Joseph Burr Tyrrell
1858 - 1957

Born at Weston near Toronto and a graduate of the University of Toronto. Tyrrell gained recognition from the Scientific circle for his work with the Geological Survey of Canada between 1881 and 1898. On resigning from the Survey he worked as a consulting geologist and mining engineer, was at the Klondike in its heyday and for many years was president of the Kirkland Lake Gold Mining Co. Very active with the Champlain Society and an accomplished Canadian explorer in his own right, Tyrrell edited the narratives and journals of many of his illustrious predecessors in northwest exploration including Samuel Hearne, David Thompson and Philip Turnor. The years of investigating the geological resources of this country took him far and wide by foot, dogteam and canoe.

No stranger was he to cold, hunger, mosquitoes and black flies, nor to the joys of discovery and outdoor life that he relished.

Among Tyrrell's contributions to this land are a good many present-day lake and river names. "The Waterhen Country" did not evade his thorough examination, being included in the "Report on North-Western Manitoba - Ottawa 1892."

Salt Springs:
When H.Y. Hind passed by in 1858, he wrote "The wells at present are twenty five in number, but some of them appear to have been lately abandoned, and others have long since ceased to yield brine. They are situated four hundred yards from the lake shore, and were first worked forty years since, by James Monkman. This enterprising individual struggled for many years against the importation of English salt, which was sold in the settlement at a cheaper rate than he could afford to manufacture salt on Lake winnipego-sis. He has made salt at Swan River and Duck River. The manufacture is now carried on with profit for the Hudson's Bay Company at Swan River, and at Winnipego-sis Lake by Monkman's sons. At the "springs" there are two small log-houses and three evaporating furnaces. The kettles, of English construction are well-made rectangular vessels of iron, five feet long, two feet broad, and one foot deep, they are laid upon two rough stone walls, about twenty inches apart, which form the furnace..."

WINNIPEGOSIS
Prior to 1898, this locality was known as "Mossy River".

Mossy River
Prior to the appearance of the explorers it was known as Ninanhemackequéke, orally translated by the Canadiens to "Riviere à l'eau Trouble." (Troubled Water River).

List of N.W.Co. clerks, translators, guides, farmers and voyageurs employed at Fort Dauphin after the 1804 fusion:

CLERKS
Cummings
Angus McGillis
François Nolin
Louis Girardin
Allen McDonald

TRANSLATORS
Joseph Collin
'Le Petit Cadotte'

GUIDE -
Nicolas Ducharme

VOYAGEURS - FARMEN
Ls. Taillon, Jacques Laviolette
Frs. Capois Houle, fils,
Frs. L'Heureux, Pierre Laroque.

VOYAGEURS
J.-B. Lalonde, Jos. Lapointe,
Ls. L'aventure, Jos. Descoteaux,
Jos. Bougeault, Frs. Coulombe,
J.B. Lafleur, Jos. Plante, Th. William,
Pierre Forcier, J.B. Desroches,
Michel Gosselin, Jos. Berger,
Pierre Cotté, J.B. Goulet,
Ant. Ducharme, Francois Roy,
Ant. Mandeville, Ed. Gilbert,
Jean Louyon, Ls. Boisvert,
Antoine Gosselin,
Piguaouoite, J.B. Ledoux,
Alexis Mc Kay, J.B. Nassue,
Jos. Clairmont.

Fort Dauphin
It is very difficult to know how many forts labelled as Fort Dauphin existed in this area and where they were located. Only archaeology and time might come up with all the answers. There were Fort Dauphin I of La Vérendrye; Fort Dauphin II of Maurice Blondeau - 1797; Fort Dauphin III, a N.W.C. provision post and others of free traders and H.B.C.

Pierre LaVérendrye (Son)
1714 - 1755
Born Dec. 1st 1714 to Pierre Gaultier La Vérendrye and Marie-Anne Dandonneau de Lile aux Vaches in the Parish of Saint-Pierre de Sorel, Canada, Pierre became a 'Cadet' at the age of 14 and served for two years at the garrison in Montreal.
He left for the western interior on June 8, 1731 with his fathers expedition, intending to explore a route to the western sea financed by the fur trade. Returning to fort La Reine, "Portage la Prairie" from the Mandans to the south in 1741 he brought in some horses and that same fall was sent by his father to establish a post further north.
Today, in the village of winnipegosis an historical plaque reads as follows: "In the fall of 1741, at the request of the Crees and Assiniboines, Pierre Laverendrye built in this vicinity, Fort Dauphin."

Gabrielle Roy
One of Canada's leading novelists, she was born and raised in Saint-Boniface where she attended l'Académie Saint-Joseph. Her post-graduate years were spent teaching in one-room country schools in the days when children walked miles to class, a leather or homemade denim schoolbag strapped to the back, a makeshift syrup-pail lunchkit with jam sandwiches in the hand and on the feet, gum-rubbers often thickened up to many times the size of those little feet by prairie gumbo. The young teacher nourished an interest in the theatre and in the '30's went to stage with Le Cercle Molière of Saint-Boniface. In 1937 she studied drama in Paris and returning to her homeland in 1939, took up residence in Montreal where began an illustrious writing career. The first novel, "Bonheur d'Occasion" was published in 1946 and brought Gabrielle Roy the international acclaim of France's Prix Femina. Translated, it was published in New York as "The Tin Flute". The second native novels to date was "La Petite Poule d'Eau" ("Where Nests the Water Hen") ("Das Kleine Wasserhuhn") a tale of one of Manitoba's frontiers, where the author had taught school. The scenes are drawn from this country: Waterhen River, Meadow Portage, Rorketon, Toutes Aides and Sainte-Rose du Lac. The characters are home grown; Lusina, Nick Slusick, Miss O'Rorke, Miss Cold, the Capitchin and many others who take part in the pioneer drama. To read "Where Nests the Water Hen" is to savour fresh country spring water from an enamelled tin goblet. It is what it is.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police
This Canadian constabulary force, formed in 1873, underwent a series of name changes, from its original North-West Mounted Police, to Royal North West Mounted Police in 1904 and finally to Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1920.
In 1935, the Canada Post office issued the RCMP stamp.
This reddish postage stamp would probably have been one of the kind in use on parcels when the "old mailman" from the novel "Where Nests the Water Hen" made his rounds northward from Rorketon on the bush trails of the Waterhen Peninsula.

Along side molasses, honey and jam on the shelf of the country store, was 10 lb. tin pails of corn syrup. The choice was limited to a couple of brands. Corn syrup had many uses from flapjack topping to mixing with milk for baby's bottle. Some old timers with a better than average sweet tooth would add brown sugar to it. The empty can was put to good use, with a few nail holes punched in the bottom to take care of condensation it became a good lunch pail packed with sandwiches and a carefully cloth-wrapped jar of milk or tea that mothers and wives had lovingly prepared, with the commercial handle removed, the solder of which would melt over the campfire, and replaced by snare or hay wire, it became a first class tea pail.

Indians old carrying place, J.B. Tyrrell's report of 1892 gave a length of 1,700 paces, Joseph Deroven's 'Itinerary of 1760': 'petit portage, d'une demi-lieu'.

"This island is said to have derived its name from the fact that Indians of the Crane River band used to grow crops of potatoes here year after year." - Tyrrell

Davis Point

PEONAN POINT

PORTAGE BAY

Peonan Point, Cree Indian name meaning 'waiting place', originally applied to Cherry Island harbour, the point at which the fur-trade brigades from various parts of the district used to wait for each other before proceeding on their annual trip. 'Pahounan' on Andrew Russell map, 1858. 'Pa-oo-nan' in Hind Expedition report 1858, and 'paonan' in J.B. Tyrrell report of 1892.

Pineimuta Lake.
'Pineimuta Sakahigan'
"We took to our boat at the beginning of Partridge Crop River (Fairford River) rising secured a guide from the fleet of canoes in the rear, to take us through a narrow passage between beds of rushes which cover many square miles, and consolidate the 'Crop' so called by the Indians on account of the resemblance which the outline of this ready expanse bears the "crop" of a partridge."
- Hind Expedition, Sept. 29th. 1858

Central dam (no. 6 Hydro) portage on N. side - government picnic site

Fairford River (Fairford Falls - Hydro - 1 December 1960)

Fairford Indian Reserve Nº 50

Western Meadowlark
Sturnella neglecta - L.
Otapi'skaiwanases (lit. the scarf or neckerchief bird) - Cree.
A chunky brownish bird sporting a bright yellow vest crossed by a black V whose particular song on a warm sunny day has left many a fond memory to its audience. The canadian folk song "Alouette" is of a similar eastern lark. The Western Meadowlark is also well known by Manitoba's Southern neighbours, it is the state bird of North Dakota.

Government Picnic Site

"Then limestone cliffs begin to make their appearance, and continue for a couple of miles along the shore, rising at their highest point to twenty-two feet above the water. The bottom of these cliffs is hollowed out into fantastic shapes, and on their summit is a lovely stretch of open prairie, in places overshadowed by oak trees. This is one of the most charming camping places on the lake." J.B. Tyrrell, 1892.

Steep Rock
Steep Rock Point
Elm Point
Pine Harbour
Cherry Island
Point Asham
Seneca-root
Mansiuïs - Cree
Polygala Senega - L.
Of the Milkwort family, the Seneca plant is know by various other names such as Mountain Flax, Cattle Herb and Snake Root. Height, depending on the soil and year varies from 15 to 40 cm with many stems and numerous long pointed leaves, deep green on top with a pale green underside. Its tiny white flowers form in conical clusters. Seneca Root has been and still is a source of income to individuals and families. Dug up with a round mouth shovel, the roots are collected in a gunnysack, dried and sold to a buyer to eventually be used in the preparation of medicines. The majority of Canada's export of this valuable herb is picked in Manitoba. Traditionally it has been used as a home remedy for snake bite, cough, pleurisy, asthma, cramps, croup and other maladies. From an old source: "It is used as a tea, powder or syrup. The dose of powdered root is from 10 to 20 grains every 3 hours. For croup of children use a decoction made by using an ounce of the root to a pint of boiling water. The dose is a teaspoonful every half hour until it acts as an emetic and cathartic. The dose of tea for adults is from ½ to 2 ounces 3 or 4 times a day for the above troubles."

"The most westerly of the small stony islands was visited on the 4th of August, 1888, and was found to be black with great numbers of cormorants (Phalacrocorax dilophus), young and old, this being their principal breeding place in the lake." Tyrrell

"The Chief pointed out a portage path between the Little Saskatchewan or Dauphin River, and the War-path River, which forms the war-road of the Ojibways and Swampys of Lake Winnipeg when they proceed on their periodical excursions against the Sioux. This War-road was much used in the earlier history of the natives of the Low Country..."
- Hind Expedition
Sept. 26th. 1858.

"La rivière Dauphine" - Joseph Deroven Itinerary Dec. 23, 1760; 'Dauphin or Little Saskatchewan R.' Hind Expedition map, 1859.

"The Narrows are caused by a remarkable barrier of boulders, chiefly consisting of the unfossiliferous rocks, about six feet above the lake and twenty feet broad."
- Hind Expedition, September 27th. 1858.

Sugar Island is a favourite camping ground of the Dauphin River Swampys, who now occupy this part of the country. We found some graves near to a garden in which potatoes were planted. A few pieces of tobacco procured us a small supply of this vegetable, so rare and valuable in these regions. Sugar Island is so named from a grove of the ash-leaved maple, the tree of which bore old marks of tapping."
- Hind Expedition, Sept. 23th. 1858.

"... the Union Jack slipped to the top of the mast... They had at hand all that was needed to betoken mourning, holidays, days of rejoicing, of toil, of departure. In her own fashion Miss O'Rorke left her mark on the Island" - from "Where Nests the Water Hen."

Borshch
13 lbs. pork spareribs.
2 qts. water.
3 or 4 medium size beets (grated or chopped fine).
1 tablespoon salt. A few peppercorns.
1 medium size onion. 1 carrot (chopped).
½ cup stewed tomatoes (or two fresh tomatoes, skinned and chopped).
Sprig of fresh dill (chopped).
- Cut up spareribs, cover with water, add salt & peppercorns. Cook for one hour or until meat is tender.
- Add the prepared beets, tomatoes, onions, carrots, dill, season to taste and re-cook until the vegetables are tender - if too thick, add boiling water.
- Dotions - one cup shredded cabbage, ½ cup yellow or green beans, ½ cup green peas.
Delicious served with sweet or sour cream and rye bread. Summer vegetable borschch can be made the same way by substituting the spareribs with chopped beet greens.

Pirishki
Dough - To ½ cup boiled milk, add ½ cup butter, margarine or oil, 1 tablespoon of salt and ¼ cup sugar - let cool - Dissolve 1 package of yeast in ¼ cup of lukewarm water with 1 tablespoon of sugar - let stand 10 minutes.
- Beat one full egg and 2 egg yolks together - When milk mixture is cool, add yeast mixture and beaten eggs - add 2 cups flour - beat together - then add ½ to 1 cup flour.
- Knead, let dough stand in warm temperature for an hour, punch down, put in greased bowl, cover and leave in refrigerator overnight.
- Roll out dough, cut in small circles, add filling and press the ends together.
- Place on greased cookie sheet, glaze with egg white or melted butter and bake in 350°F oven until golden brown.
Sauerkraut filling - Boil 1 jar or can sauerkraut for 3 minutes and strain through colander
- Saute small onion (chopped fine) in 3 tablespoons of oil
- Mix thoroughly and simmer until done (about 20 minutes) and chill before filling dough.

"... Nick Slusick grumbingly drew from one of his mail bags a letter addressed to the Tousignants. Pierre-Emmanuel-Roger, who had been sent to reconnoiter each Friday, found it in their letter box, the hollow of an old tree that had been killed by frost. The letter bore no stamp. In its place there were initials - O.H.M.S. - and, in the opposite, a buffalo surmounted by a cross, the whole engraved in relief, black on white, and most impressive."
- from "Where Nests the Water Hen."

As a vessel sailed across troubled waters from a distant land and now at berth in a calm sea of grass dotted with islands of poplar and spruce, this little church can be seen alongside. Provincial Road 481, east of Toutes Aides.

Water hen
(Fulica americana - L.)
One thing they are not short of is labels: "Kwäkwächechip" in Cree, "La petite Poule d'eau" to the canadian voyageurs, "Coot," "Mudhen," "Marsh hen" and others. Along with a few other originals of this land, they are among the most plain of birds, slate grey in colour with an almost black head, a touch of white at the tail end and a bit on the wing tips, noticeable when in flight. In a raft-like nest of reeds which floats with the rising and falling shallow waters of their marshland habitat, the female lays between 5 and 15 whitish, dark brown freckled eggs. They are fearful, deffensive and nocturnal in habit, quite pleased to float around in grass & reed filled muddy waters. One winter spoke of them as the "clowns of birds" docile but "loud-mouthed" as though always trying to make a short story long. Here in a country of flat low-lying land where daily the sunset spreads its arms as in a gesture of welcome, these agatic buffoons couldnt have chosen a better place for their northern estival paradise.

From Sainte-Rose du Lac through "The Waterhen Country" down to Anama Bay on lake Winnipeg is a give or take 486 Kilometres (302 miles). If the choice is made to contour Peonan point on Lake Manitoba an extra 80 Kilometres (50 miles) would be added. This water route goes down six rivers and through six lakes, most of the latter being of larger than average size. Travel here is through a region of limestone flats, the bed of an ancient inland sea. In boulders and rock outcrops can be seen signs of past life forms; these fossils are indications of the constant transformation taking place in nature and progressing steadily forward. With the passage of time, vegetation, animals and finally humans have moved in at intervals from other continents. The natural resources have furnished livelihoods from hunting, fishing, trapping and more recently mixed farming and ranching. Looking a short distance back this area has been dealt with in scientific and historical accounts alike. A sense of the communities' pulse and its inhabitants can better be gleaned by reading the internationally acclaimed classic "Where Nests The Water Hen" a delicate down-to-earth work.

The following list of approximate distances may be helpful to the modern day "voyageur" preparing an itinerary:

	Km.	Miles
Sainte-Rose du Lac - mouth of Turtle R.	15	9
Mouth of Turtle R. - Dauphin Beach	26	10
Dauphin Beach - mouth of Valley R.	29	18
Mouth of Valley R. - head of Mossy R.	13	8
Total length of Mossy R.	35	22
Mouth of Mossy R. - Snake Island	10	6
Snake Island - south end of Long Island	29	18
South end of Long Island - around the point to Skowan via Little Waterhen R.	385	24
Skowan - Waterhen (government picnic site)	19	12
Waterhen - Meadow Portage	19	12
Meadow Portage - Toutes Aides	26	16
Toutes Aides - Onion Point	26	16
Onion Point - Garden Island	385	24
Garden Island - Davis Point	385	24
Davis Point - Hwy No 6 bridge over Fairford R. (government Picnic site)	16	10
Hwy No 6 - Pineimuta Lake	10	6
Pineimuta L. - Sugar Island	32	20
Sugar Island - head of Dauphin R.	26	16
Head of Dauphin R. - "The Elbow"	26	16
"The Elbow" - Anama Bay on Lake Winnipeg	26	16
Total →	486	302

Peonan Point contour distance:

From portage down west shore to Cherry Island	42	26
Cherry Island - Steep Rock Pt.	14	9
Steep Rock Pt. - Hwy. no. 6 bridge	24	15
Total →	80	50

Père Pothier, Jésuit, compiled a collection of voyageurs journals. One of them was of Joseph Deroven (Drouin), dated December 25th 1760. The following excerpt of his itinerary describes the region covered by this map:
"Route du lac Onipic, par le sud (du lac Winnipeg au fort La Reine): Rivière Dauphine, 20 lieues, - lac des Perdrix, 10 lieues, - rivière Saint-Martin, 3 lieues, - 3 lieues de traverse jusqu'au petit portage, d'une demi-lieue, - 10 lieues de lac jusqu'au grand portage, d'une lieue, - 5 lieues de traverse jusqu'à l'île aux Serpents, 2 lieues de traverse jusqu'à la petite île aux Serpents, - A trois quarts de lieue, le fort Dauphin: Cris, Assiniboils, Mandanes, Blancs-Barbus, Grand-Brochets, Petits Brochets et nations qui sont dans les prairies. - A 40 lieues du lac, tirant vers le sud, est le fort La Reine, où sont les mêmes nations que ci-dessus."

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Lafrance(G) - Editing.

The Waterhen Country

SCALE
KILOMETRES 2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14
MILES 2 1 0 2 4 6 8 10

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