importance of a chieftain was measured by the number of fighting men at his command. With the loss of the chieftains' power at Culloden the primary function of the clansmen as fighting men ceased to exist. Their value to the head of the clan became secondary to the revenue he could obtain from leasing of the land. The clansmen's presence in such great numbers now exceeded the capacity of the small crofts to support them. In addition, as the chieftains turned to large scale sheep farming, the power of the land to support people declined further. Unfortunately, "once the chiefs lost their powers, many of them lost also any parental interest in their clansmen."[1] The Highland Clearances began.

During a tour of the Highlands in 1792, Thomas Douglas concluded that emigration was the solution to the economic and social upheaval ensuing from the Highland Clearances. A government policy to support emigration could achieve two highly favourable results: the opportunity for a new start in life for those with seemingly no future, and the strengthening of the British Empire by the settlement of these people in British colonies.

Unfortunately, the views of Thomas Douglas, who became the fifth Earl of Selkirk in 1799, were not fully shared by the government;

however, after years of patient negotiation approval was finally secured. Three experiments in colonization in Canada followed, the first being on Prince Edward Island, soon followed by the settlement in the Canadian Northwest.

On Selkirk's death at the town of Pau, France, in 1820, the future of the Red River colony was still in doubt, the experiment at Baldoon, in his view, a failure with only the colony of Prince Edward Island having brought him satisfaction.[2]

The ultimate success of his settlement at Red River is well known; his Upper Canada venture, however, has been viewed only as a failure by historians. Selkirk's experiment at colonization at Baldoon must be measured in terms of the failure of the settlement as a site and the ultimate success of the settlers who remained in the area. Through perseverance, determination and courage, these people achieved personal success and they and their descendants contributed greatly to the development of one of the finest farming areas in eastern North America - south Lambton and north Kent.

CHAPTER 1

SCOTTISH BACKGROUND

In order to appreciate the interest of Selkirk in America something must be known of the family background. Thomas Douglas, fifth Earl of Selkirk, Baron Daer and Shortcleugh, was born the seventh son of the fourth Earl of Selkirk at Kirkcudbrightshire, St. Mary's Isle, Scotland, in 1771. The line of succession to the earldom appeared secure and young Thomas never thought of eventually succeeding to that high office.

Closely knit, proud of their heritage and attentive to one another's needs and aspirations, the Douglas family followed with pride the progress of each member. It is not, therefore, surprising that the sons reflected the political views of the father. Dunbar Hamilton (Douglas), fourth Earl of Selkirk, stood firmly in the camp of the Whigs and was one of the leaders of the resistance to the King's List and a strong supporter of Parliamentary reform.[1] During his youth, Thomas shared his father's political views and, during a trip through the Highlands in 1792, wrote to him with great enthusiasm that "he had the honour of watching a parade in Dundee to burn Mr. Dundas in effigy for opposing the reform of the Scottish boroughs."[2] He eventually became disenchanted with liberalism as a political force as he outlined in a letter made public in 1809,[3] but as a member

of a family which had expressed great sympathy for the American Colonists in their struggle for liberty, he not surprisingly enthusiastically supported the cause to force "the acceptance of Scotland's demands for Parliamentary reform."[4]

The Church, the Army or the Law, during the eighteenth century, were the socially acceptable careers open to sons of the aristocracy and the Douglas family proved no exception since several of the boys elected careers in the Army and the youngest, Thomas, a career in Law. He entered the University of Edinburgh at the age of fifteen and together with Walter Scott attended classes taught by Dugald Stewart, the great "moral" philosopher. The intense and lively discussions which were a natural part of Stewart's lectures undoubtedly influenced Selkirk's personal philosophy of life. His concern for the plight of the Irish and Scots was indeed genuine. Later travels through Ireland and Scotland convinced him that emigration was the only solution to the existing poverty and through his various emigration projects he gave much needed assistance to those with seemingly no future.

Scott, Selkirk and Francis Jeffery, who later became a founding member and eventually editor of the Edinburgh Review, together with sixteen other young gentlemen, formed a society called "The Club" which met in Carrubers Close off High Street.[5] "The regeneration of the world and of society was the natural aim of these high-born youths in their irrepressible stage."[6] Learned discussion graced their table, followed by more convivial conversation at a nearby inn. Thomas finished his university training with two years

of law under David Hume; however, unlike many of his fellow club members he discontinued his studies before earning his law degree.

Selkirk was extremely sensitive, reserved and timid, a fact of which he was not unaware and wished to change. "I am", he wrote, "in company without making one of the company. Can I hope that time will cure me of this ridiculous timidity?"[7] Although possessed of a cold personality which served to protect him in social situations, he was not a man to be taken advantage of, but one who once possessed of an idea carried it through to its conclusion. Of Selkirk, Scott wrote in 1819, "I never knew in my life a man of more generous and disinterested disposition, or one whose talents and perseverance were better qualified to bring great and national schemes to conclusion."[8]

Summers meant for Selkirk a return to St. Mary's Isle and interesting trips into the surrounding countryside. Unlike most he did not simply pass through an area, he experienced it. He made notes on everything that interested him and his interests ranged from the sketching of old castles to the making of detailed notes on the geological structure of the land.[9] An innocent looking farm soon became a thick notebook of the farm's operation: crops, costs, size of buildings, soil and proper land utilisation. Through the purchase of a small farm from his father, Thomas put his theories on farming into practice. It was not long before the farm became "the wonder of the countryside and the local inhabitants took great pleasure in pointing out a field that young Tom Douglas had broken to the plough, driving the clumsy instrument himself."[10] The practical, combined

with the theoretical, ensured a high degree of expertise on farming and farming methods. Selkirk's diary, covering the years 1803-04, an account of his travels in North America, is an excellent testimony to his expert knowledge of the many facets of agriculture. Wherever he visited, notes were made on the raising of crops, the price of grain, the quality of the soil and, indeed, any economic activity: ship-building, lumbering, distilling, fell before his scrutinising eye.[11] As Patrick White pointed out in his introduction to Lord Selkirk's Diary, "The result in one sense is the production of a diary which could serve as a handbook on colonisation."[12]

In 1792, Selkirk made an extensive tour through the Highlands of Scotland with a Mr. Gilmour for he was "strongly excited by the representations he had heard of the ancient state of society" and of "the striking peculiarity of manners still remaining" among the Highlanders.[13] A notebook always at hand, he gathered extensive information about living conditions and from this material he wrote his Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland with a View of the Causes and Probable Consequences of Emigration. The Edinburgh Review of October 1805 wrote:

> It is a book which will by no means perish with the local prejudices which it was designed to remove. It has other claims to a permanent reputation and utility. Not only will it preserve a better picture, than has been drawn by any other hand, of a peculiar state of society and manners, highly interesting to historians; but it forms a large contribution to the theory of political economy, of most satisfactory deductions and general conclusions.14

and further:

> As having cast light on one of the most intricate parts of the science of Economy, that in which the theory of wealth and the theory of population are examined in connexion.15

Selkirk recognized the significance of the economic and social changes brought about in Highland society after the Battle of Culloden, 1745. Before Culloden, the clan system was pyramidal in structure with the bottom stratum composed of cotters and the apex crowned by a chieftain. The power of the chief lay in the number of men he could bring into battle rather than in the general prosperity of his clansmen or his personal wealth. The value of landed property, in effect, was measured not by the rent money it produced but rather by the number of fighting men who could be sent into the field.[16] The chief who possessed extensive territories granted large farms to younger members of his family or to trusted officers. The tacksmen, as they were called, were primarily those who commanded in the military operations of the clan and, as such, had little interest in the pursuit of agriculture, leasing their land to sub-tenants who held their soil "from year to year on the suffrance and goodwill of the tacksmen."[17] The insecurity of the sub-tenant was a guarantee that he and his sons could be brought into the clan regiment.[18] The cotters who formed the bottom stratum were usually landless men who from birth to death were servants. They were the blacksmiths, tailors, herdsmen, axemen and bowmen, who in return for a "little grazing for a cow on the township pasture, a kail-yard and a potato patch by his round stone hut ... paid a lifetime of service to the sub-tenant."[19] It was for the cotters that Selkirk held the greatest sympathy and they were to form the majority of the Baldoon settlers.

The Battle of Culloden changed forever the social structure of the Highlands. The chief, having lost by Act of Parliament the power of 'pit and gallows' over the Clan, slowly realized that he was

now a landlord not a warlord, and that he needed paying tenants not officers.[20] Lord Selkirk described the chiefs as:

> Being reduced to the situation of any other proprietors, but they were not long in discovering that to subsist a numerous train of dependants was not the only way in which their estates could be rend red of value; that the rents they received were far below those given for lands of equal quality in other parts of the kingdom.21

Although many chieftains, out of habit or genuine concern for their clansmen, endeavoured to carry on under the old feudal system, change was inevitable. Gradually younger men, more removed from the older order, and enterprising outsiders who secured control and were less sympathetic to traditional concepts began to exact an increase of rent. Eventually the introduction of the Cheviot Sheep, which required a great deal of land for grazing and yet limited supervision, led to wholesale removal of large numbers of tenants, many of whom emigrated. The astute Selkirk quickly realized:

> That emigration was an unavoidable result of the general state of the country, arising from causes above all control and in itself of essential consequence to the tranquility and permanent welfare of the kingdom.22

So much for the general conditions in Scotland which resulted in large scale emigration. Something must be said of the local conditions in those areas from which the fifteen Baldoon families (excluding Angus McDonald of Glasgow) migrated, specifically the County of Argyll, and, more particularly, the Isles of Mull and Tirie. Selkirk in his Observations wrote:

> The Western Coast and Isles are subject to such excessive rains, that a crop of grainscan scarcely be secured without damage, or at least not without great expense, difficulty and uncertainty. Under these circumstances, the farmer will certainly find it for his advantage to keep the greatest part of h s arable land in pasture: and, though the tending of cattle may require rather more labour than that of sheep, yet grazing of any kind, when managed with economy, can afford employment to very few people in c mparison with the numbers hitherto maintained under the old system of the Highlands.23

In the early 1790's, Sir John Sinclair compiled statistics on the population of the Highlands and reports sent to him by the parish ministers of Mull and Tirie agree with Selkirk's view of the conditions in those areas.

The Reverend Archibald McColl, in his report for the Isle of Tirie, which formed part of the Lordship of the Isles administered by the McLeans as representatives of the McDonalds, stated that, although no one had as yet emigrated from Tirie to America, "some folk talk of doing so".[24] McColl explained further "that crop failures in 1790 and 1791 together with the low price of kelp and cattle had caused considerable hardship and that many of them would soon have to go elsewhere unless manufacture be introduced to give them employment."[25]

The reports from the Isle of Mull which also belonged to the Lordship of the Isles were even more critical. The Rev. Archibald McArthur of the parish of Kilninian reported that conditions were so poor, that unless something drastic were done by those in charge there would be little hope for any increase in prosperity or population, but rather the reverse would occur.[26] He went on to report that so many of their people were poor that the list of those who were recipients of public charity was never under seventy and in some years was between ninety and one hundred.[27]

The Rev. Dugal Campbell, reporting on conditions in the parish of Kilfinchen and Kilviceuen, Isle of Mull, stated that a number of families had emigrated to America and that several families had left in 1792 to seek employment in the cotton work of the Low Country.[28]

The general wage scale for the cotters on the Isles was as follows:

A man servant a year from £3 to £4.10.0d.; exclusive of what shoes he required; a maidservant had somewhat less than half of these wages; a day-labourer could not be had for under 6d. a day and his victuals or from 10d. to 1/3d. a day without.[29]

These figures contrast significantly with those earned in Canada. John McDougall, one of the Baldoon settlers, writing home from Upper Canada in 1806 stated:

There is good encouragement for tradesmen in this Country, viz. Carpenters, Blacksmiths and Shoemakers, they have two dolars per day and their victuals - labouring men has from 1 dolars and 12 Shillings per day.[30]

However, he does not give any indication of the relative purchasing power of the two rates shown.

In 1792, Selkirk did not possess the financial support to carry into effect any hopes he might have had to relieve the distress he found in Scotland; however, through a series of tragic events, Thomas, the seventh son, became in 1799 the fifth Earl of Selkirk and, as such, a man of sufficient wealth and influence to carry out a scheme of migration and planned settlement.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. John Prebble, The Highland Clearances (London 1963), preface.
2. John Gray, Lord Selkirk of Red River (Toronto 1963), p. 328.

CHAPTER ONE

1. John Gray, Lord Selkird of Red River (Toronto, 1963), p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 11.
3. The Earl wrote and had published, A Letter Addressed to John Cartwright, Esq. In this letter Selkirk endeavoured to put forth his views on further parliamentary reform. Although a Whig, the excesses of the French Revolution and a growing disillusionment with the practical implementation of the democratic theory of the United States caused him to switch his political allegiance to the Tories, "a political adventurer, raised to power by popular favour, is fully as likely to abuse that power, as is the purchaser of a rotten borough." Ibid., pp. 54-5.
4. Ibid., p. 13.
5. George Bryce, The Life of Lord Selkirk (Toronto, 1913), p. 12.
6. Ibid., p.12.
7. Gray, op. cit., p.13.
8. Bryce, op. cit., p. 86.
9. Gray, op. cit., p. 7.
10. Ibid., p. 15.
11. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 ed. Patrick White (Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1958), p. xxix.
12. Ibid., p. xxix.
13. Selkirk, Observations On the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland With a View of The Causes and Probable Consequences of Emigration (Edinburgh, 1806), p. 2.
14. The Edinburgh Review or Critical Journal, Oct. 1805 - Jan. 1806 (Edinburgh, 1806), p. 2.
15. Ibid., p. 202.
16. Selkirk, op. cit., p. 15.

17. John Prebble, The Highland Clearances (London, 1963), p. 21.

18. Ibid., p. 21.

19. Ibid., p. 21.

20. Ibid., p. 20.

21. Selkirk, op. cit., pp. 23-4

22. Ibid., p. 2.

23. Ibid., p. 36.

24. John Sinclair, The Statistical Account of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1794), Vol. 10, p. 416.

25. Ibid., p. 416

26. John Sinclair, op. cit., Vol. 14, p. 155.

27. Ibid., p. 149.

28. Ibid., p. 191.

29. Ibid., pp. 151-2.

30. John McDougald to Hugh McDougald, 29th April 1806; Selkirk Papers, Public Archives of Canada. M.G. 19, E.1, Vol. 55, pp. 14739-40. All Selkirk Papers used in this thesis are in the Public Archives of Canada.

CHAPTER II

GOVERNMENT OBSTRUCTION

Selkirk's first proposal concerning emigration was on behalf of the Irish, and not his fellow Scotsmen, as their plight had come to national attention as the result of the rebellion of 1798. After a tour of Ireland in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the situation, he drew up a memorial entitled A Proposal Tending to the Permanent Security of Ireland.[1] Although his motives were undoubtedly humanitarian, he endeavoured to mask this altruistic attitude by the more practical presentation that His Majesty's Government could rid itself of the more rebellious Irishmen who would undoubtedly be the leaders in any revolt, as well as see the last of those whose very poverty made them easy prey to those who would incite them to violence.[2] Louisiana was Selkirk's proposed location for the settlement since it was an extremely important communication route and had a most hospitable climate. However, France possessed Louisiana and Napoleon ultimately sold the Tract to the United States. Selkirk thus turned his attention to the Red River area.

It is quite possible that the exploits of Alexander MacKenzie, whose Voyages, printed in 1801, contained an account of his exploration of the Northern and Western portions of North America, drew this part of the country to Selkirk's attention.[3] Although Lord Selkirk never

fully dropped his plans for the Red River, he was induced to search elsewhere since Lord Pelham, the Secretary of State, vetoed the idea, being opposed to emigration especially Irish "en masse", and not wanting, for political reasons, to interfere with the Hudson's Bay Company.[4]

On the 11th January, 1802, Selkirk met with Hobart, the Colonial Secretary, to discuss various emigration programmes. Hobart, like Pelham before him, was not sympathetic to Selkirk's Red River proposal; however, he was not unsympathetic to colonisation and informed Selkirk that he would give every consideration to a request for land in Prince Edward Island.[5] Selkirk still favoured an inland settlement as opposed to a maritime one. Therefore, on the 6th July, 1802, in a letter to Hobart, he requested a grant of land in Upper Canada at St. Mary's Falls and, in order to meet part of his expenses, a grant "also of the mines and minerals"[6] he might discover along the north shores of Lakes Superior and Huron. Selkirk indicated in his letter a willingness to undertake the settlement of Prince Edward Island, if the conditions of the grant were reasonable, in conjunction with his proposal concerning St. Mary's. He argued that:

> By possessing these different grants in connection I could devote to them more of my time and attention than I could afford to either separately and should therefore, hope to render them more beneficial both to myself and the public.[7]

Hobart, in his reply of the 30th July, 1802, indicated that the Government would not be able to grant any special consideration and that if Selkirk wished to pursue his settlement plans for Upper Canada any further, he would have to meet the general regulations regarding the granting of waste lands.[8] In effect, he was telling

Selkirk he would not receive the additional grant of mines and minerals to help meet his costs. However, Hobart went on to explain that:

> If upon this explanation, your Lordship should think the subject deserving your further consideration, and will do me the honor to inform me what number of Persons you may calculate upon being able to engage as Settlers under your direction, I will take His Majesty's pleasure for sending the necessary directions to the Governor of Upper Canada, to afford the most favorable consideration which his General Instructions will admit to your Lordships application; and I shall have great pleasure in giving every facility in my power to the furtherance of your Lordships views.[9]

The Colonial Secretary also felt that the Government of Canada would "probably object to the introduction of a large number of Irish settlers at the commencement"[10] and it was his advice that Selkirk should engage either Scottish or German families.

Selkirk was happy with the reply and, in his letter of 21st August, 1802, enthusiastically agreed to Lord Hobart's suggestion that he bring out people "more tractable than the Irish"[11] as he could secure a sufficient number of Scots who were at that very moment about to emigrate. He was most anxious, however, to see the terms of the grant changed as he believed that certain local circumstances existed at St. Mary's which deemed it not unreasonable that "some modification should be made on the usual terms of His Majesty's American Grants"[12] and in his letter of the 21st August, 1802, he endeavoured to justify his earlier proposal. The strait, he argued, was the only means of communication between the eastern provinces and the western territory, other than through the United States, and provided also for the passage of valuable fur trade. The strategic importance of this area could not therefore be overlooked by His Majesty's Government and must be secured before control of the strait passed to the Americans.[13] Selkirk con-

tended that, as the area was extremely remote and the land less fertile and hospitable than the more southerly parts of the province, it would require "extraordinary encouragement"[14] to attract settlers. Consequently, he requested the grant of mineral rights in compensation for the extra expense incurred in offering more favourable terms to attract the necessary settlers.

As he received no reply to his letter of the 21st August and a subsequent letter of the 30th November, he cautioned the Government in a letter of the 25th January, 1803, that since it was necessary to make immediate preparations for those settlers already assembled and since he did not possess the purse to meet all the expenses he had incurred, he could turn the immediate debts into a profitable account through "a purchase in the western territory of the United States".[15] He maintained, however, that "little short of absolute necessity would make me think of this resource".[16]

On the 1st February, 1803, Selkirk made a separate proposal to the Rt. Hon. Henry Addington in which he asked for permission to settle those already recruited on "the unappropriated lands in that portion of Upper Canada south west of Lake Simcoe and Yonge Street."[17] However, Selkirk included in his request concessions beyond the usual terms of the grant of waste lands. Addington discussed the proposal with Lord Hobart who eventually replied on the 12th February, 1803, in a letter to Selkirk indicating that the Government was in no position to initiate any action on the scale Selkirk had requested. However:

> If with such encouragement as the general regulations mentioned in my last letter to your Lordship of the 30th June last will admit, you should be inclined to make the attempt upon a more limited scale I shall feel extremely disposed to extend that encouragement as far as it can be done without a total deviation from the principal which has hitherto been acted upon.[18]

Earlier historians of the Baldoon settlement have not fully explained the move from St. Mary's. Four important developments led to this sudden change in location. Firstly, the North West Company viewed a proposed settlement at St. Mary's as an intrusion into their traditional trading area.[19] A second and ultimately the most important factor was the reaction of the settlers to the site. They were completely ignorant of the geography of Canada; however, upon payment of their initial instalment they became acquainted with its location and insisted on a less isolated region, one close to their fellow countrymen, who had emigrated earlier.[20] The report of Richard Savage, Selkirk's agent in Upper Canada, on the conditions at St. Mary's provided a third reason for a change of location. The climate, he reported, was inhospitable and the soil of poor quality compared to other areas of Upper Canada.[21]

Finally, "The Highland Society", alarmed at the increasing number of emigrating Scots, exerted considerable political pressure upon the Government which in turn cautioned Selkirk to find means of attracting emigrants to Canada without encouraging the spirit of emigration.[22] The proposed settlement at St. Mary's would have required considerable financial expenditure which the Government now felt even more reluctant to dispense.[23] Thus Selkirk believed that the selection of a more hospitable area which could be privately supported by himself was indicated. He therefore suggested lands south west of Lake Simcoe and Yonge Street in Upper Canada.

In further discussions between Selkirk, Hobart and Mr. Sullivan, Hobart's intermediary, it became evident that the Government preferred an initial settlement at Prince Edward Island. As time was of the essence,

since he had already recruited settlers for Upper Canada, Selkirk agreed to settle these people on the Island. In the introduction to his Observations, he wrote:

> I was given to understand, however, that it would be more satisfactory to Government, if the people I had engaged were settled in a maritime situation, instead of that I had at first in contemplation. For reasons, which I may perhaps have occasion hereafter to lay before the public, I was by no means satisfied that this suggestion was founded in just views of national policy. Nevertheless, I thought it my duty, under all the circumstances of the case, to acquiesce and determined on making my settlement in the Island of St. John (now called Prince Edward's) in the Gulph of St. Lawrence.[24]

Selkirk received, subsequent to his proposal to settle at Prince Edward Island, the opportunity to locate, at some future date, a settlement in Upper Canada on the terms suggested by Hobart in his letters of the 12th February 1803, and June 30th, 1802. Hobart wrote on 28th February, 1803, to Lieutenant-General Hunter, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, signifying that it was "His Majesty's Pleasure to grant, in the usual and subject to the customary regulations to Lord Selkirk a grant of any township not already appropriated which he may prefer".[25] In July 1803, 800 of the settlers originally intended for Upper Canada and accompanied by Selkirk, sailed for Prince Edward Island.[26] Selkirk took advantage of the time in Prince Edward Island to visit various parts of the United States and Canada. He left the Island on the 17th September, 1803, with two purposes in mind. One was the examination of land which he had purchased earlier in the Genessee area of northern New York and eventually sold, and the other was the organisation of his projected settlement in Upper Canada.[27] Despite the fact that his efforts in the summer of 1803 were "directed towards the colonisation of Prince Edward Island, he did not lose sight of his plan for a settlement in Upper Canada."[28]

During the summer of 1802, Selkirk had directed his agent, Richard Savage to purchase up to 1,000 sheep in the eastern United States and to have them ready to take to Upper Canada.[29] William Burn, an experienced sheep farmer, was chosen as his farm manager and Alexander Brown, a fellow Scotsman, was hired to assist Burn with the care of the sheep. Burn arrived in New York on the 10th December, 1802, and wintered at White Creek.[30] Selkirk in a letter of the 16th June, 1803, instructed Burn to visit the country between Niagara and Detroit.

> I have an order from the King for a grant in that quarter of any township I shall choose and therefore I wish you to take a general view of the Country before my arrival to give me a guess of the best situations.[31]

Selkirk arrived at York on the 20th November, 1803, and remained there until 4th January, 1804.[32] It was during his stay at York that he decided to establish his settlement in the North West portion of Dover township.[33] Since he did not yet have access to Burn's report, this decision was undoubtedly reached on the basis of his conversation the previous fall with Father Burke of Halifax, and his several meetings with the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Lieutenant-General Hunter, together with his many visits to the Surveyor General's office in York where he had diligently studied the maps of the LaTranche and River St. Clair areas.[34]

It has been argued that Selkirk selected Baldoon "for geographical considerations of national strategy and therefore stands open to the charge of settling areas with an eye to the map rather than to the markets for colonial produce."[35] There is no doubt that

one of the major considerations, albeit not the only one, for the selection of Baldoon was that of national strategy. During his stay at Halifax in the fall of 1803, Selkirk had met with Father Burke, a Roman Catholic clergyman, and the ensuing discussion dealt with the possibility of establishing a settlement in Upper Canada. Father Burke regretted the fact that Selkirk had induced his people to settle on Prince Edward Island for Burke viewed Upper Canada "both as a better country and one of importance to be secured to Great Britain by a colony of Europeans - avert to the danger of being settled by Yankees - as also the necessity of securing the Passes at Detroit and R. St. Clair to preserve the trade to the upper country."[36]

Selkirk concurred with Burke's assessment of the importance of the south western region of Upper Canada and informed Burke that his original plan was to establish a settlement in that area, but he had been induced by His Majesty's Government to transfer his settlers to Prince Edward Island.[37] The following day, Selkirk and Burke spent two or three hours poring over a map of Upper Canada and Selkirk mentioned that he preferred a location where there was more room to spread "in which view R. St. Clair or LaTranche was preferable," and "where a settlement could be formed and kept distinct from the Yankees, unmixed and not hemmed in - with the object of keeping up their national distinction shoudl be studied, to prevent their imbibing the principles and dispositions of Yankees, which would otherwise pervade the whole country."[38]

Lieutenant-General Hunter with whom Selkirk had several meetings while at York, undoubtedly agreed with Selkirk's selection

from a purely military point of view as he was keenly aware of the military importance of the region. On the 23rd April, 1802, General Hunter had received a manuscript from Gother Mann, Colonel Commanding, Royal Engineers, Quebec, entitled Some General Obervations on the Boundary between the British Provinces of Canada and New Brunswick and the United States.[39] In this report, Colonel Mann mentioned the military importance of the area and, specifically, of several of the islands between Lakes Erie and Huron.[40] Hunter was greatly impressed and forwarded the manuscript to Edward Thornton, Esq., Secretary of Legation from the Court of Great Britain to the United States of America at Washington, with a description of the report as "being the best information upon that subject which I have yet been able to obtain."[41]

Although Selkirk was fully cognisant of the settlement's strategic importance, a further consideration and undoubtedly of equal importance was that of securing land which would enable his settlement to prosper. His extensive knowledge of soils and land utilisation made it emphatically clear that the rich soil of Dover township and the excellent water transportation routes available would greatly increase the settlement's chances of success. The tract of land he selected was open, which meant that little clearing would be necessary andthe lush grasses would provide excellent fodder for his sheep. In a letter to Burn in June 1803, when he asked his farm manager to visit "the country between that (Niagara) and Detroit",[42] he wanted information on the area in order that he could make the best selection of land and he mentioned that he had already been told that "there is

much land therabouts, naturally clear of wood and good pasture which must be of great conveniency."[43]

The motto of the Douglas Family, "Firmior quo Paratior" - The Firmer as the More Prepared [44] - was prophetically apt for Thomas Douglas. Decisions for Thomas were made only after careful deliberation of substantive evidence and it is therefore not surprising that Selkirk strongly favoured planned as opposed to random settlement. During his tour of 1803-04, nothing connected with settlement escaped his notice or his pen. Motivated by a strong desire to ensure the success of his colonizing theories, he issued detailed instructions to McDonell, his newly appointed farm manager, on the settlement's operation. These instructions, contained in McDonell's notebook, cover a ide range of activity, from the employment of the indenture system to the raising and marketing of sheep and cattle.

The indenture system was employed by Selkirk as land was so plentiful and cheap that in order to attract settlers land would have to be offered at excessively low prices. However, the low prices would be extremely attractive to people from the United States and these he considered to be of the worst type.[45] Land-hungry labourers from Europe would undoubtedly indenture themselves for the opportunity of being brought to Canada if a farm of their own were eventually procured at the end of their indenture.[46] Selkirk realised that this system offered many disadvantages as some would work with such ill will that their labour would be of little value, and also that many of those indentured would desert.[47] This Selkirk blamed on the lack of formal ties as most indentured people were single. He hoped to overcome

this disadvantage by bringing out indentured families. He also introduced an incentive programme where allowance would be made for work done beyond a fixed amount and the settlers would be allowed to share in the produce of their labour. Additional land might also be granted to parents of young indentured men if the children served faithfully, thus committing the family unit even more to the settlement.[48] The Home Farm was to be the centre of the settlement, and the work of the indentured on this farm was expected to produce a profit which would thus reimburse Selkirk for his expenses.

Sheep were to be the staple upon which the farm would flourish. Selkirk anticipated eventually wintering 10,000 to 15,000 and saw the possibility of employing the system used in Spain where sheep were sent from one part of the country to another for winter and summer pasture.[49] This would require more land than Selkirk possessed and he therefore engaged in negotiations with the hope of obtaining more land further west, in what is now the state of Michigan.[50] The breed of sheep was extremely important and Selkirk imported Spanish rams. The market for the wool produced was to be found in Albany, New England, Kentucky, Pittsburgh and Lower Canada.[51]

Cattle were to be wintered on the coarse grasses with a dairy herd of approximately twenty and the milk to be applied entirely to the making of cheese and butter.[52] It was also his hope to purchase one hundred cattle annually to fatten for market purposes.[53] A small number of horses were also to be raised, both for market purposes and as beasts of burden.

The usual species of crops were required for the support of the people employed on the farm, for the wintering of stock and for the supply of the first settlers. Mixed farming, however, was not to be a staple. A distillery was to be established on an experimental basis as well as the growing of hemp and rape seed.[54]

The proposed settlement appeared destined for full development since the site apparently offered the necessary environment conducive to exploitation. Through planned settlement based on family indenture, Selkirk believed he could minimize hardships and trouble, and assure the settlement's success. However, nature was to provide the one insurmountable obstacle.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER TWO

1. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 ed. Patrick White, (Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1958), p. xii.

2. Ibid., p. xii.

3. Ibid., p. xiv, footnote 3.

4. Pelham to Selkirk, 27th May 1802; Q. 293, pp. 167 ff. Quoted in J. R. Pritchett, The Red River Valley, 1811-1849, A Regional Study, p. 28. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 p. xv.

5. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 p. xv.

6. Selkirk to Hobart, 6th July 1802; Selkirk Papers Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 19, E. 1, Vol. 52, p. 13840.

7. Ibid., pp. 13840-41.

8. "I am under the necessity of acquainting your Lordship, that the Extent of the Grants of Waste Lands must be regulated by the number of Settlers which it may be undertaken to establish upon them, allowing Twelve hundred acres for the Principal of the undertaking and 200 acres for each Settler or follower; and that the Governor and Council of the Province regulate upon the Spot, according to a General & Established Rule, the nature and situation of the Grants and the conditions & Reservations to which they are subject." Hobart to Selkirk, 30th July 1802; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, pp. 13851-2.

9. Ibid., p. 13852.

10. Ibid., p. 13852.

11. Selkirk to Hobart, 21st August 1802; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, p. 13843.

12. Ibid., p. 13842.

13. Ibid., pp. 13842-3.

14. Ibid., p. 13843.

15. Selkirk to Hobart, 25th January 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, pp. 13847-8.

16. Ibid., p. 13848.

17. Selkirk to Addington, 1st February 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, pp. 13854-55.

18. Hobart to Selkirk, 12th February 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, p. 13849.

19. Fred Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon (Unpublished manuscript, 1942), p. 7.

20. Robert Brown, Strictures And Remarks On The Earl of Selkirk's Observations On The Present State of the Highlands With A View of The Causes And Probable Consequences of Emigration (Edinburgh, 1806), pp. 10-11.

21. Hobart to Hunter, 4th September 1802; Michigan Pioneer Collection Vol. XXIII, p. 424. Quoted in F. Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon p. 7.

22. Selkirk to Addington, 1st February 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, p. 13853.

23. Selkirk believed that a settlement at St. Marys was in the best interests of Great Britain. Since the area was remote the Government would have to grant extremely lenient terms to Selkirk for he would have to offer in turn extremely attractive terms to induce settlers to the area.

24. Selkirk, Observations On The Present State of The Highlands of Scotland With A View of The Causes And Probable Consequences of Emigration (Edinburgh, 1806), pp. 6-7.

25. Hobart to Hunter, 28th February 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 52, p. 14305.

26. Observations p. 198.

27. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 p. xx.

28. Hamil, op. cit., p. 9.

29. Ibid., p. 9.

30. Ibid., p. 9.

31. Selkirk to Burn, 16th June 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 53, p. 14272

32. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 pp. 143-69

33. Mure to Burn, 9th May 1804; Selkirk Papers Vol. 53, p. 14212.

34. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 p. 170. William Burn did submit a report on the area to Selkirk; however, the report reached Selkirk after the decision had been made to locate in Dover township. Unfortunately Burn, who could have been of great assistance to McDonell during the first year, died suddenly in the fall of 1804.

35. Chester Martin, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada (Oxford, 1916), p. 184.

36. Selkirk Papers Vol. 75, p. 19904.

37. Ibid., p. 19904

38. Ibid., p. 19905.

39. Peter Hunter, Letter Books, 1799-1805 Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 24, A. 6, p. 121.

40. Ibid., pp. 121-7.

41. Peter Hunter, Military Correspondence: October 1799 to August 1805 Part 1, p. 185.

42. Selkirk to Burn, 16th June 1803; Selkirk Papers Vol. 53, p. 14272.

43. Ibid., p. 14272.

44. George Bryce, Life of Lord Selkirk (Toronto, 1913), p. 95.

45. Alexander McDonell Collection, Notebook Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 24, I. 8, Vol. 12, p. 16.

46. Ibid., p. 16.

47. Selkirk fully realized that there were certain disadvantages to the indenture system: "It is not to be denied however that many persons have brought over labourers from Europe on Indenture, and have not been able to turn them to advantage - and that the Indentured men finding the circumstances of the Country so different from that which they left have become discontented and have either deserted, or done their duty with so much ill will and reluctance as not to be of any value." Ibid., p. 17.

48. Ibid., p. 18.

49. "... if sufficient wintering can be secured, there are abundant resources for summer tho' the Island and other adjacent Pasture should be totally inadequate we need not be at a loss while any Plains remain unoccupied, as we may adopt the system used in Spain where they send their sheep from one area of the Kingdom to the other between their Summer and Winter pasture ..." Ibid., p. 2.

50. Ibid., p. 2.

51. Ibid., p. 5.

52. Ibid., p. 6.

53. Ibid., p. 7.

54. Ibid., pp. 10-11. McDonell in a letter to Selkirk dated 21st September 1809, suggested that one or two Russians who understood the growing of hemp be encouraged to settle at Baldoon. Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14487.

CHAPTER III

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SETTLERS

Selkirk visited the site of his settlement between June 8th and July 9th, 1804. He was accompanied by Alexander McDonell, the Sheriff at York and Selkirk's valet.[1] William Burn had preceded Selkirk to the site and, together with a number of labourers, had commenced clearing trees and planting a few crops.

As a social note, although scarcely part of the history of the settlement, the visit disappointed Burn who had expected Selkirk to provide drinks for the labourers.[2] A Mess room which Burn had fixed for the labourers was taken over by the visiting party for sleeping accommodation and no drinks were forthcoming.[3] This visit provided Selkirk with the opportunity of surveying his property by land and by canoe and on his departure everything appeared in readiness for the settlers, then gathered in Kirkcudbright, who were expected to arrive at the settlement in September.

In expectation of returning, Selkirk left several articles at Baldoon. Among these was a large marquee with double lining and a number of deal boxes.[4] The marquee, incidentally, played a role in the surrender of Detroit to Brock in 1813. The Baldoon settlement was pillaged by the Americans under Captain Robert Forsyth in 1812 and

the marquee was part of the plunder. General Hull had it set up south-east of Fort Detroit and it was there that the final negotiations between the opposing armies took place.[5]

One of the deal boxes, made of cedar boards with wrought iron hinges, has been preserved by the Grant Family of Becher. The box came into the possession of William A. Grant through his mother, Margaret A. McDonald, a daughter of Catherine McLean and John McDonald, Baldoon settlers.[6]

The settlers at Kirkcudbright, under the charge of Peter McDonald, had been assembled at this place for a year. Some of the families had been recruited for St. Mary's in Upper Canada but when the site was changed to Prince Edward Island they preferred to wait until Selkirk made a selection of land in Upper Canada.[7] Several families, however, indicated a willingness to emigrate to the Island. They set sail in late summer of 1803 but were forced to return shortly after they had set out, for Selkirk, fearing French privateers, as the war between France and England had resumed, instructed them to remain at Kirkcudbright until the next year.[8] Many historians have suggested that this latter group were intended for Baldoon in 1803, however, this was impossible as Selkirk did not notify William Mure, his estate manager at Kirkcudbright until January, 1804, that a site had been selected in Dover township for his proposed settlement in Upper Canada.[9] Selkirk selected the site in Upper Canada during his stay at York, 20th November, 1803, to 4th January, 1804. William Mure, on receipt of Selkirk's letter, wrote to William Burn, who was then undertaking a study of the lands in the Chenail Ecarte area:

This will be delivered to you by Peter McDonald your old acquaintance, who goes out with a few highlanders that came here last year - they were intended originally for St. John's Island (Prince Edward Island) where Mr. Williams is, but the Earl of Selkirk wrote me from York to send them by Montreal towards you.[10]

This record shows that earlier historians misunderstood the purpose of the 1803 departure and explains those accounts which have the original settlers coming from Prince Edward Island. Professor Hamil, in his unpublished manuscript, Lord Selkirk's Work in Upper Canada; The Story of Baldoon, is the most nearly accurate although he does have the settlers aboard a ship destined for Baldoon in 1803.[11]

The site selected, preparations were then made for the emigration of those at Kirkcudbright who wished to settle in Upper Canada, and in July 1804, fifteen Highland families comprising 102 persons disembarked at Montreal from the ship Oughton.[12] Unfortunately, no record of the crossing has come down to us, if indeed any of the settlers kept a diary. Certainly not all were illiterate, for Angus McDonald and Hugh McCallum were sufficiently educated to become schoolmasters in the settlement.

On October 30th, 1957, the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of the Ontario Department of Travel and Publicity erected an historical plaque to commemorate the establishment of the settlement, 1804-1818, near the original Baldoon settlement. The research required to establish the text of the inscription once again revived controversy concerning the number of original Selkirk settlers. Gourlay, the Scottish reformer, who visited the area in 1817-18 said that 111 persons had settled at Baldoon in 1804.[13] For 120 years writers slavishly accepted the Gourlay figure. Dr. George Mitchell, a long-time resident of Wallaceburg prepared a paper for the Kent

Historical Society in 1914 and he continued the practice of recording the number of settlers as 111.[14] Dr. Fred Hamil of Wayne State University, the only professional historian to attempt a thorough study of the settlement agreed with previous figures concerning the number of families - fifteen, but in an unpublished manuscript on the Baldoon settlement area, written in 1942, he estimated the number of settlers to be in the eighties.[15] Mr. D. F. McQuat of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board in consultation with Dr. Hamil and Dr. John Moir, agreed that the inscription on the plaque, to be accurate, should run as follows.

On September 5th, 1804, fifteen families of Scottish emigrants numbering some ninety persons landed near this site...[16]

Hamil and Moir based their argument on documented sources from the Selkirk Papers in the Dominion Archives. McDonell, writing to Selkirk on 3rd August, 1805, stated "including Peter McDonald there were originally fifteen heads of families".[17] He did not, however, mention the total number of original settlers. Selkirk, in his diary, enumerated the men who left Kirkcudbright to come out in 1804.[18] This list contains some 87 persons and with the addition of Peter McDonald and family would bring the total to approximately 90.

This figure, however, is incomplete, for the list of men who came out in 1804 does not include the families of Donald Brown, Allan McLean, Donald McDonald (Taylor) and Peter McDonald.

The most accurate reference concerning the original number of settlers is to be found in the list of passengers of the ship Oughton under the heading "Passengers, Labourers for the Earl of

Selkirk's Settlement in North America" which was recorded at La Chine on 19th July, 1804, by A. Roxburgh.[19] The above-mentioned list contains names and ages of all members of the fifteen original families. This document was perhaps overlooked by others because of the heading "Passengers, Labourers ..." as it was perhaps assumed that the list contained the names of people from Prine Edward Island who were to be brought to the settlement to work as labourers; however, the intention was in fact to differentiate between the settlers who paid their own passage on the ship and those who came across under indenture. Selkirk makes references to this fact in his diary on the 5th and 6th August, 1804:

> A. McLean etc. not indented asked terms for going up - I promised work and land cheap on credit - wages referred to W. Burn.[20]

My research indicates that the "Passengers and Labourers ..." list of the ship Oughton is, in fact, the most accurate record as to the number, names and ages of the original Baldoon settlers and that there were fifteen heads of families comprising one hundred and two persons.

The list in Selkirk's diary of men who left Kirkcudbright to come out in 1804 is incomplete for, as mentioned above, the families of Donald Brown, Donald McDonald (Taylor), Peter McDonald and Allan McLean, are not included. McDonell's list of settlers, which was sent to Selkirk on the 20th April, 1809,[21] is accurate for that date only as the children who died between 1804 and 1809 are not included, whereas those born at the settlement during that time are shown. A list of the Baldoon settlers written in 1810 by McDonell, [22] with comments on their character, is likewise inaccurate as it too includes

those born in the settlement and excludes those who died. A comparison of the above lists, however, with the names of those who died during the period 1804-09 which can be found in the correspondence between Selkirk and McDonell, definitely substantiates the thesis that the list of settlers drawn up by A. Roxburgh at La Chine is the only complete list of the original Baldoon settlers.

The people hired by Selkirk to prepare the settlement site for the Baldoon settlers complicated the study of the names and numbers of the original Highland emigrants. Among those hi ed were William Burn, Alexander Brown, Lionel Johnson, James Stewart, three lads from Glengarry, several men from Prince Edward Island and a number of local people. Although many of these families were later to inter-marry with the Baldoon settlers, they should not be considered as original Baldoon settlers, since Selkirk received under royal order dated 28th February, 1803, a total of 4,200 acres in Dover township in right of himself and the fifteen families from Scotland.[23] Several writers on Baldoon have in error included these hired men as original Baldoon settlers.

Travelling by means of French carts, bateaux and a small sailing vessel, they arrived at Queenston on the 5th August, where they were met by Selkirk.[24] Arrangements were made for a brief stay at Fort Erie. The opportunity of meeting with Selkirk to discuss various problems was welcomed by the settlers. Peter McDonald, whom Selkirk had placed in charge of the migrants, recounted the events of the year's stay at Kirkcudbright.

The settlers, he maintained, were generally well behaved and proved to be good workmen.[25] The indentured families requested

Selkirk to allow the time spent at Kirkcudbright to count as part of their indenture period.[26] In Selkirk's view, they did not anticipate a favourable reply and when refused appeared satisfied.[27]

The settlers and, in particular, Mary McCallum, complained that meal and potatoes were insufficient and asked for compensation.[28] Selkirk instructed McDonald to give out Indian meal and corn while they were detained at Fort Erie according to proportions at Kirkcudbright.[29] Fresh beef was to be given to lieu of milk.[30] The provisions were to be provided by Thomas Clark.[31]

Selkirk believed the settlers shoudl be kept busy for too much leisure time, he thought, would make them indolent and lazy. He therefore issued instructions that they be kept together and usefully employed during their stay at Fort Erie. Several settlers were employed in cutting firewood for the garrison, while others were utilised in quarrying line ballast for the ship Camden.[32] The women were not forgotten as Peter McDonald issued them with wool to be spun at the rate of the country.[33] Thomas Clark, Selkirk's agent at Queenston, endeavoured "to employ five or six lads in driving Oxen."[34]

Leaving Fort Erie, Selkirk resumed his journey eastward to the Maritimes and eventually home to Scotland; the settlers continued westward by ship, arriving at Amherstburg in the latter part of August. After a short stay, they completed their exhausting trip when they reached Baldoon on September 5th, 1804.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER THREE

1. Selkirk Papers Vol. 53, p. 14316.

2. Ibid., p. 14316.

3. Ibid., p. 14316.

4. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 ed. Patrick White (Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1958), p. 331.

5. Robert Lucas, Journal of The War of 1812 During The Campaign Under General William Hull ed. John Parrish (Iowa City, 1906), pp. 61-2. Quoted in F. Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon (Unpublished manuscript, 1942) pp. 86-7.

6. W. G. Trestain, "Historic Old Chest Is Associated With Baldoon Settlement", London Free Press, 28th May 1940.

7. Norman MacDonald, Canada, 1763-1841 Immigration And Settlement (London, 1939), p. 155. Thomas Clark in a letter to William Burn dated 25th July 1803 wrote: "Selkirk certainly acts strangely in not writing. Report now says Ld. Selkirk is going to Island of St. Johns in Gulf of St. Lawrence." Selkirk Papers Vol. 53, p. 14196.

8. Fred Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon (Unpublished manuscript, 1942), p. 37.

9. William Mure to William Burn; Selkirk Papers Vol. 53, p. 14212.

10. Ibid., p. 14212.

11. Hamil, op. cit., p. 37.

12. The Oughton, registered with Lloyds of London in 1804, was of the Snow class. A sheathed, single deck with beams ship build in 1787, it had a draught of thirteen feet when loaded. The owner, in 1804 was W. Stewart and J. Baird served as her captain. The surveying port for the Oughton in 1804 was Greenock and her destination Quebec. Lloyds Register, The Register of Shipping For the Year 1804 (London, 1804). There are no page numbers; however, the ships are listed alphabetically.

13. James Soutar, Kent County Annual and Almanac For 1882 (Chatham, 1882), p. 11.

14. George Mitchell, "Lord Selkirk's Baldoon Settlement", Kent Historical Society: Papers And Addresses (Chatham, 1914), Vol. 1, p. 13.

15. Extract from letter by F. Hamil to D. F. McQuat dated 30th April 1957. Copy of letter owned by F. Mann, Wallaceburg.

16. "The Baldoon Settlement 1804-1818", plaque erected by the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board, October 30th 1957, on highway 40 approximately four miles west of Wallaceburg.

17. Alexander McDonell to Selkirk, 3rd August 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14351.

18. Selkirk Papers Vol. 75, pp. 19902-3.

19. "Passengers and Labourers For the Earl of Selkirk's Settlement In North America." Selkirk Papers, Vol. 4, pp. 105-08.

20. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 p. 331. Selkirk in his instructions to McDonell described the terms for those not indentured: "The Highland Settlers now gone up are to be treated on the same principles - those not indented to have assistance in Cattle, Provisions ... on an adequate return in work or produce." Alexander McDonell Collection, Notebook Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 24, I. 8, Vol. 12, p. 24.

21. McDonell to Selkirk, 20th April 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14590.

22. McDonell to Selkirk, (undated) 1810; Selkirk Papers Vol. 76, pp. 20019-20.

23. "Table Showing The Quantity of Land Received, Re-Granted, Appropriated By and Due to The Right Honorable The Earl of Selkirk under The Royal Order of 28th of February 1803." Selkirk Papers Vol. 76, p. 20004.

24. Hamil, op. cit., p. 37.

25. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 p. 331.

26. Ibid., p. 331.

27. Ibid., p. 331.

28. Ibid., p. 331.

29. Ibid., p. 331.

30. Ibid., p. 331.

31. Ibid., p. 331.

32. Ibid., p. 331. Col. Brock doubted that the Camden could take the settlers further than Sandwich; however, Captain Gilkison disagreed. Brock proved correct as the settlers had to transfer from the Camden to smaller boats to complete their journey to Baldoon. Ibid., p. 332.

33. Ibid., p. 331.

34. Ibid., p. 331.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPERIMENT AS A FAILURE

The success which appeared assured in June during Selkirk's stay at the site eluded the colony. It was immediately struck by a series of misfortunes from which it never fully recovered. The early disasters which befell the colony were many, and the overwhelming cause is to be found in the site itself. All other causes, although important, were secondary. Selkirk appreciated the rich soil and the lush, open grasslands which today form an integral part of one of the finest farm areas in north-eastern America, but this land is extremely low, marshy and subject to periodic floods. He was not unaware of the hazards created by the periodic rise of the Great Lakes for, as he reported in his diary:

> From several factors observed at Niagara and Detroit - it appears that the Lakes were higher fourteen years ago than they have been since and at that time overflowed lands at Detroit formerly cultivated and now again dry.[1]

William Hambly, who had been ordered to undertake a survey of the township of Dover, recorded in his diary that from Wednesday, 18th July, 1804, to Wednesday, 24th October, 1804, there was scarcely a day on which it did not rain.[2] McDonell, Selkirk's farm manager wrote:

The continued rains have swelled the Great Bear Creek so much that it gives its own dusky colour to the river all the way down to the Lake and repelled its current from the forks up to the house. The water in the point of wood where Turner .... was clearing is knee-deep.[3]

The continued rains hampered the building of houses for the settlers and since the two houses which were completed by Peter McGee were flooded, the settlers, already weakened by their long and exhausting journey, were housed in makeshift shelters and tents.[4] McDonell was assailed en masse with a cry for houses.[5] Under these conditions it was not surprising that he should report to Selkirk that "fevers have been and are extremely prevalent since the beginning of August in this district, but in no part of it so much so as at Baldoon."[6] The incessant rain, combined with mosquito infested marshes and the "noxious vapours"[7] of decaying matter proved insurmountable for the travel weary settlers and McDonell regrettably reported to Selkirk on the 8th November, 1804, that fourteen of the original settlers had died and that more were likely to follow.[8] McDonell believed, as did most people in Upper Canada at that time, that the fevers were caused by the bad air of low lying swamps and poorly drained lands.[9] The real culprit behind the fevers was the Anopheles mosquito which abounded in the marshes of the Chenail Ecarte and St. Clair.[10] The fever, which today is known as malaria, continued to take its toll as twenty-two settlers, including eight of the original fifteen heads of families were to die by November of 1805.

The north-west protion of Dover township is subject to flooding conditions to this day as is evidenced by the disastrous floods of 1893, 1904, 1927, 1947, and 1968.[11] However, the development of tile drainage

and extensive dredging have enabled the farmers of this district to prosper and to exploit the richness of the soil. Since tile drainage was not introduced into the region until the turn of the twentieth century, this important technological development was not available to Selkirk.[12] Although he endeavoured to minimise the effect of flooding through a series of drainage channels, they were not adequate to meet the challenge of a flooding Chenail Ecarte and Great Bear Creek.

Until the farmers of the district possessed the technological advantages of the twentieth century, the Baldoon site remained inhospitable In 1888, Alfred Little drew up survey plans for the future development of the western portion of the present town of Wallaceburg.[13] The survey included within its boundaries a large portion of the original Baldoon Home Farm. The projected survey was dropped however for several reasons, not the least of which was the flood of 1893 which inundated the entire survey area.

Lacking the tools of modern day science, the settlers were unable to meet the challenge proffered by the immediate environment. Even Selkirk's presence could not have mde the site a viable place for settlement. However, he would undoubtedly have made the necessary decisions to have significantly reduced the attendant hardships. Unfortunately the delays caused by the slowness of communications with the resultant necessity of giving extraordinary powers of discretion to the local farm manager created further hardships. It was Selkirk's misfortune and that of his settlers that he hired as farm manager a man incapable of providing the necessary leadership - Alexander McDonell.[14]

As a farm manager, McDonell proved to be incompetent, however, he must be given a small measure of credit for realising that the site was ill-chosen. He pleaded with Selkirk on numerous occasions to quit the area and settle elsewhere, on one occasion writing:

> Would to Heaven my Lord that you had made your selection of the lands on the River Credit where the plains tho' not so extensive as those of Baldoon, are far superior for sheep pasture, where every acre could be disposed, every article find a ready market.[15]

Later he added:

> Allow me to entreat of your Lordship to turn your eyes to some more eligible part of the province for settlement for rest assured my Lord, that not one of the present importation will ever settle at Baldoon.[16]

Although McDonell's appraisal of the site was valid, his utter neglect of Selkirk's directions and of the colony's best interests compounded the disasters to the detriment of the settlers. His insatiable appetite for security and self-esteem took precedence over the administration of the colony and he spent more time at York in search of higher office than he did in Baldoon. Although McDonell had agreed to take up residence at Sandwich and to devote the major portion of his time to Baldoon,[17] between 1804 and 1809 the record shows clearly that he spent the larger part of his time at York.

McDonell had been appointed sheriff of the home district in 1792 and was a member of the Assembly at York.[18] In February, 1805, he was elected Speaker of the Assembly and thus became even more bound to the capital.[19] The early disasters at Baldoon, coupled with his recent marriage, made York more attractive. In 1807, McDonell sounded out Selkirk as to whether the Earl would be agreeable to releasing him from his agency in case he obtained the Receivership of the province.

Selkirk was indeed willing and wrote to McDonell as follows:

I perceive and indeed it has appeared to me for some time past that your avocations are now so multiple that it is impossible for you to devote your individual attention to my affairs and as constant residence at Baldoon would require a sacrifice of other objects more important to yourself.

McDonell did not secure the position he sought and the fear of being without a tangible source of income induced him to make the best of the position he held with Selkirk. McDonells enthusiasm for Baldoon increased as his hopes for other employment diminished.

He wrote to Selkirk, upon hearing the news that he had not been appointed to the Receivership of the province, that matters at Baldoon could still be rectified and that he would move his family to the site in the spring of 1809. The settlers whom he had previously described as "a strange set and not unlike our neighbors the Chippewas and the Ottawas in their inordinate love of whisky and incorrigible propensity to filthyness" became "the finest looking young men" in the whole province.

Lieutenant-General Hunter, from the first expressed doubts to Selkirk in McDonells ability to manage a settlement. He acknowledged McDonells industry and integrity but he mistrusted his obstinacy and unaccommodating temper. Time was to prove Hunter a prophet, as one of McDonells greatest failings was his inability to provide leadership and his constant disagreement with those whom he left in charge during his extended tryss to York.

For example, during the first winter of 1804-05 when the colony was in urgent need of competent leadership as a result of the many deaths and unsettled conditions, he appointed John McDonald, not

an original settler but from Prince Edward Island, as overseer during his absence. Selkirk was critical of McDonell's appointment of McDonald whom he believed to be incompetent. Selkirk gave his opinion in a letter dated 31st January, 1806:

> When I learnt that you had been absent from the settlement for so long a period last winter with no better a substitute than John McDonald to take charge, I anticipated no good, but the extravagance of which he appears to have been guilty goes beyond all bounds; and I cannot understand how you could think of leaving so unlimited a charge in the hands of a man so little capable of it.[25]

McDonell vindicated Selkirk's judgement when he later wrote on 17th December, 1806:

> It would have been a fortunate event for the settlement had Mr. (John) McDonald left it at an earlier period. He introduced a spirit of discontent, idleness and party work, all of which will now, I am certain, disappear.[28]

McDonell constantly was at odds with those whom he left in charge. During the winter of 1807-08, Dr. Sims took over the management of the settlement while McDonell was at York. Sims had been sent out from Scotland in 1806 by Selkirk to serve as physician for the colony. McDonell in a letter to Selkirk reported that Sims was fully equal to managing the business at Baldoon. However, McDonell was to write in 1809:

> I think him a gentleman of abilities as a medical man and between River St. Clair, the Thames and his situation at Baldoon might have a very comfortable income, but his apathy and torpor are beyond belief and his mode of living singular and unbecoming a man of his acquirements.[27]

Unpleasant arguments also took place between McDonell and the shepherds, Johnson and Mitchell: both men eventually left the settlement. Mitchell, who returned to England, complained directly to Selkirk and McDonell in his letter of explanation to the Earl did not

mince words as he described Mitchell:

His propensity to liquor can only be equalled by his utter disregard of truth which is proverbial in the settlement ... his low cumming and smooth manner of addressing himself I mistook for good natured naivety ... he is a mass of deception and totally incapable of discharging the trust which it was intended should be placed in him.[28]

In January 1810, McDonell evidently in an attempt to cover his own shortcomings, complained about the settlers:

With the exception of three or four families they are the most drunken, quarrelsome, sponging, indolent, of any people in Upper Canada. I have repeatedly made up differences between them, but finding there is no end to their frays I have at length done what I will persevere in doing, bind them over to the quarter sessions at Sandwich. The McDougalss are pre-eminent at pugilistic exploits and the author of most broils, particularly Allan who is a worthless fellow, and who has been the cause, with seven besides himself, made their appearance at last quarter session lately.[29]

A second factor and undoubtedly of greater importance than even McDonell's inability to provide leadership was his complete and utter disregard for Selkirk's instructions. When Selkirk first received the calamitous news of the deaths of so many of his settlers, he immediately wrote McDonell advising him to move the settlers to either the forks of the Great Bear Creek (the present site of Wallaceburg) in the Shawnee township or to the River St. Clair.[30] McDonell, on his return to the settlement in the spring of 1805, believed that the conditions which led to the disasters of 1804 no longer existed and, as the settlers appeared to be on the road to recovery, he decided on his own authority not to remove them to healthier lands. The fevers returned in the summer and more settlers were to die. McDonell proceeded then, at Selkirk's expense, to move the families to Sandwich.[31] Selkirk agreed with McDonell's decision as the settlers would then receive medical care. He was genuinely concerned with the welfare of his settlers.

However, he reiterated that ultimately the settlers should be moved to the Shawnee township.

The southern boundary of the Shawnee Tract, which commenced at the first fork of the Chenail Ecarte and ran due east until it met the Thames River, had been established by the McKee Treaty, 1790.[32] Selkirk's Home Farm located in the north-west of Dover township abutted a portion of the southern boundary of the Shawnee Tract. The boundary line became known as the Indian Line.

Under the terms of the second McKee Treaty, 1797, an area approximately twelve miles square north of the Indian Line of 1790 and east of the St. Clair was surrendered by the Chippewa chiefs to His Majesty, King George III for approximately £800 Quebec currency in trade goods at Montreal prices.[33] The land purchased became known as the Shawnee township and eventually by the present name, Chatham Gore.

Selkirk had no reason to suppose that his request to move the settlers into the Shawnee township would meet with any opposition for in August 1804, he had broached the subject to Lieutenant-Governor Hunter, who at that time had no doubts that the land could be obtained.

> General Hunter....Shawnee township - cannot be determined till papers of Indian Department come from Lower Canada - purchased 1796 - knows no right in Indians and will be located as another - but better not apply till Settlers more come in - promises no other shall interfere, & has no doubt Gov. will grant.[34]

Selkirk believed that the lands within Dover could not be made healthy until the marshes of the neighbouring islands were drained. He therefore, through McDonell, requested Hunter for land in the Shawnee township and the right to drain the neighbouring island marshes. Both requests were refused and Selkirk was surprised and vexed at Hunter's

decision. Hunter, in a letter to McDonell dated 24th May, 1805, stated that the Shawnee township was reserved to the Indians.[35] As a result of Hunter's decision and the deaths of so many of his settlers, Selkirk decided in November 1805 to abandon temporarily the settlement site and he directed McDonell to purchase two or three cleared farms on the Thames River where the settlers would be kept together, but independently working their land on shares.[36]

McDonell, who had spent the winter of 1805-06 at York, did not make Selkirk's plan known to the settlers until April 1806. The majority of the settlers were in favour of Selkirk's proposal but again McDonell personally overruled the majority and decided to give Baldoon another chance in the face of Selkirk's instructions.[37]

Francis Gore replaced Hunter as the Lieutenant-Governor of Upper C n da in June 1806 and Selkirk had reason to believe that Gore would be more amenable to the Earl's earlier proposals regarding the draining of the island marshes and the acquisition of land in the Shawnee township. Selkirk therefore told McDonell that it would be best to remove the settlers to the Shawnee township giving up the idea of the move to the three lots on the Thames.[38] Once again McDonell believed that it was not necessary to move the people as the summer of 1806 had passed without a return of malaria and he, therefore, said nothing to the settlers about the prospect of moving to the Shawnee township.[39]

Further evidence of McDonell's neglect of instructions was indicated by his petition in June 1809, to the Council to surrender the wet lots along the Chenail Ecarte in return for land elsewhere.[40] This action diametrically opposed Selkirk's own wishes as the Earl had

repeatedly informed McDonell that the marsh lands were of great value and should be permanently retained.

A further instance of McDonell's failure to carry out instructions is shown by his failure to submit his expenses in the manner outlined by Selkirk. Repeatedly, Selkirk ordered McDonell to keep careful account of the colony's financial affairs, yet McDonell, out of ignorance or by design, completely failed to carry out this basic administrative procedure. In a letter of the 3rd May, 1808, Selkirk wrote instructing McDonell to let the Farm on shares and to keep the expenses to a minimum.[41] And further:

> I have also repeatedly insisted on your transmitting to me, at the beginning of each year a distinct and precise estimate of the expenses to be incurred: tho' the omission of this is no new cause of orders can induce you to attend to that essential point.[42]

Although Selkirk was anextremely patient man, McDonell's complete disregard for these instructions compeeled him to write that this act had:

> Excited my displeasure in a higher degree than anything which has occurred since I had concerns in Upper Canada, not excepting even the unparalleled extravagance which prevailed in the years 1804-05. The plan of management which I transmitted to you on 3rd May 1808, appears to be set completely at nought though it could not escape your observation that I place great importance to that measure.[43]

Selkirk ordered McDonell to come to England to explain his actions and appointed Thomas Clark, his agent at Queenston, to audit McDonell's records at Baldoon. Clark reported that although McDonell's book-keeping was irregular, there were no signs of dishonesty. However, it was his belief that if McDonell had spent more time at Baldoon there would not have been the enormous financial waste which had occurred.[44]

In addition to the troubles caused by malaria the colony suffered further hardships as the sheep which were to be the mainstay of the fledgling community fared poorly in the early years. In May 1805, McDonell reported that the sheep had suffered from scab and that a number had already died and more werellikely to follow.[45] Roving packs of wolves and rattlesnakes also accounted for a number of dead sheep. To make matters worse, crops failed in 1804 and 1805. In the fall of 1804, McDonell reported that:

> The torrents of rain which fell during the months of September and October inundated the Plains on the Little Bear Creek to such a degree that it will be impracticable to get at thehay which has been stacked there until the frost sets in. The small crop of Peas, Barley and Oats near the garden tho' cut and stacked has been destroyed.[46]

Nature reversed her role in 1805. McDonell indicated that little could be said of the crops for this year they had suffered as a result of summer drought.[47]

The deaths of William Burn and Peter McDonald in the fall of 1804 caused further grief as these two men could have filled the leadership vacuum created by McDonell's ineptitude and absence. Burn was an extremely good shepherd and had been highly recommended to Selkirk and McDonald had been in charge of the settlers during their stay at Kirkcudbright and during their voyage to Baldoon.

Dr. Sims, who was relieved of his duties in 1809, foresaw further difficulties for the colony as he predicted that if war were to break out between the United States and Great Britain, the Americans would raid the settlement and particularly endeavour to obtain possession of the sheep at Baldoon.[48] Sims' prediction came true for the War of 1812 brought American troops to Baldoon.

Captain Robert Forsyth, in July 1812, commanding a small militia unit, pillaged the homes of the settlers as well as the Farm. Sandwich at that time had been occupied by the Americans under General Hull and Forsyth returned to Sandwich with "a small herd of cattle, nearly 1,000 sheep, and accompanied by the settlement's large boat and ten small ones laden with grain, flour and other booty."[49] It was later rumoured that Hull, who removed the sheep to Detroit, sold a large number of them for his personal benefit. The fortunes of Baldoon rose and fell with British fortunes on the Detroit River. The capture of Detroit by Brock led to the return to Baldoon of the majority of the sheep, but a number were killed and eaten by the army.[50] In October 1814, the American General McArthur and 750 of his men took control of Baldoon but there was not the plunder attending with this raid as that of the previous one in 1812.[51]

Selkirk's interest in Baldoon waned as he became more deeply involved in his latest settlement venture at Red River, and following the War of 1812, the Baldoon Farm was leased to a William Jones. On September 17th, 1818, the Farm was sold to John McNab for approximately £2,225.[52] The Farm was eventually resold at public auction to James Wood and William Jones. Two of the lots on the Thames River were also sold to James Wood and the remaining lot to Dr. Robert Richardson of Sandwich.[53] Selkirk's remaining lands in Dover were finally sold in 1832 to Thomas Clark, his agen at Queenston.[54]

With the transaction of 1818 the settlement may be said to have disappeared. Consequently, Selkirk's experiment at Baldoon has usually been described as an ill-fated venture and a failure, having played a relatively insignificant role in the growth of Kent and

Lambton Counties. Dr. George Bryce, in his book The Life of Lord Selkirk referred to Baldoon as a burden and dismissed the settlement as ten years of most disappointing events,[55] with no comment as to the ultimate success or failure of the settlers. John Gray, in his book Lord Selkirk of Red River described Baldoon as "a dead albatross"[56] about Selkirk's neck, and "of his three settlements - his three dreams - only the first was ending as it should. Baldoon was finished, a miserable failure."[57] Gray, like Bryce, did not discuss the fate of the settlers and their influence on the surrounding area.

Dr. Fred Hamil, in his fine unpublished manuscript Lord Selkirk's Work in Upper Canada, The Story of Baldoon, said that the settlement at Baldoon, "intended as the nucleus of a much greater one" was destined "to extinction after a series of heart-breaking disappointments ..."[58]. Hamil, unlike the writers previously mentioned, does mention the f ct that many of the settlers moved northwards to the Gore of Chatham which was then part of the old Shawnee township. However, he concludes his work on Selkirk by stating emphatically that "Selkirk's work in Upper Canada met with little success, and has largely been forgotten."[59].

The settlers, however, remained and a distinction must be made between the failure of the settlement as a site and the success of the settlement in terms of the ultimate future of the settlers. The settlement site was indeed abandoned for a time but the settlers remained and provided the nucleus of many successful farming communities in Kent and Lambton Counties.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 ed. Patrick White (Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1958), p. 144.

2. "Hambly's Diary" published in W. G. McGeorge "Early Settlement and Surveys Along The River Thames in Kent County", Kent Historical Society: Papers and Addresses (Chatham, 1924), pp. 25-31.

3. McDonell to Selkirk, 25th September 1804; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14325.

4. Fred Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon (Unpublished manuscript, 1942), p. 38.

5. McDonell to Selkirk, 25th September 1804; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14326.

6. Ibid., p. 14325.

7. McDonell to Selkirk, 8th November 1804; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14329.

8. William R. Riddell, "Mosquito In Upper Canada", Ontario Historical Society: Papers And Records (Toronto, 1919), Vol. XVII, p. 85.

9. The writer was in Wallaceburg during the flood of 2nd February - 4th February 1968.

10. Lloyd Clark, The Historical Geography of The Baldoon Settlement: Present Day Roots In The Past (Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1968).

11. The map of the Little Survey is included following page 41.

12. For further details on hiring of McDonell see Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 pp. 325-7.

13. McDonell to Selkirk, 4th May 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14341.

14. McDonell to Selkirk, 28th July 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14347.

15. Lord Selkirk's Diary p. 326.

16. Hamil, op. cit., p. 15.

17. Ibid., p. 42.

18. McDonell to Selkirk, 6th June 1810; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14502.

19. McDonell to Selkirk, 6th March 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14456

20. McDonell to Selkirk, 30th June 1807; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14407

21. McDonell to Selkirk, 20th April 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14407.

22. Lord Selkirk's Diary p. 341.

23. Selkirk to McDonell, 31st January 1806; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, pp. 14378-9. Quoted in F. Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon (Unpublished manuscript, 1942), pp. 53-4.

24. McDonell to Selkirk, 17th December 1806; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, pp. 14384-5. Quoted in Hamil, ibid., p.55.

25. McDonell to Selkirk, 27th June 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14471. Quoted in Hamil, ibid., pp. 68-9.

26. McDonell to Selkirk, 28th November 1808; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, pp. 14448-53. Quoted in Hamil, ibid., p. 62.

27. McDonell to Selkirk, 15th January 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, pp. 14499-15000. Quoted in Hamil, ibid., p. 71.

28. Selkirk to McDonell, 21st February 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14540.

29. McDonell to Selkirk, 28th July 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14346.

30. V. Lauriston, Romantic Kent (Chatham, 1952), p. 22.

31. Ibid., p. 391.

32. Lord Selkirk's Diary, 1803-04 pp. 341-2.

33. Hunter to McDonell, 24th May 1805; Michigan Pioneer Collections Vol. XXIII, p. 435. Quoted in Hamil, op. cit., p. 46.

34. R. S. Woods, Harrison Hall And Its Associations (Chatham, 1896), p. 88. Five of the lots were purchased by James Woods and today form part of the northern section of the city of Chatham.

R. S. Woods recalled that his father, who was Selkirk's solicitor, had large trunks and boxes containing the papers of the estate (Baldoon) and those of the officials connected with it. These records have not been discovered by the author of this thesis.

35. McDonell to Selkirk, 13th April 1806; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14369.

36. Selkirk to McDonell, 30th October 1806; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14564.

37. McDonell to Selkirk, 30th June 1807; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14407.

38. McDonell to Selkirk, 27th June 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14469.

39. Selkirk to McDonell, 3rd May 1808; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, pp. 14570-72

40. Selkirk to McDonell, December 1809; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14580.

41. Ibid., p. 14580.

42. Clark to Selkirk, 28th June 1810; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14332.

43. McDonell to Selkirk, 4th May 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14341.

44. McDonell to Selkirk, 30th November 1804; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14332.

45. McDonell to Selkirk, 3rd August 1805; Selkirk Papers Vol. 54, p. 14353.

46. Francis Huff, "Settlement of Baldoon An Ill-Fated Venture of The Earl of Selkirk", London Free Press 29th June 1963, p. 28.

47. Hamil, op. cit., p. 85. R. Innis requested the loan of one of Selkirk's Spanish rams and Spanish ewes for Col. Elliot. Elliot had been insturmental in preserving Selkirk's sheep at Detroit during the War of 1812. Innis to Brown, 9th September 1812. Letter in possession of Mrs. Mary Morrison, Tupperville.

48. Ibid., p. 86.

49. V. Lauriston, op. cit., p. 105.

50. Hamil, op. cit., p. 92.

51. Ibid., p. 92.

52. Ibid., p. 92.

53. George Bryce, The Life of Lord Selkirk (Toronto, 1913), p. 30.

54. John Gray, Lord Selkirk of Red River (Toronto, 1963), p. 40.

55. Ibid., p. 328.

56. Hamil, op. cit., p. 3.

57. Ibid., p. 105.

CHAPTER V

THE EXPERIMENT AS A SUCCESS

The failure of the settlement as a site is obvious. As an experiment in organized emigration the effort was a success. Tradition has been that the settlers simply faded away. However, the genealogies of the families who remained in the area, which have been compiled by the author, support the view that the settlers who stayed in the neighbourhood of Baldoon contributed greatly to the growth of Lambton and Kent Counties. For the purpose of this thesis the area has been set as being approximately the land falling within a seventeen mile radius of the original site.

In order to uncover the subsequent careers of the settlers and their descendants it was absolutely necessary to first establish the genealogies of all the families about which information was needed. Through research in the neighbourhood, including personal interviews, location of family records and other depositories listed in the bibliography it has been possible to find something about every family who sailed from Kirkcudbright. It must be admitted that information in four cases is sparse. In the appendix, however, fairly comprehensive genealogies of eleven families are set out.

These records provide a further chapter in the history of Baldoon and the following pages attempt to show the permanent contribution subsequently made by the fifteen Baldoon families whom Selkirk brought out in 1804.

The majority of the settlers clung stubbornly to their fifty acre lots on Great Bear Creek until the Shawnee township, surveyed in 1821 by Thomas Smith, was opened for settlement in 1822.[1] Laughlan McDougall, son of John and Sarah McDougall, in circa 1822, secured from the Crown lot 13, 2nd Concession of Chatham Gore[2] at the forks of Great Bear Creek, and thus became Wallaceburg's first settler.

Lionel Johnson and his son-in-law, James Stewart, in 1809 had obtained an illegal Indian deed to land at the forks and temporarily squatted at the site;[3] however, McDonell petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor for their removal as Selkirk had his own designs on the area. Johnson removed to lot 3, 1st Concession of Sombra township where a sharp bend in the Chenail Ecarte occurs and today is referred to as Johnson's Bend.[4] Stewart settled on lot 2, 1st Concession, Sombra township.[5]

McDougall opened a multi-purpose building which served as a trading-post, tavern and dwelling place. This building fronted on Wallace Street approximately where the Liquor Control Board of Ontario store stands today. He later opened a hostelry across the street which became famous "for its three cent swipes of whisky, and from the effects of which not a few free brawls were instituted."[6] The McDougalls were well known for their pugilistic nature.

In 1834, Laughlan launched the schooners Wallace and Selkirk,[7] the first of many ships to be built at Wallaceburg.

Interestingly enough, Selkirk in his early instructions to McDonell suggested that the Baldoon settlement would need the services of a "shallop" and felt that the McDougalls with a good shipwright to superintend them could handle the project, and that Allan McDougall could serve as captain.[8]

Archibald and Hector McDougall soon followed their brother's lead and took up land across the river from Laughlan on the north side of Great Bear Creek east of the Point.[9] The Point refers to the property situated at the confluence of the north and east branches of Great Bear Creek where the Canadian Legion building stands today. The McDougall family eventually established a flourishing lumber business on their property. The first registered cemetery in Wallaceburg, known as the McDougall Cemetery, was established on this side of the river and today is marked by a simple cairn on Water Street.[10]

The McDougalls were soon joined by other Baldoon settlers. Hugh McCallum obtained the south half of lot 12, 2nd Concession.[11] He built a frame house on the property in which he taught school. Selkirk had visualized the need for a school for his original settlement and Hugh McCallum was his intended schoolmaster.[12] Son of Donald and Mary McCallum, Hugh became in 1834 the settlement's first postmaster. The settlement, known as "The Forty Thieves" and "The Forks" eventually adopted the name Hugh gave to the post office - Wallaceburgh, in honour of Sir William Wallace, Scotland's great patriot.[13] The name was later shortened to Wallaceburg.[14]

Hector McLean settled lot 12, 2nd Concession, in 1830.[15] He lived on the northern portion of the lot in the approximate area today

of Nelson Street where it crosses Running Creek. The southern portion of the lot which now comprises most of downtown Wallaceburg remained dense bush.

Hector McDonald at a later period, 1840, opened a boarding house on present-day Nelson Street where he dispensed hospitality on strictly temperance principles.[16]

Laughlan McDougall instituted the first survey - the Eberts Survey - in 1833. This was followed by the McCallum survey in 1836.[17] On the north side of the river, James Baby who settled on lot 12, 2nd Concession, initiated the Baby Survey.[18] During the next forty years many other s rveys and sub-divisions which bore Highland names such as McDonald, McLean and McDougall were inaugurated, ndicating the impact of the Baldoon settlers on the community.[19]

The Baldoon settlers who settled at "The Forks" were joined at an early stage by families not directly connected with the original settlement. John McGregor, for valued service in the War of 1812, received a grant of 850 acres chiefly in the 1st Concession.[20] James Baby, previously mentioned, settled on lot 12, 2nd Concession. George Little, who married Hannah McDougall, a Baldoon descendant, settled east of "The Forks" on the north bank on lot 18.[21] Following 1860, the Hay Beattie, Forhan, Fraser and Scott families entered the area, joining other non-Baldoon families who had recently preceeded them, the Judson, Steinhoff, Patterson and Clancy families.[22]

As the community grew in size the business and industrial interests kept pace. Lionel H. Johnson, son of James and Margaret (McCallum) Johnson, purchased property located within the Baby Survey,

lot 4,[23] site of the present cenotaph. Here he erected a frame house and opened a blacksmith's shop.[24] Eventually he extended his business to include a store, the first to be built on the north-west angle of the forks. This land today forms a portion of the business section of James Street, Wallaceburg's principal thoroughfare. Henry E. Johnson, son of Lionel, took a course at a commercial college in Toronto and returned to operate his father's store.[25] He was later appointed the community's first Dominion Telegraph agent, a position he held until 1884. In 1898 he became librarian of the public library which was located on the north-east lower floor of the town hall. The building was less than ideal, for the local fire hall, contained within the same walls, created sufficient din with each fire alarm to unnerve the staunchest reader. In 1908, the present library located on lots 1 and 2 of the Baby Survey was opened with Mr. Johnson ws chief librarian.[26] Like many libraries of the day it was financed through the munificence of a Carnegie grant.

Calvert and Hugh Stonehouse, sons of Hugh and Margaret (McDougall) Stonehouse extended the dry goods and grocery store established in 1879 by their grandfather R, S. Stonehouse.[27] The store, situated at the corner of Wallace and McDougall Street was destroyed by fire in 1892; however, a brick building erected on the same lot replaced the former frame building and stands today.

In 1905, Baldoon descendant Herb McDougall, together with two prominent citizens of Wallaceburg, D. A. Gordon and Herb Burgess, headed a local group which incorporated the Wallaceburg Brass and Iron Manufacturing Company.[28] In April 1933, the firm changed its name to Wallaceburg Brass Ltd.[29]

Morrison Irwin, a son of John and Naomi (Morrison) Irwin in circa 1926, established a chain of 5¢ and 10¢ stores throughout Kent County known as Mirwin's Ltd. The stores were eventually sold, some to the Metropolitan chain.[30]

Eric McDonald, son of Delos and Ella McDonald and a great-great grandson of Angus McDonald Sr., established his own company, Mac Craft, which built boats of the pleasure craft class. During the Second World War the firm produced Fairmiles for the Canadian Navy. Following the war he established Mac Construction which has built numerous buildings in Kent County, including the additions to the local hospital and library.[31]

The Baldoon settlers as loyal subjects offered their services to the Crown when the national security of Canada was threatened. Hugh McCallum[32] and Angus McDougall took part in the War of 1812.[33] It has been reported that McCallum saw action at the battle of the Thames where the famous Tecumseh was mortally wounded.

Hugh McCallum saw further action in the Rebellion of 1837-38 as did Hector McDougall, who served as captain of one of the local military companies.[34] Lionel H. Johnson left his studies at the old Upper Canada Academy, now Victoria College, and returned home to join the local militia.[35]

Many of the descendants of the Baldoon settlers took part in the two World Wars of the twentieth century. Two returning servicemen from World War II, Cal and Fred Duchene, descendants of Allan McLean, together with Harold Martin, organized the fund-raising campaign for a local arena which led to the erection, in 1948, of the Wallaceburg Memorial Arena.[36]

In recognition of the town's industrial contribution to the War effort, in which the Wallaceburg Brass Co. Ltd. took a prominent part, a Canadian Corvette received the name H.M.C.S. Wallaceburg.[37]

The Baldoon settlers also played active roles in municipal and county affairs. Lionel H. Johnson distinguished himself in local politics as he was chosen to represent the Core of Chatham, then a part of Sombra township, on the District Council of Essex, Kent and Lambton. In 1849, he was elected chairman of the Kent Provisional Council and served his township and county in various capacities, Reeve, Deputy Reeve and Warden, for over twenty-five years.[38] Henry Johnson, his son, served for a time as the town clerk of Wallaceburg. Hugh McCallum, as previously mentioned, served as Wallaceburg's first postmaster. D. B. McDonald, son of Allan and Bell McDonald, was the local postmaster at the time of Wallaceburg's incorporation as a village in 1874.[39] The Reeve at the time of incorporation was Alexander McDougall and W. J. McDonald served as a council member.

Alexander McDougall became the local attorney in 1857.[40] A nephew of Laughlan and son of John and Mary McDougall, he erected an office on the same property on which his uncle Laughlan had established his hostelry, which had been destroyed by fire. Alexander's office was in turn destroyed by fire, reportedly by irate hotel owners frustrated with McDougall's strict enforcement of the Canada Temperance Act 1878.[41] The outline of the office foundation can still be seen today in front of the apartment occupied by his grand-daughter, Frieda McDougall.

Since 1896 when Captain J. Steinhoff was elected Wallaceburg's first mayor, three Baldoon descendants have held the town's highest office; W. J. McDonald, 1909-10; C. S. Stonehouse, 1929-30; J. Eric McDonald, 1944 and 1950.[42]

Chester McGregor, 1911-12; W. J. McDonald, 1917-19; Frank C. Nightingale, 1950;[43] all Baldoon descendants, served as Reeves of Wallaceburg and the previously mentioned W. J. McDonald served as Deputy Reeve in 1914-15, as did C. S. Stonehouse in 1926.[44]

The foregoing record of the contribution made by the individuals previously cited to the founding and growth of Wallaceburg is by no means exhaustive. Other Baldoon descendants were to perform valuable service as town councillors, teachers and as members of various civic and county boards. The full impact of the Baldoon settlers and their descendants can never be fully measured; however, Wallaceburg's earliest beginnings and development rest to an overwhelming extent upon the courage and perseverance of the Selkirk settlers in the face of so many hardships.

Not all the Baldoon settlers took up residence at "The Forks" but to a large extent took to homesteading in the immediate area where they contributed greatly to the development of the agricultural economy of north Kent and south Lambton.

Angus McDonald, only son of Donald and Margaret McDonald, apprenticed himself early in life to a tannery in Amherstburg. Following his apprenticeship, he took up land in c. 1817 in Sombra township, bounded on the north by the present Ward Line and on the south by the French Line.[45] This property today consists of a large part of the village of Port Lambton. Angus opened the first tannery on the

St. Clair River and became one of the leading figures in the growth and development of Port Lambton. Through necessity, he became Sombra township's first schoolteacher. He built a small log cabin next to his home where he taught his many children. In later years many of his neighbours started sending their children to Angus to be taught reading, writing and arithmetic. The descendants of the Angus McDonald family today live on both sides of the St. Clair River which forms the boundary between the State of Michigan and the Province of Ontario.

The Donald Taylor McDonald family moved a short distance upstream on the Chenail Ecarte where he received in 1824 a grant of land being lot B of the 4th Concession.[46] John McDonald, eldest son of Donald, received in 1826 a grant of land in lot A, 4th Concession.[47] It was on this lot that John built a home which became the focus of the "Baldoon Mystery".[48] The Baldoon Ghost or Poltergeist caused tables to fly through the air, fires to appear and disappear and other strange phenomena. The McDonalds for a short period of time enjoyed great notoriety as hundreds of curious people came great distances with the hope of seeing the Poltergeist at work. Mr. Frank Mann, a long time resident of the area and an amateur historian believes that the happenings began as the result of a feud between the Buchanan family and the McDonalds. It was only a short time after John McDonald refused to sell his property to a member of the Buchanan family that the phenomena occurred. The canny McDonalds used these happenings to great advantage as the McDonald home became an early tourist attraction and they were never ones to look a gift horse in the mouth.

The enterprising Duncan McDonald, a brother of John and son of Donald, eventually secured both his father's and brother's property as well as additional land in the 6th Concession of Sombra township.[49] These extensive holdings were willed in turn to his many relatives. A large portion of this property is today owned by the Stewart family, also Baldoon descendants.

Hector Brown, son of Donald and Marion Brown, received a grant of land from the Crown being the north part of the south half of lot A[50] and the north part of the south half of lot 1 in the 3rd Concession of Sombra township.[51] In 1826 he sold this property to his brother Alexander, for £31.[52] In addition to the land already mentioned, Hector Brown also received from the Crown in 1837, in lieu of his brother Neil who had died, the south half of lot 1, 3rd Concession of Sombra township.[53] Hector became prominent in local politics serving for four years on the township council. A skilled orator, he became the local preacher, well known for his "fire and brimstone" sermons.

Alexander Brown received a grant of land in 1837 consisting of the north half of lot A in the 3rd Concession of Sombra township.[54] As mentioned above, Alexander purchased his brother Hector's property in 1826.

Alexander T. McDonald, son of John and Nancy McDonald, spent his early years on his father's farm. However, like so many of the Baldoon descendants, he took to sailing on the Great Lakes for several years before returning home to marry and to commence farming in Sombra township. In circa 1869 he moved to Wallaceburg where he opened a highly successful grocery store. In 1881 he built the barge Gondola which operated between Detroit and Wallaceburg.[55]

The John Buchanan family took up land on the north bank of Great Bear Creek in the 19th Concession.[56] During the building of the addition to the Heinz factory in Wallaceburg, the Buchanan family burial plot was discovered. The headstone of Catherine Buchanan, wife of Robert Clark, was the only one to be preserved and is now situated on the Clark homestead.

The majority of the Baldoon settlers were of the Presbyterian faith of Scotland, but on coming to Canada many of them became Methodists. In circa 1812, the Weslyians from the Thames Circuit established two appointments, one on the upper Chenail Ecarte and the other on the lower Chenail Ecarte. The congregation united in 1842 and built a log church on the farm of James Stewart.[57] Robert Brown, Hector T. McDonald, John Buchanan and H. McDonald, all Baldoon settlers, became staunch supporters of this Wesleyian congregation.[58]

John Morrison, upon leaving the Baldoon settlement took up property on Strumness Island. In 1830, he sold a portion of his land to Robert Brown[59] and he eventually leased the remainder to a James Cartwright and moved to the mainland.[60] He settled on land located on the north branch of Great Bear Creek. which he in turn sold and finally took up permanent residence on lot 11, 15th Concession, Chatham township.[61] Edwin and Charles Morrison, sons of John, opened a highly successful grist mill on the east branch of Great Bear Creek. In time the small village of Tupperville grew up around the mill. The descendants of the Morrisons have remained in the Tupperville/Dresden area where they are engaged principally in farming

The John McKenzie family elected to settle on the Baldoon Road in Dover township on lot 40.[62] This family suffered greatly from an outbreak of Black Diptheria and only one member, Daniel, a grandson of John McKenzie, survived. The local residents buried the family on the homestead and the cemetery was still in existence at the turn of the century. However, as the farm changed hands the cemetery was eventually ploughed under and the headstones thrown into a nearby dredge cut.[63] The descendants of Daniel McKenzie still reside in Dover township but the McKenzie name has been lost.

The contribution of the Baldoon settlers to Wallaceburg and to Kent and Lambton Counties can perhaps be best expressed in the words of the present Lord Selkirk, the tenth Earl of Selkirk, who visited Wallaceburg on 27th July, 1967. He pointed out that Thomas Douglas, the fifth Earl of Selkirk, in establishing the settlement showed the possibilities and importance of emigration.[64] The settlers, he stated, although hard hit by malarial fever, crop failures and poor management revealed the high degree of resolution, determination and courage which enabled them to overcome these difficulties and make the experiment a success.[65]

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER FIVE

1. V. Lauriston, Romantic Kent (Chatham, 1952), p. 391.

2. James Soutar, "Baldoon", Kent County Annual And Almanac, 1882 (Chatham, 1882), p. 18.

3. Fred Hamil, Lord Selkirk's Work In Upper Canada: The Story of Baldoon (Unpublished manuscript, 1942), p. 70.

4. Wallaceburg Old Boys' and Girls' Reunion (Wallaceburg, 1936), p. 5. D. MacDonald, Illustrated Atlas of The Dominion of Canada (Toronto, 1881), p. xiii.

5. Ibid., p. 5.

6. Soutar, op. cit., p. 18.

7. Ibid., p. 18.

8. Alexander McDonell Collection, Notebook Public Archives of Canada M.G. 24, I 8, Vol. 12, pp. 44-45.

9. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion p. 7.

10. A list of the settlers buried in the McDougall cemetery is now in the possession of Frank Mann, Wallaceburg.

11. Soutar, op. cit., p. 18.

12. Alexander McDonell Collection, Notebook p. 48.

13. Soutar, op. cit., p. 19.

14. A map of Wallaceburg drawn in c. 1880 retained the spelling 'Wallaceburgh' and was undoubtedly pronounced Wallaceboro' as in Edinburgh; however, the 'h' was eventually dropped. Map owned by Frank Mann, Wallaceburg.

15. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion p. 7.

16. Soutar, op. cit., p. 19.

17. Ibid., p. 19.

18. Ibid., p. 19.

19. See map of Wallaceburg following page 59.

20. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion, p. 7.

21. George Mitchell, "The Baldoon Settlement", Kent Historical Society (Chatham, 1914), p. 18.

22. Soutar, op. cit., p. 25.

23. Ibid., p. 19.

24. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion p. 7.

25. J. H. Beers & Co., Commemorative Biographical Record of The County of Kent (Toronto, 1904), p. 203.

26. Pamphlet prepared by Frank Mann on the opening of the addition to the Wallaceburg Public Library on Saturday, 8th July 1967. The addition was Wallaceburg's official centennial project.

27. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion p. 27.

28. Lauriston, op. cit., p. 409.

29. Ibid., p. 410.

30. Interview with Mr. Robert Irwin, Wallaceburg, autumn 1967.

31. Interview with Mrs. Eric McDonald, Wallaceburg, summer 1967.

32. Mitchell op. cit., p. 17.

33. The Crown Deed to Angus McDougall read as follows: "... and Grant unto Angus McDougle or Dougal of the Township of Dover in the County of Kent in the Western District Farmer as a private in the late Company of Kent Volunteers .... one hundred acres - be the same more or less, being the North half of lot no. Twelve in the Third Concession of the said Township." Crown Deed to Angus McDougall recorded 2nd August 1823, now in the possession of Frank Mann, Wallaceburg.

34. Commemorative Biographical Record of The County of Kent p. 649.

35. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion p. 13.

36. Lauriston, op. cit., pp. 414-415. Interview with Michael Duchene of Wallaceburg, brother of Cal and Fred Duchene, autumn 1967.

37. Lauriston, op. cit., p. 416.

38. Wallaceburg Old Boys' And Girls' Reunion p. 13. Commemorative Biographical Record of The County of Kent p. 203.

39. For further information on D. B. McDonald see Appendix.

40. Interview with Miss Frieda McDougall, granddaughter of Alexander McDougall, 1967.

41. "The Canada Temperance Act", Public Statutes of Canada, 1878 Chapter 16, pp. 81-123.

42. List of mayors prepared by Frank Mann, Wallaceburg, and D. MacKenzie, London.

43. Lauriston, op. cit., pp. 783-4.

44. Ibid., p. 784.

45. Wreath, Helen. "Lambton Centennial Series", Sarnia Observer (Sarnia, 1949), day and month of issue not available.

46. Abstract relating to north part of south part of lot lettered 'B' in the 4th Concession, Gore of Chatham. (Kent County Registry Office, Chatham).

47. Abstract relating to south half of lot lettered 'A' in 4th Concession, Gore of Chatham. (Kent County Registry Office, Chatham).

48. For further information on the Baldoon Poltergeist see Neil T. McDonald, The Belledoon Mystery (Wallaceburg, c. 1880). Francis Huff, "Sombra Teacher Faced Witchcraft Charge Over Baldoon 'Ghost'", London Free Press, 28th March 1964. P. Jones, History of The Ojibway Indians (London, 1861), pp. 157-9.

49. Will of Duncan McDonald, 13th July 1874, Kent Registry Office (Chatham, Ontario).

50. Bargain of Sale by Hector Brown to Alexander Brown of a portion of the north part of the south half of lot lettered 'A' in the 3rd Concession of Sombra township, 15th June 1826. Indenture of Bargain of Sale owned by Mrs. Gordon Stewart, R.R.#4, Wallaceburg, Ontario.

51. Bargain of Sale by Hector Brown to Alexander Brown of a portion of the north part of the south half of lot 1 in the 3rd Concession of Sombra township, 15th June 1826. Indenture of Bargain of Sale owned by Mrs. Gordon Stewart, R.R.#4, Wallaceburg, Ontario.

52. Crown Deed of 100 acres to Hector Brown, 28th February 1837. Deed owned by Mrs. Gordon Stewart, R.R.#4, Wallaceburg, Ontario.

53. Bargain of Sale by Hector Brown to Alexander Brown of a portion of the north part of the south half of lot lettered 'A' and the north part of the south half of lot 1, both in the 3rd Concession of Sombra township, 15th June 1826. Indenture of Bargain of Sale owned by Mrs. Gordon Stewart.

54. Crown Deed of 100 acres to Alexander Brown, 28th February 1837. Deed owned by Mrs. Gordon Stewart.

55. J. H. Beers & Co., Commemorative Biographical Record of The County of Lambton (Toronto, 1906), p. 494.

56. John Buchannan (Buchanan) owned 50 acres of lot 1 in the 19th Concession, Chatham township. Assessment Roll, 2nd November 1860. Assessment Roll owned by Mrs. George Clark, Port Lambton, Ontario.

57. "The News Annual For 1905" Wallaceburg News Colwell Bros. (Wallaceburg, 1905).

58. Subscription pledge by members of the Weslyian Methodist Church, 30th July 1853, now owned by Mrs. George Clark, Port Lambton, Ontario.

59. Mortgage Deed from John Morrison to John Brown, 14th August 1830.

60. Mortgage Deed from John Morrison to James Cartwright, 9th March 1832

61. Deed of Land sold by John Morrison to Angus Morrison, 5th April 1873. Deed owned by Mrs. Mary Morrison, Tupperville, Ontario.

62. Alexander McDonell Collection, Notebook p. 48.

63. Interview with present owner of farm on lot 40, Dover township.

64. London Free Press 28th July 1967.

65. Ibid.