

ST. JUDE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

St. Clement's Heritage Advisory Committee
Designation Project

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Historian

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HERITAGE INITIATIVE

The St. Clement's Heritage Advisory Committee hired me to research the history of St. Jude's (Anglican) Church, Grand Marais (MB) and prepare a report to support the historical designation of the church at both the municipal and provincial level. My findings are listed in the following pages.

Built in 1896, St. Jude's Church has been a key part of the community of Grand Marais for 113 years.

The structure is architecturally significant because of the material used in its formation - black poplar log with dovetailed ends and local fieldstone with mortar.

The church also holds cultural significance in that it is one of the few protestant churches in the municipality to have been built, maintained, and attended by a community of primarily Métis (Half-breed) people. The building of the church was made possible from the generosity of two Métis (Cree/Scottish) men who donated one acre of land each for the church and cemetery. The builders of the church, and the majority of the initial congregation, were made up of families with parallel ancestry, as were some of the early missionaries who ministered to the people. Names such as Knott, Ruperts, Linklater, Cook, Thomas, and many other well known fur trade names made up the early community.

As a historian, I believe this fact establishes the church as a central part of Manitoba History that represents a specific era and identifies a partial life-way of an ethnic group that made numerous and noteworthy contributions to the province. While the building of the church promoted the teachings of Christianity it must be remembered that the Indigenous ancestors of these families were not Christians and did not practice Christianity. And so the building of the church and the accepting of Christianity was a major transition in the spiritual tradition of a specific group of Indigenous people.

The Friends of Old St. Jude's, a group of community members concerned with the future of the church, have begun working to restore the church and collect and preserve its history. Some of their goals include:

- 1). Application to Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Culture, Heritage, Tourism, and Sport for a heritage grant to repair the church roof.
- 2). Raise \$10,000.00 to meet their contribution of the grant.
- 3). Repair and restore the church.
- 4). Application for heritage designation from the R.M. of Clements.
- 5). Application for heritage designation from the Province of Manitoba.
- 6). Transform the church into a museum and genealogical resource centre.
- 7). Rework a part of the cemetery to make it a tranquil, peaceful place where people could go for spiritual healing.

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THE CHURCH

An Architectural History

On the edge of the eastern shore of Lake Winnipeg, in the settlement of Grand Marais, a small protestant church took form in 1896. It was given the name St. Jude's (Anglican) Church.¹ The foundation of the church was made from local fieldstone and mortar.² Black Poplar trees, cut locally and hand sawn into square logs with dovetailed ends became the walls. The outer surface was covered with light wood panels that were painted white. The original structure was small and had a simple hall plan that was lighted along the east and west walls with rectangular, flat windows. The structure was placed in such a way as to give the front entryway a southern exposure that was initially sheltered with a small porch and a slender tower topped with a large cross. Beside the entryway was a red-brick chimney. Cedar shakes covered the roof originally, a common material used for roofing at that time.



St. Jude's Church sometime before 1950 – (Credit - Eva Brown)

¹ “**Saint Jude** was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He is generally identified with Thaddeus, and is also variously called Jude of James, Jude Thaddaeus, Judas Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus. He is sometimes identified with Jude, brother of Jesus, but is clearly distinguished from Judas Iscariot, another disciple and later the betrayer of Jesus. Saint Jude's attribute is a club. He is also often shown in icons with a flame around his head. This represents his presence at Pentecost, when he received the Holy Spirit with the other apostles. Occasionally he is represented holding an axe or halberd, as he was brought to death by one of these weapons. In some instances he may be shown with a scroll or a book (The Epistle of Jude) or holding a carpenter's rule.” (www.wikipedia.org)

² Mortar is a mixture of sand and a binder such as cement or lime, and water, and is applied as a paste which then sets hard to the construction blocks, filling the holes and holding the blocks together. Construction blocks can be either stone, brick or cinder block.

The interior of the church contained a wood stove for heat with community members taking turns collecting and chopping wood. Local carpenter, James (Jim) Raven, built the wood pews, holy table and shelves, and did so after the loss of one of his arms. Born in about 1861 at Berens River, James moved to the Grand Marais area as a young man to work as a commercial fisher.³ Raven, along with Rev. Edward Thomas later built a Bishop's Chair from local timber.⁴ The church purchased its first organ in 1914 with the assistance of Rev. George C. Smith of the church of St. Peter. Oral story says Rev. Smith helped the community raise money by holding basket and pie socials.⁵

The church was built on two acres of land (Part NW 18-18-7E) that were generously donated by local residents, George Rupert/s (Francis/Fanny Knott) and Alexander Knott (Barbara Linklater).⁶ The two men were brothers-in-law. Both men were of Native American and European descent, and both received Métis (Half-breed) scrip, Alexander in 1876 and George in 1878, from the Dominion of Canada (Federal Government).⁷ According to scrip record, George Rupert/s was born around 1845 at Fort Ellice (Manitoba) to a Cree woman named Lissette and Chief Michael OKanase (a.k.a Michael Cardinal).⁸ Over several generations the Cardinal Clan had moved westward from Quebec with many descendants remaining in the region of the Keeseekoowenin Reserve near Riding Mountain (MB).⁹ George chose to leave that area and move to the settlements of St. Peter (East Selkirk) and Fort Alexander on the Winnipeg River where he remained until 1869 before moving to

³ James (Jim) Raven (also spelled Ravin in some records) was born in Berens River about 1861 to Elizabeth and Robert Raven. The family later moved to Brokenhead (Manitoba) where James served as a Councilor of the Brokenhead Band from 1922 to 1927 and Chief from 1927 to at least 1936, possibly longer. The 1881 census states James Ravin as a married, male, Indigenous, age 18 years, a fisherman who attended the Church of England. His wife is listed as Annie Ravin, age 15. They were living with Robert & Mary Mackae (McKay) in the district of Lisgar, St. Clements. ("East Side of the Red," p. 20-31, 182; also Church of Latter Day Saints 1881 Census at www.familysearch.org; 1906 Automated Genealogy of the North West Provinces, Canadian Census at www.automatedgenealogy.com)

⁴ Rev. Edward Thomas (1844-1917) was killed on 1 October 1917 at the age of 73 in a fatal incident with a team of horses. He is buried in the cemetery. (East Side of the Red, p. 182-3; Headstone Transcription) His son, Alfred Edward, with wife Elizabeth, married Sarah Mathilda Knott in 1897, daughter of Alexander Knott and Barbara Linklater.

⁵ Rev. George C. Smith served as the minister of St. Peter Dynevor from 1949 to 1950 and from 1961 to 1963. The Manitoba Historical Society awarded him a Centennial Medal for his contributions during 50 years of ministering to his parishioners. ("East side of the Red", p. 182, 193; "Beyond the Gates of Lower Fort Garry 1880-1981, p. 63-64; The Manitoba Historical Society at: www.mhs.mb.ca

⁶ The name is spelled as both *Rupert* and *Ruperts* in various archival records. On the "Deed of Land" written by George to the Church of England in 1906 he uses the spelling *Ruperts*.

⁷ Scrip was a one-time payment in cash or land made to people of mixed Native American/European (Indian/White) ancestry from the Dominion of Canada to extinguish their Indigenous entitlement. Historically the term *Métis* was used for people of Indigenous and French descent, while those of Scots/English and Indigenous descent were labeled *Half-breed*. See www.collectionscanada.gc.ca – Métis Scrip (Half-breed) Records – Archiva Net Online Resources, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸ Fort Ellice was a Hudson's Bay Company trading post built in 1831 on Beaver Creek near the confluence of the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle rivers, just east of present day border of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The name Okanase is an Ojibway word that means "little bone." When Michael Okanase's descendants received Christian baptism, some took the surname Bone, while others claimed Burns and Rupert/s.

⁹ Neufeld, Peter L. Dictionary of Canadian Biography On-line "Keeseekoowenin" (www.biographi.ca)

the shore of Lake Winnipeg, 10 miles south of Fort Alexander at the mouth of Red River.¹⁰ In 1871 a son, John, was born to George and wife, Eliza Henderson, at Fort Alexander.¹¹ The Rupert/s family moved to Balsam Bay where Eliza died, and soon after, George resettled at Grand Maris. There, he married Francis/Fanny Knott (ca.1854-1901) daughter of Mary and John Knott. George fathered at least two children with Fanny: Elizabeth (1875-1891) and George Albert (1876-1912), and later the couple adopted another son, Alexander, born in Selkirk in 1885. George & Fanny's 16-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, died on 7 February 1891, five years before the church was built, suggesting the cemetery is much older than the church. Although George had donated the land as early as 1891, it was not until 26 September 1906 that he signed the Deed of Land to the Church of England, Parish of St. Phillips (Part NW 18-18-7E – St. Jude's Anglican Church), making the transaction official. Part of the land description from the Deed reads:

All and Singular that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being that portion of the NorthWest quarter of section Eighteen (18) in Township Eighteen (18) and Range Seven (7) East of the Principal Meridian in Manitoba described as follows:

Commencing at a point on the southern boundary of said quarter section distant Easterly along the same Fourteen hundred and Thirty (1430) feet from the south west corner of said quarter section: thence north parallel with the western boundary of said quarter section two hundred and seven (207) feet to a point: thence East parallel with the southern boundary of said quarter section two hundred seven (207) feet to a point: thence south parallel with the western boundary of said quarter section two hundred and seven (207) feet more or less to the said southern boundary of said quarter section: Thence west along the said southern boundary two hundred and seven (207) feet more or less to the point of commencement containing one acre more or less.¹²

George's wife Fanny died sometime before 1906. George survived her by six years dying on 23 June 1912, and their son, George Albert, followed five months later on 7 November 1912.¹³

¹⁰ George Rupert/s Scrip Record Application dated 5 September 1878 (www.collectionscanada.ca) Library and Archives Canada

¹¹ Scrip Records for John Rupert/s at www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

¹² Diocese of Rupert's Land Archives – “Deed of Land,” File: St. Jude, Grand Marais, #OW.032

¹³ Manitoba Vital Statistics at www.vitalstats.gov.mb.ca

RC + 19.

10 miles south of Fort Alexander and

DOMINION OF CANADA,
PROVINCE OF MANITOBA,
County of *Saskatchewan*
City of *Yarmouth*

George Rupert, formerly of
Upper Canada at *Lake Umbagog*, near *Oran* in the County
of *Westchester* in said Province,

do hereby make oath and say as follows:

1. I am a Half-breed head of a family resident in the Parish of
St. James in the said Province, on the 1st day of July, A.D. 1879, and consisting
of myself and *family*
and I claim to be entitled as such head of family to receive a grant of one hundred and sixty acres
of land or to receive Scrip for one hundred and sixty dollars pursuant to the Statute in that behalf.

2. I was born on or about the *15* day of *June* A.D. 1845 in the Parish of
St. James in said Province.

3. *Michael O'Hannagan* was my father;
and *Resonette O'Connell* is my mother

4. I have not made or caused to be made any claim of land or Scrip other than the above in
this or any other Parish in said Province, nor have I claimed or received, as an Indian, any
annuity moneys, from the Government of said Dominion. *Except the first two*
years that the treaty was paid out, since
then I have never taken any treaty money
and always see documents from the Indian
Commission that my name was struck
out from the Indian list

Sworn before me at the Parish and County aforesaid on the
13 day of *June* A.D. 1879 having
been first read over and explained in the *English*
language to said deponent who seemed perfectly to under-
stand the same and *signed his*
mark in my presence.

George Rupert
mark

Amable Louis
Agent Don Land
Affdt. N° 2239
Claim N° 2847
Scrip N° 12278. \$160.00.
Scrip issued on 5th Sept. 1878.
23-11-86. J. A. C.

Métis (Half-breed) Scrip application, George Rupert/s, 1878 (www.collectionscanada.gc.ca)

Alexander Knott noted on his scrip application that he was born somewhere in the Northwest on 10 July 1842 to Mary/Marie Hays (Half-breed) and John Knott (Indian). He settled for a while in the parish of St. Andrews, but sometime after 1870 he moved north to Balsam Bay and Grand Marais where he, and his wife Barbara Linklater, made a home with their children. At least nine children were born to them: Sarah Mathilda (1871), Annie (1873), Charles and Thomas (1876), Patrick (1877), John (1880), Jessie (1881), James (1885), Edward (1886). Sons John and Patrick died in 1880 and James in 1886. Perhaps the deaths of their children encouraged the Knott family to also donate part of their land for the cemetery. Alexander died on 16 May 1920 at the age of 80 years.

According to one story, Alexander Knott's mother, Mary/Marie (Hays) Knott was the first person buried in the cemetery. She was born at Moose Factory, James Bay in July 1820 to a Cree woman named Margaret and a white father, Keenynoon Hays.¹⁴ She is listed in the 1891 census as a 72 year old widow, but is not listed in the 1901 Canadian census, which suggests she died sometime in-between.¹⁵ Although her wooden grave marker is still visible today, it is not completely legible.



Wooden grave marker of Mary/Marie Knott, 2009

¹⁴ Scrip Records at www.collectionscanada.gc.ca Library and Archives Canada

¹⁵ Library and Archives Canada, 1891 Canadian Census online database

DOMINION OF CANADA.
PROVINCE OF MANITOBA.
County of Lisgar.

I, *Alexander Knott*
of the Parish of *St Andrews* in the County
of Lisgar, in said
Province, *former* make oath and say as follows:

1. I am a Half-breed head of a family resident in the Parish of *St Andrews* in the said Province, on the 15th day of July, A.D. 1870, and consisting of myself and *wife and children*, and I claim to be entitled as such head of family to receive a grant of one hundred and sixty acres of land, or to receive Scrip for one hundred and sixty dollars pursuant to the Statute in that behalf.
2. I was born on or about the *10th* day of *July* A.D. 1842 in the Parish of *Montealegre* in said Province.
3. *John Knott, an Indian* was my father; and *Mary Knott* was my mother.
4. I have not made or caused to be made any claim of land or Scrip other than the above in this or any other Parish in said Province, nor have I claimed or received as an Indian any annuity moneys from the Government of said Dominion.

Alexander Knott

Sworn before me at the Parish of *St Andrews*
in the County of Lisgar, on the
24th day of *July* A.D. 1876, having
been first read over and explained in the *English*
language to said deponent who seemed perfectly to
understand the same, and *signed*
in my presence.

J. M. Macfarlan
Commissioner.

Affdt. N° 162.
Claim N° 157
Scrip N° 1185 to 1192. #160. (C).
Scrip issued on 1st May 1876.
26-3-86. J. M. C.

The church underwent several changes after 1930. The north end was extended, adding a chancel sanctuary with a stained-glass window. Mrs. Margaret Linklater, the first W. A. President donated the window. Two vestry rooms were also added. The old tower and porch were disassembled and a square belfry and front porch were built on a concrete foundation. A bell was hung inside the belfry. It is said that this bell came from the Grand Marais Cement School built in 1913/14. The school had received the bell from a Winnipeg fire hall.¹⁶ After the extension the main structure of the church measured 41 feet long and 21.4 feet wide. The front porch is 18 feet wide and 10 feet long.¹⁷



Stained glass window, 2009



Stained glass window, 2009

¹⁶ “East Side of Red River” p.182-183

¹⁷ Christine Stewart, The Friends of the Old St. Jude’s Church



Front view of porch, 2009



Belfry, 2009

Throughout the 20th century, numerous protestant Ministers, Deaconesses, and Lay Readers came to the region to minister to its parishioners. Some stayed in the community full time, while others visited occasionally to perform a baptism, death or other function, and yet others travelled to the church for Sunday service. Some of those dedicated people include:

Rev. Coats, Edward Thomas, F. Longmore, Chas. R. Harbord, J. Rance, E. Barrett, R. Clarke, G. E. Sage, W.C. Turney, J. Morgan Davis, Mr. Eden, G.A. Harris, S. J. Tolton, Ernest R. Roe, J. Mainer, Helen Isbister, Rev. Sherstone, J. Blewett, T. D, Conlin, Len Fryen, J. Elwall, and J. Mckinney. Henry Harper, R. N. Holmes, W. A. Knight, E. J. Hoad, Maurice Harman, R. F. Dawson, E. W. Davidson, Nelson Smith, R. S. Montgomery, Stanley Aikens, John Bethel, G.W. Aston, Joseph Davidson, George Hardy, Canon F. Glover, J. Burton Thomas, E. W. Scott, Dominic Prosser, Blake Wood, W.H. J. Walter, John Raines, Andrew Lam, Jennie Wright, J. P Mullan, Deaconesses Enid Hives and Ruth Hall, David Holms, Canon Scott, Doug Gray, Walter Ermine, Steve Beardy, John N. Evans, C. Griggs R.A. Woods, Chuck Baldwin, David Barclay, Robert H. March, E. Drewlo, Canon Hoad, J. W. Oliver, Genevieve Murdock, R.S. Oliver, Canon Whiteford, Daniel Ash, A. G. Johnson, Capt Stevens, Rev. Roy Barkett.¹⁸

The church has had several organists over its lifetime too. Primarily women, some of their names include Mrs. Flora Sayer, Miss Maud Lester, Eva Linklater, and Mrs. Marsh.¹⁹

The church served the people of the parish as a place of worship for 68 years. The last service took place on 18 October 1964.²⁰ The building sat empty for some time before it was turned into a community museum in the summer months. The cemetery continues to serve the community.

THE COMMUNITY

The original people who made Grand Marais their seasonal home were indigenous, living and visiting the area since time immemorial. The region has always been abundant in fur bearing animals for trade, fish for personal and commercial use, with a varied and plentiful supply of berries and medicines (roots & grasses). The area was easily reached by travellers en route from the north or from the east via the Winnipeg River. Canoes were easily shored along the long, sandy beaches where temporary camps were assembled and dissembled in certain seasons.

¹⁸ "East Side of the Red" *St. Jude's Anglican Church Grand Marais* by Betty Linklater, p. 182-185; also *St. Jude's Church Grand Marais* File #: OW032, Diocese of Rupert's Land Archives

¹⁹ "East Side of the Red" *St. Jude's Anglican Church Grand Marais* by Betty Linklater, p. 183

²⁰ Christine Stewart, The Friends of Old St. Jude's Church

The recorded history of the region began in the early 1730s when French explorer, Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye (1685-1749), along with his sons, nephew and other French fur traders arrived in the region. They referred to it as *Grand Marais* meaning *Big Marsh*.²¹ The area has been known by its French name for over 275 years.

In the early 1800s numerous Cree families as well as families of mixed Cree and Scottish/English heritage migrating from more northern communities such as Churchill River, York Factory, and Moose Factory settled in Red River Settlement and lands around Lake Winnipeg. Ojibway and Métis families arriving from the east settled in the region too. Communities at Red River Settlement, St. Peter, Brokenhead (Scanterbury), Fort Alexander, and Balsam Bay developed and flourished. Several retired Hudson's Bay Company men also settled in these areas with their Native wives and children. Many of the names that linger are reminders of the community's origins. After Treaty One was signed in 1871 at Lower Fort Garry, the Reserves of Brokenhead and Fort Alexander (Sagkeeng) became official. And, for those of mixed Indigenous/European descent, scrip was distributed in either cash or land to those eligible, including several families that originally settled in Balsam Bay and Grand Marais.

After a large influx of immigration to Manitoba in the later part of the nineteenth century, several Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian families followed the gravel ridge from East Selkirk to the beach area and built homes as well.

Commercial fishing and lumbering became economic resources for the people of Grand Marais, Balsam Bay and other shore-line communities. As the population grew, so did the need for amenities such as retail outlets, schools, and churches, hence, the formation of St. Jude's Church, followed by the building of a school, the incorporation of a school district, the formation of a post office, and the opening of retail outlets.

²¹ Sutherland, Donna G. *Peguis, A Noble Friend* p. 33; also Wikipedia.org - *Pierre Gaultier de Varennes sieur de la Vérendrye*

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

- Year of construction: 1896
- Style of construction: log, black poplar – hand sawn, dovetailed squared
- Exterior: light wood panels
- Original foundation: fieldstone on main structure, poured cement under present-day front porch
- Current foundation: same
- Building shape: rectangular
- Building height: single storey
- Building dimensions: 41 ft x 21.4 (main structure) 18 x 10 (porch)
- Roof shape: gable
- Original roof materials: cedar
- Current roof materials: asphalt shingles
- Roof features: short square belfry with bell, although from photos this is not the original shape
- Window shape: One stained-glass, pointed window on north end of structure, three rectangular windows on each side of building, and two small rectangular windows on the front entry door.
- Entry door direction: south
- Bell Tower – yes. According to local resident, Betty Linklater, the original bell came from the first Winnipeg Fire hall to the region's cement school before finding it's home in St. Jude's Church
- Cultural affiliation: protestant – Métis/Half-breed (mixed Indigenous/European) community
- Building status: empty, in need or repair
- Significant/outstanding features:
 - Architecturally – made of log, hand sawn
 - Culturally - formed by a majority of Metis/Half-breed families. One of few churches in the province that can claim this distinction

BUILDING USE AND CONDITION:

Current use: empty

Past use: church, museum

Condition of roof: poor, damaged

"Friends of the Old St. Jude's Church" are currently fundraising to re-shingle the roof and restore the structure

Condition of outside walls: fairly well

Condition of inside wall: unknown at time of visit

Condition of foundation: cracked, in need of repair

Condition of windows: fair, but in need of paint or replacement. Energy efficient windows would lessen heat loss

Condition of bell tower: in need of repair, boarded



View of St. Jude's Church from the lakeside (west), 2009

THE FUTURE OF ST. JUDE'S CHURCH

A group of dedicated community members have formed a committee called, "*The Friends of the Old St. Jude's Church*" with a mandate to raise funds to restore the church. The committee has been in communications with Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Culture, Heritage, Tourism and Sport regarding costs, restoration advice and guidance. Architect, David Firman, has suggested a cost of \$20,000.00 to repair and replace the roof of the church. The committee plans to apply for a Heritage Grant through Manitoba Culture, Heritage, Tourism and Sport in March 2010 for the sum of \$10,000.00. The remainder of funds will be raised through donations from the community as well as outside sources.

Once the roof has been successfully repaired and/or replaced, the committee intends to begin work on the remainder of the church.

The goal of the community is to restore the church to its former glory and return it to a usable structure that would enhance the community and be a destination place for tourists to learn the history of Grand Marais and the people who contributed to its development within its recorded history. Suggestions for future use include:

- 1). A Genealogy Centre, where descendants and/or historians could research family histories, including a library of genealogical and historical books, computer internet service, guidance and direction on the varied resources available to research, genealogical workshops, historical lectures.
- 2). Museum/Tourism - The church was once the home of the local museum and members believe it could be used for this purpose once again. Local artifacts from the various ethnic cultures that have been part of its history could be on display with a history of how they came to be and from whom they came from.
- 3). Park - The church and cemetery are situated near the community's Wellness Centre and the committee is looking into possible ways to connect the two sites. The cemetery is a peaceful, tranquil setting with beautiful trees and scrubs that would benefit anyone on their healing path.



View of the cemetery, 2009



A large Oak tree in the cemetery, 2009

RESOURCES:

ARCHIVAL HOLDINGS:

Diocese of Rupert's Land Archives, Winnipeg

BOOKS/ARTICLES:

Neufeld, Peter L. "*Keeseekoowenin*" Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online 1901-1910 (Volume XIII) at www.biographi.ca

St. Andrew's Historical Committee, "Beyond the Gates of Lower Fort Garry 1880-1881 (R.M. of St. Andrew's, 1981)

St. Clement's Historical Committee, "East Side of The Red 1884-1984" (R.M. of St. Clement's Historical Committee, 1984)

Sutherland, Donna G. *Peguis, A Noble Friend* (St. Andrews: Chief Peguis Heritage Park Inc, 2003)

INTERNET WEBSITES:

www.automatedgenealogy.com – 1901, 1906, 1911 Canadian Census
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca – Métis Scrip Records – Library and Archives Canada – Archiva Net Online Resources
www.biographi.ca Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online
www.familysearch.org – Family Search, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca - Hudson's Bay Company Archives
www.mhs.mb.ca - Manitoba Historical Society
www.manitobia.ca – Manitoba Legislative Library online data base of Manitoba newspapers
www.vitalstats.gov.mb.ca – Manitoba Vital Statistics Online database
www.wikipedia.org – Wikipedia

