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THE DYNAMICS OF SETTLEMENT: THE TRANSITION OF SOUTH
NORFOLK, MANITOBA, 1880 TO 1915

BY

DOUGLAS STUART PANTING

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History
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Winnipeg, Manitoba
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The Dynamics of Settlement: The Transition of South Norfolk, Manitoba, 1880 to 1915

BY

Douglas Stuart Panting

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of

Master of Arts

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Abstract

This study is a detailed quantitative study of the process by which the prairie municipality of South Norfolk, Manitoba ceased to be a frontier area and became a settled community. The heart of this study is an analysis of land title documents and the experiences of two farming families, as illustrated by their financial records.

When the settlement experiences these families are examined in a chronological order it would seem that the Municipality of South Norfolk was a Peel County for a new century. In rural Peel in 1840 economic and social betterment were predicated by favorable family/land ratios. It was the same further west in South Norfolk in 1880. Those who came early were guaranteed high profits and consistent gains in net worth. The trials of the later family complete the picture. Their experiences were more like that of Peel's later residents. Living in an era of more finite land resources, they behaved like many in Peel. They delayed their marriages or did not marry at all. Treherne had been transformed and timing was crucial to the success of the migrant farmer.
Acknowledgments

There are many people to thank at the end of this long road. I would like to thank Barry Ferguson for his encouragement and my advisor Douglas N. Sprague for the insight that my research lacked at various stages.

I greatly appreciate my employer James Richardson & Sons, Limited. They have provided me with much kindness. The satisfying work as Archivist for the firm has sharpened my skills and has made continuing my research much more viable. But most of all I am grateful to my boss for the past several years, the late Don Hyde.

Working as an archivist has made me appreciate that this research would not have been possible without special access to records and so I would like to thank Russell James and his staff at the Morden Land Titles Office. It was not an easy task to enter over a thousand pages of land title abstract data into computers. The data entry took place over a number of summers. On each day the staff were sympathetic and did not complain about the devices that invaded their storage area.

Finally, I would like to thank those who are closest to me: Patricia Chaychuk and Rodger Sigurdson. Patricia was understanding about the late nights and even helped me enter data for a few days. Rod’s assistance with software and real estate appraisal theory helped me to keep focused on the important thing: the early residents of South Norfolk.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: HISTORIOGRAPHY, SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

This study is about historiography and sources within the field of Canadian rural and agricultural history. It draws heavily on the quantitative work of David Gagan and owes much to Donald Loveridge's work on the Rural Municipality of Sifton. It extends the arguments made by the American historian, Winifred Rothenberg, and thus supplements Wendy Owen's work on the papers of A.J. Cotton. It is a detailed quantitative study of the process by which the prairie municipality of South Norfolk, Manitoba ceased to be a frontier area and became a settled community. Significant attention is devoted to the matter of the material progress and behavior of the residents, with early settlers being contrasted with those who came after them. The intention here is to document the transition on both the macro and micro level, that is to examine the changes and effects both on the community as a whole but also to look at the changes as they related individuals on an everyday basis.

Like many of its predecessors, this study makes use of a variety of traditional sources including local newspapers,
diaries, surveyors' accounts, and census records. To these sources it adds intensive use of a number of farmers' account books and land title documents from a small geographical area. Exploring a Manitoba community in this manner is worthwhile because the process places Manitoba among studies of communities in Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta and thus adds to an important line of inquiry in Canadian rural history. This line is about the possibility of a national settlement dynamic. In conducting case studies with farmers' financial records I hope to add a different perspective and further, more finely detailed examples, to the debate on farm making costs and the issue of average farm income.¹ This study also gives some attention to the origins of farm laborers. By examining their origins in an earlier, less mechanized agricultural society, this thesis tests the notion that the large scale mechanization that occurred after 1910 made farming on a small scale no longer feasible and forced many to become landless laborers.²


As John Herd Thompson has pointed out, agricultural history can be summarized by saying that, until recently, Canadian historians have had very little to write about Canada’s rural past, since they have been indifferent to social history, the realm to which agricultural history belongs. Instead of "the frontier", Historians of Canada have embraced the influence "the metropolis", which has made the rural majority even more peripheral to Canadian History.

However, as social history has matured it has provided a context in which the history of rural Canada has grown. Studies of individual communities remain the backbone of rural history, but there is often a new level of sophistication. Analyse methods have often been employed by historians in Quebec. Others have followed the social historians in the United States producing computer aided micro-studies using evidence from routinely generated records -- censuses, land records and tax assessments to reveal the essential patterns of rural life.

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3 John Herd Thompson, "Writing About Rural Life and Agriculture." Writing About Canada Edited by John Schultz, (Scarborough: Prentice Hall, 1990), 98.
5 Ibid., 98-119. For a more recent historiographical discussion see Royden Loewen, "On the Margin or In the Lead: Canadian Prairie Historiography", Agricultural History Vol. 73, (Number 1), 27-45. Loewen finds aspects of Prairie
A significant work among these micro-studies is David Gagan's *Hopeful Travellers: Families, Land and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel, Canada West*. According to Gagan, land is the key to understanding the settlement dynamic. In 1840 Peel was a virgin frontier. Its early residents were prosperous and prolific due to a favorable ratio of land per capita. However, after two decades of intensive settlement the area was overpopulated and by 1861 land was increasingly expensive and difficult to acquire. Peel's residents responded to this crisis with a number of subtle coping strategies. For some families, continuing to farm in the community was no longer viable. Many left the Peel area to move on to greener pastures in the West. Among the youngest generation of those who did not migrate there was a greater propensity to remain a part of parents' households. Marriages were delayed, and fertility declined. Expansion by the largest landholders, in conjunction with a decline in fertility resulted in a decrease in the rural population by 1871.\(^6\)

The hypothesis in this study is similar to Gagan's. The focus of this study is another community, at a later date. The overriding question is: "Was South Norfolk a Peel County for the new century?" As suggested, significant attention will be devoted to the matter of the material progress and behavior of the residents, with early settlers being contrasted with those who came after them.

Exploring Gagan's paradigm of frontier transition is compelling because studies of other areas in Eastern Canada have revealed similarities. Ian Winchester has written about the Peel County and Saguenay projects: "the similarity of their results and their conclusions" is "remarkable...given the wedge we tend to drive between the two founding cultures." More recently Gerard Bouchard has argued that a nationalistic French-Canadian Historiography has portrayed rural Quebec as unique, and yet closer examination reveals a number of similarities, to Ontario, some which center around Gagan's paradigm.

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However, Gagan's settlement paradigm, with its focus on land, has never been fully explored in the Prairie setting. Works on Western Canada seem to indicate a similar settlement process moving westward but nothing is conclusive. Though we may learn something about the rapidity of frontier settlement, the phase of consolidation is usually understudied.

In his book on Vulcan, Paul Voisey mentions Gagan and makes note of a similar population trend. In Vulcan, as in Peel, population rose rapidly, peaked, and then declined. However, Voisey has little to say about the decline. Issues such as delayed marriage and adult-age progeny in parental homes are never probed.⁹

Lyle Dick's work on Abernethy seems to offer support for an interpretation of western settlement that is in line with Gagan's work on Peel. Dick discusses the success of the early arriving British settlers over the later Germans. He notes that the British by virtue of arriving early were able to select the best lands at the lowest prices. When land prices began to rise they were able to finance expansion with capital gains made on existing holdings.

Dick points out that the most telling statistic is that 50% of the Germans sold out 10 years after gaining a patent while over 70% of British remained. That the Germans were only staying long enough to earn equity indicates another land population crisis. The later residents of Peel also tended to spend much less time in the Municipality than those who had arrived before them. However, the picture is incomplete. In Dick's work, we learn little of this period. We do not know if the British were expanding by purchasing the Germans' land. If so, what did the British settlers do when this land became scarce?¹⁰

In light of recent scholarship, one might question the validity of testing Gagan's ideas in a Prairie setting. Gordon Darroch and Lee Soltow's Property and Inequality in Victorian Ontario: Structural Patterns and Cultural Communities in the 1871 Census is the most important work in this area. Soltow and Darroch argue that in mid Victorian Ontario, "there is no evidence to suggest a sufficiently dramatic change in access to land." Between 1851 and 1871:

¹⁰Lyle Dick, Farmers "Making Good": The Development of Abernethy District, Saskatchewan, 1880-1920 (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1989), 27-49.
The evidence suggests that in mid-Victorian Ontario farmers tended to become landholders at a rate of about 3 per cent per year while the population of farmers also increases about 3 percent a year, with a few of the youngest having initial ownership. Each of our estimates leads to the conclusion that throughout much of the nineteenth century Ontario experienced a pattern of more or less constant proportions of owners and propertyless among farmers.\(^{11}\)

For numerous reasons, Gagan's work still appears to be the starting point. Soltow and Darroch acknowledge that their main source, the 1871 census, has limits. Their discussion seems to recommend some work with farm account books, which are a significant part of the present study:

Although the manuscript data of the 1871 census make reference to the ownership and occupancy of land, to private residences and to a variety of other forms of real property, a full accounting of wealth distributions would have to consider other non-financial assets, such as machinery and equipment, inventories and household furnishings as well as financial assets such as bank deposits, shares and currency. These assets would have to be offset by knowledge of the debt side of the ledger, mainly mortgages and loans.\(^ {12}\)

Soltow and Darroch acknowledge that different areas in Ontario had different levels of land purchase activity,

\(^{11}\) Gordon Darroch and Lee Soltow, Property and Inequality in Victorian Ontario: Structural Patterns and Cultural Communities in the 1871 Census (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 39.

\(^{12}\) Ibid., 5.
“although the Ottawa-Huron tract presented formidable obstacles to settlement, mid-northern Bruce and Huron counties had been filling with astonishing speed since 1850.”

Because of this, one naturally is led to ponder if the examination of statistics for all of Ontario masks the possibility that Gagan’s phenomenon was working its way across Ontario. The amalgamation of data from older and newer areas could produce relatively flat statistics. Soltow and Darroch’s findings also seem inconclusive without some price and land quality data. As a whole, land purchases in Ontario may have occurred at a constant rate but they may have been at increasingly higher prices and for poorer pieces of land, which would be consistent with Gagan’s ideas of land-crisis. Soltow and Darroch go on to argue that if there had been a land-crisis, “we would expect the record of political agitation and social disruption to be unmistakable.”

However, it must be remembered that these residents had the golden opportunity of westward migration. Men like A.J. Cotton did not protest. They moved west. They did so at such a rate that young women in Ontario began to lament the shortage of potential partners. Their refrain became a popular song:

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13 Ibid., 35.
One by one they all clear out
Thinking to better themselves, no doubt,
Caring little how far they go
From the poor little girls of Ontario.\textsuperscript{15}

Donald Loveridge has made excellent use of land title records in the Manitoba setting. Aspects of his work on the Rural Municipality of Sifton also support the proposed hypothesis. Between 1901 and 1905 the pattern of disposals in Sifton suggests that the established farmers were beginning to make major enlargements of their existing holdings. But there are still many gaps.\textsuperscript{16} Loveridge's work, though excellent, is restricted to initial disposals of land and so there are limits to what his data can tell us. His data cannot tell us much about average land prices and farming costs because as time passed the land remaining to be sold for the first time tended to be of increasingly poorer quality. Thus it cannot be considered to be representative of the land transactions in the area.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 40.


In some ways, the scope of this study is larger than Loveridge's work in both the type of land transactions being studied and in the examination of different types of land title instruments. In regard to land transactions, this study attempts to track not just initial disposals, but all land transactions from approximately 1880 to 1915 in a similar sized study area. The type of land title instruments being studied has also been extended. Rather than being limited to those instruments conveying a piece of land, this study has included in its raw data, mortgages, mortgage discharges, quit claims, leases, tax sales, foreclosures and other instruments that disclose much about the transformation of the area.

Land title abstract books are the main source of information. Robert Doyle provides an excellent summary of the key features of these books and the system that created them. According to Doyle, these documents were produced as a result of the first system of land title registration system introduced to Manitoba, "Soon after Manitoba became a Province in 1870, one of the first statutes passed was the Registry Act (R.S.M. 1870, ch R 50). This act introduced what is now called the 'Old System' of land registration."

The land title abstract books contain short summaries of all land title instruments that relate to land registered under the Registry Act. All land title abstract books are indexed according to the legal description of a property. The land title abstract books were compelling as a historical source because they document virtually every land title instrument relating to the study area during the period under investigation. Often they told much about the study area beyond the period of study. Approximately ten per cent of settled land in Manitoba is still registered under this system.\textsuperscript{18}

Each entry in an abstract book contains a brief description of the type of instrument, the date it occurred, the date the instrument was registered, the names of the parties, and the amount of money, along with a section for comments.\textsuperscript{19} All the entries from over 1100 pages of abstract books were entered into a spreadsheet, to make the information from the land title instruments subject to

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{19} This is pointed out by Doyle. However, Doyle does not mention that there is also a column for the date of an instrument's registry. Certain instruments especially patents, are often registered long after their issue. Within abstract books instruments are ordered sequentially by the date of registry. This can create confusion for the student of history. In this study the problem was solved by simply using the computer to resort the transactions by the instrument date.
analysis. The spreadsheet was then manipulated so that it would graph and map different characteristics.

The data in the land title abstract books was seen as desirable for many reasons. The foremost was that it had a format that facilitated internal verifications of its reliability. One instrument or transaction may involve many distinct properties and so the same entries relating to one instrument number could occur on many different pages. When the entire data set was sorted by instrument number, so that all the entries with the same number could be viewed together, any incongruencies could be easily resolved. There were many other ways to test the data. For example, the entries for mortgage discharges require the inclusion of the number of the original mortgage in the comments section. Sorting the data for matches in these number sets showed the data to be incredibly precise.

The information on each quarter section, which was obtained from the abstract books was supplemented by the addition of agricultural capability ratings. To make the results comparable with those of Donald Loveridge, the Canada Land Inventory (CIL) "Soil Capability for Agriculture" rating scale was used as a basis to describe local conditions. The general CLI scale consists of eight classes, ranging from "no significant limitations" (1) to
“no capability” (7) with subclasses describing basic limitations to agriculture.  

Each class includes many types of soil. In South Norfolk, the classes relate closely to specific types of soil and drainage. Classes one to six are present in South Norfolk along with a number of subclasses.

The information from the CLI coding for each quarter section in South Norfolk was made part of each transaction and land title instrument within the database. To remain consistent with Loveridge’s work, where the quarter section was divided by multiple ratings a value was assigned proportionally on sectional basis. The ratings were adjusted to reflected conditions in the 1880’s. For this purpose the original surveyor’s maps and notes were consulted.

This study differs greatly from Gagan’s work by its application of detailed case studies derived from farm account books. There is much to recommend farm account books as sources. In an article on sources for rural history, Winifred B. Rothenberg has written that much of the best of what is new is coming from the exploitation of materials by and about individuals. Among these sources, Rothenberg finds farm account books most promising, explaining that they

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21 Ibid., 263.
often capture an immediacy and detail about rural life (especially concerning the economics of production and consumption) that eludes all other sources:

Take for example a farmer in Ipswich, Massachusetts, named John Baker. I open the box in which his large hidebound book is kept. The faint smell of manure, over 200 years old, still rises from the pages. And I begin to live his life! What his account book tells me is every transaction he recorded to which he was a party for the 65 years from 1769 to 1834. I know the farm-gate price and quantity of everything he bought and sold, the price of every pair of shoes he made; I know the name of every buyer and seller with whom he dealt and where they came from; I know the labour he did for others; I know the price he charged for wagon transport and the destination of every trip he took; I know every man-day of labour he hired and the tasks he hired it to do and the wages he paid and whether the hired hand was a man or a boy and if he came to work with his own team and plow and whether Baker provided dinner or the hired man found for himself...I know that he produced milk, eggs, fresh meat and other commodities too perishable to appear in probate inventories.\(^\text{22}\)

In a closely related piece, E.J.T. Collins adds that the business records of farms also reveal aspects of rural social history, furnishing information about the rural social structure and case studies in social mobility.\(^\text{23}\)

Despite the potential of farm account books, Canadian historians seem reluctant to subject them to detailed


analysis. A notable exception would be an article by Douglas McCalla entitled, "The Internal Economy of Upper Canada: New Evidence on Agricultural Marketing Before 1850." In this piece McCalla uses farm business records to question whether wheat was the region's only significant cash crop. The advantage of using farm records for the basis of this type of study, according to McCalla, is that they "capture a sample of the economy's workings unfiltered by policy perspective or outside observer's bias."

In scholarship on Western Canada, the most compelling example of the use of farm account books is Wendy Owen's History MA thesis "Prairie Patriarch: A History of Almon James Cotton, 1858 to 1942." Through the intricate use of Cotton's letters and voluminous financial records Owen documents Cotton's spectacular success after migration to Manitoba. In the same pages, Owen makes an important contribution to the debate on farm-making costs. From Cotton's experience and his discussions with relatives, Owen comes to the conclusion that with access to $1200.00 in capital and a good land rental agreement, one could "turn the corner" having no debts and possession of considerable livestock, chattels, and grain, within five years.


Like many vanguard works, Owen's thesis also provokes new questions. In her discussion of Cotton's move from his home of Durham County, Ontario to Treherne, Manitoba, Owen mentions "over-population" and seems to accept the presence of a similar process to what Gagan has documented in Peel. More curious is Cotton's second move. Almon James Cotton, or "A.J." as he was often called, moved from the Rural Municipality of South Norfolk to the Swan River Valley because of increasing land prices and fears of not being able to provide land for his sons.

These were the same factors that prompted many to move from Peel. Again, according to Gagan, in 1840 Peel was a virgin frontier, but after two decades of intensive settlement the area was overpopulated. By 1861 Land was increasingly expensive, and difficult to acquire. Peel's residents responded to the crisis with a number of subtle coping strategies, which included migration. Among the youngest generation of those who did not migrate, there was a greater propensity to remain a part of parents' household; marriages were delayed, and fertility declined. Expansion by the largest landholders and in average farm size; in conjunction with a decline in fertility resulted in a decrease in the rural population by 1871.  

26 Gagan, Hopeful Travellers, 6-19.
because of the same factors that prompted many to move from Peel, so one is naturally led to ponder the possibility of a similar transformation in Southern Manitoba.

Owen may not have been aware of it but there is another set of farm account books for the Treherne area. Thus there looms a rare opportunity for detailed comparison and the possibility of gaining new insight into the settlement dynamic of the Municipality of South Norfolk. This is what this study is about: exploiting an incredible opportunity.

The Charles A. Drury collection contains a set of financial records authored by Charles Drury Sr. The patriarch of the Drury family operated a farming enterprise on a number of plots in the Treherne area, in roughly the same period as Cotton. Farms were not highly mechanized in this period. Horses still provided the bulk of agricultural power.

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27 The account book was initially attributed to Charles Jr. but this has now been revised. The matter was resolved in my review of entries by the ledger's author, which did not correspond to Charles Jr.'s experiences and by handwriting samples on different documents. See Mortgage No. 87819, No. 89464, and No. 2478, Land Titles Office, Morden, Manitoba. See also a receipt from Charles Drury Sr. to Wallace Moore, January 24, 1903, PAM.

Like A.J., Drury rented the bulk of his productive lands. Some of his tracts were just miles away. Cotton farmed 2-8-10. One tract of Drury's land was on the North West corner of 25-7-10. In between the plots is a distance of one mile. Both men also sold wheat to the same grain agents and asked many of the same merchants to honor their notes.\textsuperscript{29} It appears that the two men once rented land from the same person.\textsuperscript{30} But there is still more to the connection between the two entrepreneurs. Most interesting is the fact that Cotton was one of Drury's creditors. The two mens' names appear on numerous occasions in each others' books. Drury's records disclose amounts and terms of loan agreements as do Cotton's. When debts are repaid, both sets of records reflect the accomplishment.\textsuperscript{31} The fact that the two sets of records reconcile so well is a testament to their reliability.

However, the most crucial affinity of the two operations lies in the richness of records they have left us. The account book of Charles Sr. stretches for two

\textsuperscript{29} See Cotton to Manager, Canadian Bank of Commerce, Winnipeg, Sept 6, 1899; Drury Charles Sr. Account Book Jan. 7, 1903; Cotton to the Massey-Harris Company, August 5, 1899; Drury Account Book Jan. 15, 1901; Sept 1901; Nov. 23, 1901; Feb. 21, 1902; Nov 24, 1902.

\textsuperscript{30} See Charles Sr. Account Book, May 2, 1903; Cotton, Account Book January 1, 1997; A.J. Cotton to Dr. T.G. Philips, December 17, 1898.

\textsuperscript{31} Cotton, Account Book, 1900, 1901; Drury Charles Sr. Account Book, Nov. 12, 1900; Oct 23, 1901.
hundred pages and provides nearly twenty years of data. It includes daily entries on income from crops and livestock, as well as household and farm operating expenses. Like Cotton's books, it dates back to the period prior to immigration and discloses much about the family's financial position before coming to the Prairies.\(^{32}\)

The Drury collection also contains a guiding text that compares well to Cotton's letters. Before his death in 1956, Charles Jr. composed a 175-page autobiography of his life as an itinerant farm hand. The narrative speaks at length on his early years on his father's farm and describes such things as harvest time when the farm's labour force swelled.\(^{33}\)

Differences between the financial records in the two collections define the methodology of this investigation. Drury's records have a peculiar format. The manuscripts are organized so that two pages accommodate each month's entries. The left hand page records cash incoming, while the right page registers amounts paid out. After every few transactions, a sub-total is placed in an additional column. At the end of the month Charles Drury Sr. totaled each of the four columns. Cash paid was then deducted from income, which Drury then verified against cash on hand. The result

\(^{32}\) Drury also posted data on crop production for each of his tracts of land. pp. 80, 81, 96, 97, 132, 133, 167.

of all this corroboration was the creation of an extremely accurate set of records. But while Drury posted the information with exceptional precision, it was never organized into separate account groups, yearly statements of profit/loss or net worth. Thus little meaning could be derived from a casual investigation of the source. A lack of organization is a common problem in working with farm account books. The result, writes E.J.T. Collins, is that the modern analyzer is faced with the task of disentangling and re-itemizing the various entries before he is able to arrive at meaningful figures and begin interpretation.\textsuperscript{34} This procedure is exactly what has been done.

In order to begin interpretation, account groups had to be created and the appropriate amounts assigned to each category. In the quest to organize Drury's account books, the first step was to insert information from each entry into a spreadsheet. Information entered included the date of the transaction, the transaction description, amount, and whether it decreased or increased the cash on hand.\textsuperscript{35} Many of the account groups were created simply by examining entries that occurred during the life of the business. Subjecting


\textsuperscript{35} Information at this point constituted over 6000 entries and nearly half a megabyte of data.
postings to alphabetical sorting by transaction description was also a useful technique.

A further problem with Drury's records lies in the vague nature of some transaction descriptions. In most instances the nature of Drury's transactions are clear, but there are occasions when a description of the item or service bargained for is not recorded; only the name of the other party involved was registered. In such instances local histories, tax collection rolls, and municipal electoral lists were probed for the occupation of the other party. When this information was added, gaining insight into what had occurred was often a quick process. For example, a relatively large payment of $35.00 to William Scott, on Nov. 11, 1902 could only mean the purchase of a harness. Scott was the town's harness maker. From other entries it is apparent that this amount was well within the typical range of costs for this piece of equipment.

36 See Charles Sr. Account Book, Jan. 23 1902; March 13 1902; August 4, 1902; June 5, 1904.

37 Charles Sr., Account Book, Nov. 11, 1902; Tiger Hills to the Assiniboine; A History of Treherne and the Surrounding District. (Altona, Manitoba: D.W. Freisen and Sons, 1976), 357.

38 Upon migration Cotton valued his harness at $25.00. Later Cotton appraised a more elaborate double harness at $45.00. In another agreement with Scott, Drury purchased a harness with a note, due in six months, for $38.00. Cotton, Account Book 1888; Owen, "Prairie Patriarch", p.56; Charles Sr., Account Book, April 5 1901; Oct 16 1901.
Another obstacle in working with Drury's records concerns the entries related to debts. With most loans Drury indicates the amount borrowed, the interest rate and the payment timetable. But on several occasions mortgage payments with differing names appear suddenly and are never heard from again.\textsuperscript{39} In such instances a number of land title instruments proved invaluable. They also revealed that Charles Sr. would obtain mortgages and make a few annual payments. He would then obtain another mortgage, discharge the old with the new funds, and continue on.\textsuperscript{40}

The ultimate viability of reconstructing Drury's records in order to give an accurate picture of the business was secured by the large number of items that could be used to scrutinize the various accounts. Farm account books exhibit a preoccupation with debt.\textsuperscript{41} Drury's records are no exception. Upon numerous occasions, Drury pronounced assessments of individual obligations.\textsuperscript{42} The elimination of a liability, whether it is to a merchant, banker, craftsman,

\textsuperscript{39} Charles Sr., Account Book, April 25, 1902; May 6, 1903.

\textsuperscript{40} The end result was often a better interest rate. See Mortgage No. 87818, No. 89464, No. 2478; Mortgage Discharge Certificates No. 2800, 2801, Land Titles Office, Morden, Manitoba.

\textsuperscript{41} Rothenberg, "Farm Account Books: Problems and Possibilities", 109.

\textsuperscript{42} On March 4, 1906 Drury's records tell us that he paid \$30.00 interest to C.H. on a mortgage of \$1293.00. Thus the balance for the account on that date should be the same.
or fellow farmer was a significant event. On over 30 occasions Drury's books acclaim this feat.\textsuperscript{43}

There were also instruments of verification regarding assets. On different dates, Drury's records give us the balance of his bank account.\textsuperscript{44} Municipal tax assessments provided dated appraisals of Drury's horses and livestock.\textsuperscript{45} Charles Jr. not only described the family's animals and equipment in his autobiography, he often told what he thought was most effective. In discussing the 1902 crop he wrote:

I had 4 pretty good horses and a 22 shod drill that I used to sow with. It was the best seeder I ever used. I would throw it out and in and never stop the team. Turning to the left, I used to throw out the right-hand lever first and, going back in, throw the left-hand one first, then the other one.\textsuperscript{46}

Until one makes all the information correspond, there is very little to say. The mistaken allocation of a payment on a pioneer "big-ticket" item such as a team of horses to the wrong account could profoundly affect one's evaluation of a struggling operation. But once one had laboured over

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid. Dec. 12, 1900; Oct 19, 1901; Feb 3, 1902; Oct 3
1902; May 5, 1903; May 30, 1903; Sept 30, 1903; Oct 13;
1903; May 5, 1904; May 27, 1904; August 17, 1904; ect.

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid. Nov. 3 1902; Jan 2, 1907; Jan 31, 1907; Feb. 28,
1907; March 29, 1907.

\textsuperscript{45} Municipal Tax Assessment Roll 1908, Treherne Municipal
Office, p. 38.

\textsuperscript{46} Charles Drury Jr., "Autobiography", PAM 27.
the books so as to create a mixture of assets, liabilities, income and expenses that passed all the tests, one had an extremely reliable set of data.

We should remind ourselves that Drury's records contain over 6000 entries involving cash payments and almost 100 monthly assessments of cash on hand. There are also Drury's indications of liability account balances and the entries which chart the rise and fall of his bank account. This was supplemented by the information contained on Drury's deeds, mortgages and tax assessments. Once one had reconstructed the account book information so that it corresponded with all this data, there was little question about what had occurred or the reliability of the results that told the story.

When the settlement experiences of Cotton and Drury are examined in a chronological order (Cotton first and then Drury) it would seem that the Municipality of South Norfolk was a Peel County for the new century.

In rural Peel after 1840 economic and social betterment were predicated by favorable family/land ratios.\textsuperscript{47} It was the same farther west in South Norfolk after 1880. Cotton came to Treherne in 1888 when demand and prices were still

\textsuperscript{47} Gagan, \textit{Hopeful Travellers}, 18.
low. Subsequently, he was able to negotiate advantageous long-term rental agreements. These contracts were key to the success of the "Wheat King". They guaranteed high profits and consistent gains in net worth.

The trials of the Drury clan fill out the picture. Arriving in 1901, in much the same time as Cotton was considering leaving. The experiences of the Drurys were more like those of Peel's later residents. Charles Drury Sr. came with a net worth that was comparable to Cotton's eleven years before, yet he would not make similar gains. He could produce crop yields at or above the provincial average and the efforts of his offspring kept his labour costs exceptionally low, but there were no more rental agreements like Cotton had enjoyed. Living in an era of more finite land resources, Drury's offspring behaved like many in Peel. They continued to be part of their father's household as adults. They delayed their marriages or did not marry at all. Treherne had been transformed. Timing was crucial to the success of the migrant farmer.

In order to fully comprehend the similarities between Treherne and Peel, aspects of Cotton's settlement experience should be re-examined. However we must first discuss the area to which both families migrated.
Chapter II
The Frontier Period: 1870-1900

The patterns of farm activity in South Norfolk in the period from 1870 to 1900 are the result of a complex convergence of influences interacting with each other. From the beginning, transportation routes would influence the development of the community. The location of available land and its quality greatly affected the decisions of those early settlers in South Norfolk and their decisions inevitably affected the decisions of those who came after them. Of course, wider economic forces had an influence and it can be shown that even the culture and background of the individual settlers also played a role in the development of the community. However, one thing is clear. By the time the Drury family arrived, South Norfolk had been depleted of land which was both high in quality and low in cost.

Loveridge has stated that a rural municipality is a good size for analytical purposes as it offers a ready-made unit for research. It is a well-defined area in its own right and has provided a specific focus for record keeping and report preparation by all levels of government on a long-term basis.\(^4\) With South Norfolk, it is slightly more

\(^4\) Loveridge, "Sifton", 29.
complex because the municipality itself evolved, changing boundaries several times.

In Manitoba, the period from 1870 to 1886 was a time of experimentation in forms of local government. Local histories report that, "by 1880 settlers persuaded the Province to form the county of Norfolk which included townships 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 in Ranges 9, 10, 11, 12 making up what is now North and South Norfolk and Victoria." In 1884, the municipality was divided into South Norfolk and North Norfolk and in 1901 three townships were added to South Norfolk. A further division in 1902 created South Norfolk and Victoria. These boundaries have remained consistent to the present time. Today, the municipality covers 277 square miles. It is composed of nearly 9 full township squares. It includes Township 7, 8 and 9 in range 8 and 9 and parts of townships 7, 8, and 9 in range 10. For our purposes this area constitutes the study area for the entire period between 1870 and 1915 and all data has been selected and supplemented accordingly.

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The town of Treherne is the largest in the municipality. The reasons for its formation are related to early transportation routes. Treherne is located at the junction of the southern branch of the Yellow Quill Trail and the Boyne River. Local histories attribute the beginning of the town to the year 1881.\textsuperscript{50} It appears to have been named Treherne after the man who was contracted to bring the mail from Portage la Prairie.\textsuperscript{51} The post office and the town first appeared on the east side of the Boyne River.\textsuperscript{52} Eventually, the town was moved to the west bank probably because the railway found a good supply of water to locate its station there.\textsuperscript{53}

According to the Canada Land Inventory, "Soil Capability for Agriculture" rating scale, the land in the municipality of South Norfolk was well suited to agriculture. The CLI rating scale has eight classes ranging from "no significant limitations" (one) to "no capability" (eight). Classes one to six are present in South Norfolk

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 18.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 11.

\textsuperscript{52} Treherne Board of Trade. \textit{Treherne in 1908: A Collection of Views and a Description of the Town of Treherne, Manitoba, Canada} (Treherne: Treherne Board of Trade, 1908), 1.

\textsuperscript{53} Treherne Area History Committee, 11.
along with a number of subclasses. Table 1 has been constructed to be comparable with Loveridge’s statistics on the municipality of Sifton.\textsuperscript{54}

In Table 1 we can clearly see that the Municipality of South Norfolk was better suited to agricultural production. Some further statistics, which can be taken from Table 2, are more revealing.

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Land Quality in Sifton and South Norfolk}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Land Quality & Sifton & South Norfolk \\
\hline
1 & 0\% & 18\% \\
2, 3 & 7\% & 60\% \\
4 & 50\% & 13\% \\
5, 6 & water & 43\% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}


\textsuperscript{54} Loveridge’s section on agricultural capability groups certain ratings so that an exact class-by-class comparison is not possible, 262-265.
### Table 2

**Land Quality in South Norfolk by Classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Quarter sections</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Nearly fifty percent of the municipality carries a rating of one or two. Another twenty-nine percent of the quarter sections are ranked class three. Thus, over seventy-seven percent of the municipality is rated in the first three classes. In Sifton, only seven percent of the land was rated in the first three classes.

In South Norfolk, as in Sifton, the classes relate closely to specific types of soil and drainage. The two dominant physiographic sections that occur in the municipality influence land use in South Norfolk. The land with the highest agricultural potential is in the center of the municipality. The level to slightly rolling landscape in the north and east occurs mostly in the loam to clayey lacustrine deposits of the Red River Plain.\(^5\) These same areas correspond to a lower agricultural potential. The

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agricultural capability of the loamy soils is generally good, ranging from class one to three. However the sandy soils in the area have a lower potential ranging from class three to five. The hummocky landscape in the south and west of the municipality consists dominantly of loam to clay loam textured till. The agricultural potential of these deposits also ranges from class three to five.\textsuperscript{56}

The quality of the land in South Norfolk can be understood more completely by looking at the land capability ratings of each township square, as exhibited in Table 3.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Township, Range & 7.8 & 7.9 & 7.10 & 8.8 & 8.9 & 8.10 & 9.8 & 9.9 & 9.10 \\
\hline
Class & 1 & 18 & 2 & 0 & 33 & 70 & 34 & 11 & 35 & 1 & 0 & 203 & 18\% \\
\hline
2 & 28 & 51 & 26 & 48 & 37 & 60 & 35 & 33 & 2 & 22 & 340 & 31\% \\
\hline
3 & 81 & 62 & 15 & 45 & 19 & 2 & 41 & 33 & 19 & 317 & 29\% \\
\hline
4 & 15 & 23 & 7 & 13 & 16 & 0 & 36 & 16 & 20 & 146 & 13\% \\
\hline
5 & 2 & 6 & 2 & 5 & 2 & 0 & 14 & 14 & 33 & 78 & 7\% \\
\hline
6 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 7 & 13 & 2 & 22 & 2\% \\
\hline
Water & 0 & 0 & 2 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 2 & 0\% \\
\hline
Total & 144 & 144 & 52 & 144 & 144 & 96 & 144 & 144 & 96 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Land Quality in South Norfolk}
\end{table}


At the center of the municipality, in township eight in range nine, approximately 75 percent of the land is rated in

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 6-7.
the best two classes. The degree of excellence of the land in the center can be seen by the percentage of land rated as class one. In this township square forty-eight percent of the land is of the best possible quality. In the portion of township eight, range ten, 88 percent is ranked either class one or two.

In those areas near the north, south, and eastern extremities, the land is noticeably poorer. In these areas, land rated class three or lower recurs across the countryside. Sixty seven percent of township seven in range eight is rated class three or lower. In township seven in range nine, sixty three percent of the land is designated class three or lower. In township nine in range eight, sixty-eight percent of the land is class three or lower.

The land in South Norfolk was first surveyed in the years from 1873 to 1875. There has been some discussion about the ability of new settlers to choose good land. In light of their acquisition patterns, which will be discussed later, the ability of South Norfolk’s pioneers cannot be doubted. It appears that it was relatively easy to ascertain which lands were the best. The high quality of the land near the center of the region was readily apparent to the surveyors. On September 10, 1875 George A. Bayne reported on township eight, range ten:
This township is well adapted for settlement. The land although hilly is well adapted for the purposes of agriculture. There is sufficient wood scattered in bluffs through the township. The River Boyne runs through the northern half and in the valley of the river is a magnificent stock grazing country. The township is principally covered with hazel and small oak. The water in the small lakes scattered through the township is of the best quality.\footnote{57}

During the survey, the surveyors also became equally aware of the limits of other areas. On March 4, 1874, M.M. McFadden reported on township 9, range 10:

The township consists of rolling land numbered with small poplar gray willow and thick underwood with numerous small muskeg and much windfall. The lumber is too small to be of any value and altogether the township presents few attractions to the settler for either agricultural or grazing purposes.\footnote{58}

What is remarkable about the surveyors’ notes is that there is no mention of any existing squatters. This may be due to

\footnote{57}{George A. Bayne, "Field Survey Notebook", September 10, 1875, PAM.}

\footnote{58}{M.M. McFadden, "Field Survey Notebook", March 4, 1874, PAM.}
several reasons. The survey of the area of South Norfolk took place earlier than the survey of Sifton. It may also be related to changing perceptions of the land. While South Norfolk was well suited to commercial monoculture agriculture, it was less attractive to a more primitive perception of the land’s use. Unlike Sifton, South Norfolk had no large lake. It was not an important crossroads of the rivers and trails used by traders. This does not mean that the area was without attraction but other areas were more attractive.

The settlement of South Norfolk occurs completely under the systems devised by the Canadian government and entirely after the Dominion surveys of 1873-1875. The land disposal system itself had a profound effect on the development of the community. The system has undergone its own evolution, which has been well discussed in a number of sources. Because of the limited period of under study and our distinct focus, it is only necessary to have a basic grasp of the key components of this system. These rudimentary


60 See Chester Martin, Dominion Lands Policy, Lewis H. Thomas, ed. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973); John Langton Tyman, By Section, Township, and Range: Studies in Prairie Settlement (Brandon: Assiniboine Historical Society, 1972)
elements are well summarized by Donald Loveridge in his guide to the study of land and settlement records:

Generally speaking Dominion lands in Manitoba were assigned to one of three categories of disposition by the government. A large part was also set aside to compensate different corporations for their contributions to the development of the West. These included the Hudson’s Bay Company and the various railway companies...The last category and the largest one consisted of Dominion lands intended for rapid transfer into the hands of settlers by means of free homesteads and low priced pre-emptions.\(^\text{61}\)

Of all of these elements, the homestead is the most important. Essentially, Canada offered a quarter section of land to any male willing to pay a registration fee of ten dollars, erect a residence and bring forty acres under cultivation within three years.\(^\text{62}\) The pre-emption allowed a homesteader to make an interim entry on an adjacent quarter section.\(^\text{63}\) Pre-emptions were important because they allowed

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families to gain an entire half-section at a relatively low cost.

In South Norfolk the settlement process exhibited certain characteristics, which can be broken down further into two periods: 1875-1890 and 1891-1900. However, one thing is clear. For the most part, the settlement process was coldly logical. South Norfolk's pioneers first chose to homestead the highest quality land in the center of the municipality, near the town and railway line. Only when this land became scarce did they turn to the lower quality lands, farther away from the center of the municipality. As this land became scarce South Norfolk's residents began to purchase land from each other and the purchase of more expensive railway lands became more common. Matters of family and culture sometimes obscure these patterns. They are also masked by the fact that these settlers often preferred to choose a patent and pre-emption combination, which resulted in the ownership of a half section of lesser quality land, over a better single quarter section with no adjacent lands available.

In the first of the two periods, 1875 to 1890, the proving of a homestead was of central importance. The
patent, which is usually associated with a homestead land transfer, was a prolific land title instrument. During this era, most quarter sections being homesteaded were undertaken in combination with a pre-emption. There were private sales between individuals in this early period, far more than most people would expect, but these early sales mostly involved lower prices and a certain type of anxious seller. The degree to which farming was a commercial enterprise can be seen in the number of mortgages granted by corporations from 1881 forward. In this early period, the new mortgages also far out numbered mortgage discharges. This indicates that these earlier farms were meager struggling operations without the ability to quickly reduce debt.

The second period marks the transition to a settled area. In the years from 1891 to 1900 the number of first time disposals in relation to private sales was in decline. There were many more mortgages but also a far greater number of mortgage discharges. The nature of the land title transactions speaks of an era of consolidation. Settlers were beginning to be able to pay off their debts. It is also in this period that we begin to see large numbers of farms being transferred among members of the same family and an escalation of prices that continued as the end of the century approached.
The first land transfers in the Municipality of South Norfolk occur in the years between 1875 and 1880. The most significant of these occurred in 1879 and involved the Hudson's Bay Company. The Hudson's Bay Company received approximately two sections in every township in Western Canada in return for surrendering its title to the area in 1869. In 1879 the Hudson's Bay Company received official notification of the transfer of 94 quarter sections in South Norfolk. Land transferred to the HBC came as part of a predetermined pattern without deviation. Unlike the railways, the Hudson's Bay Company had no right to reject land on the grounds that was unfit for settlement. Loveridge has pointed out that the land transferred to the Hudson’s Bay Company tended to be representative of the type land available in each region.

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We can see this pattern of transfer both in Table 4 and Map 1.

**Table 4: Hudson’s Bay Land in South Norfolk**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>All Land in South Norfolk</th>
<th>Land Received by the Hudson’s Bay Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>203 18%</td>
<td>9 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>340 31%</td>
<td>34 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>317 29%</td>
<td>38 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>146 13%</td>
<td>5 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>78  7%</td>
<td>8  9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22  2%</td>
<td>0  0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While the land acquired by the Hudson’s Bay Company did not perfectly mirror the quality of the land in South Norfolk, it was a close approximation. The percentage of land rated class two or better in the municipality compares well with the land acquired by the Hudson’s Bay Company. In both instances the amount comprised nearly fifty percent. As shown in Table 4, ten percent of the land transferred to the Hudson’s Bay Company was class one, thirty-six percent of the land acquired was rated class two, forty percent of the land was class three and the remaining fourteen percent was later rated class four or lower.

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65 Loveridge, "The Rural Municipality of Sifton", 34.
As suggested by Figures 1 and 2, patents were a prolific instrument throughout the years from 1875 to 1890. However, a significant decline occurred in the years following 1883. Most of the activity involving these patents occurred in the fertile center of the municipality with another significant body of activity occurring in township nine, range eight. The majority of the land taken in this period was of very high quality but a significant portion of it was not. It appears that there were two distinct groups acquiring land in this period. Understanding the nature and identity of these groups leads to a better understanding of why land disposals exhibited these patterns.

Figure 1
Cumulative Number of Patents Issued in South Norfolk 1878-1890
The data derived from the land title abstract books indicates that settlement in South Norfolk begins sometime before 1878. In 1878, four patents were issued. Another twelve patents were issued in 1879. Of those that occurred in 1879, eight were part of a patent and preemption package. Thus these four early residents received a full half section of good Manitoba land for a very minimal price. In 1880 the Crown transferred another 9 quarter sections and again preemptions dominated. Only one quarter section was transferred by itself.

What is also notable about these land transfers is the type of land involved. The land chosen for homesteads by these early settlers tended to be of the best quality and located near the center of the municipality. The four
quarter sections patented in 1878 included two quarter sections of land rated class one. The twelve quarter sections patented in 1879 included 6 quarter sections of class one land and another four quarter sections of class two land. Ten of the twelve quarter sections were near the center of the municipality in township eight. Seven were in range ten and another three were in range nine.

What is surprising about this early period is the number of transactions occurring between individuals. In 1879 there were only two quarter sections involved in this type of transaction. In 1880 there were sixty of these transactions. These transactions are interesting. Not all of these involved full quarter sections so the total amount of land sold amounts to only 43.22 quarter sections. The total consideration for this land was $9,849.00 or $228.00 per quarter section. A number of the sales appear to be Metis selling to new Anglo-Saxon settlers. Most interesting are the sales of land on which the patent had just been granted. Robert H. Ferguson sold his two quarter sections a year after gaining their ownership. He sold these as a package to A. McLaren for $600. This is our first indication of the large capital gains made by these early settlers.
In 1881 patents on 30 quarter sections were issued along with grants for 8 quarter sections. Again quarter sections with a preemption dominated. Half of the grants comprised half a section and only 4 quarters were patented as single units. However the character of these new patents was quite different. Issues of family, friends and culture have been shown to have an influence in land choice.66 We can see it at work here.

All of the new patents issued in 1881 were issued in township nine, range eight. Among the new patents French names dominated. Of the 30 patents issued, at least 22 of the names are French in origin. The grants issued in 1881 are much the same. All pertain to land in township nine, range eight. Six of the eight names can be identified as ethnically-French. The degree to which these other factors affected land choice can be seen by examining the quality of the land chosen. The land taken by these settlers was not of the best quality available for agriculture. The land granted ranged from class three to class six. Among the lands patented nearly fifty percent was class five or lower.

Part of this trend was foreshadowed in the previous year. In 1880, nine patents had been issued. Five of these

were to settlers in township eight in range ten. The land transferred to these settlers ranged from class one to class three. However, four patents were issued in township nine in range eight. Their new owners all had the last name “Goulet.” Two of the quarter sections acquired were class four and the others were class five.

In 1882 almost forty quarter sections were disposed of by the Dominion. Patents were issued on 31 quarter sections of land. Another 6 quarter sections were acquired by grant. Again preemptions dominated. Over two thirds of the patented land involved a preemption combination. These new acquisitions were spread over four different townships. Again we can see the forces of culture and family at work.

The ethnic-British settlers tended to choose land that was close to Treherne and the rail line and highly rated on the CLI scale. In 1882 ten patents were issued to these settlers in the fertile township eight in range nine. Another four patents were issued in the equally excellent township eight, range ten. This group of settlers were also granted patents on 4 quarter sections in township seven, range ten.
However, the largest numbers of patents were issued in township nine in range eight. In this township square, patents were issued on thirteen quarter sections of land. Eleven of the new owners possessed French names and again the land was of lower agricultural potential than that taken by others. Over seventy-five percent of the land taken by these settlers was of class three or lower. Among the land taken by other settlers approximately seventy-five percent was class one or class two. We can see the activities of the two groups more clearly in Map 2, which depicts patent activity for the period of 1878 to 1890.

It might be concluded that many of the new landowners in township nine range eight were Metis. However, their stay in the community is so brief their stories do not become part of the area’s local histories. As discussed earlier, the land these residents chose was of very poor quality. Chester Martin has pointed out about the Metis, “if it had been the object...to select the poorest land available then they succeeded”.  

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67 Martin, 20.
As we can see in Map 2, most of the land chosen by this group was close to the Assiniboine River, centering on a large peninsula, created by a curvature of the river. This
suggests that the person making the choice was not thinking about commercial monoculture agriculture. We shall see later that the owners of this land sold it very quickly.

In 1883 thirty-nine patents were issued. Combinations of quarter sections and preemptions dominated, with only nine quarter sections not being one of these types transactions. The land patented in this year was of a higher quality than in past years. Thirty-two of the quarter sections were later rated class one or two. This was most likely due to the absence of activity by settlers in township nine, range eight. The land disposals in this year were concentrated in the two most productive township squares in the municipality. In 1883, there were seventeen patents issued in township eight, range nine and another sixteen disposals in township eight, range ten.

In 1884, 32 patents were issued and there were 4 grants. These numbers represent the beginning of a decline in land activity in South Norfolk. This decline was due to wider economic forces. In the period previous to 1883 land speculation was occurring across the West. Changes in final railway routes meant that much of the speculation was unsuccessful and by 1884 the speculative bubble had burst and affected all types of land transaction. We can see
similar results in Sifton. Lyle Dick has reported similar conditions in Abernerthy.\footnote{Loveridge, "The Rural Municipality of Sifton.", 97; Lyle Dick, Farmers "Making Good", 30.} In South Norfolk twenty-six of the patents issued were quarter section and preemption combinations. The lands patented were spread across six township squares but were concentrated near the town of Treherne in the fertile township eight in ranges nine and ten. Almost eight-five percent of these quarter sections were of excellent quality and almost evenly divided between class one and two.

We can see the real hangover from the bursting of the speculative bubble in 1885. In this year only 9 patents and three grants were issued. Even so, it seems that in these difficult times each of these settlers was just as concerned with getting as much land as possible for the least amount of money. Again, patent and preemption combinations were abundant, comprising two thirds of the dispositions. The quality of these quarter sections was evenly composed of the first three classes.

The trends involving patents in the years from 1886 to 1990 are summarized in Map 2. Patents in this era tended to
be concentrated in the fertile center of the municipality near Treherne. However there was some activity in the more distant areas. Though the amount of land activity was increasing, it did not approach the levels of 1883.

In 1886 there were 11 patents issued along with 11 grants. The land acquired in this year was of excellent quality. Over sixty percent of it was ranked as class one. Among the land acquired via the patent instrument, 6 quarter sections were involved in patent and preemption combinations.

In 1887 there were only 7 patents issued but 11 grants. The majority of the land acquired by grant was of excellent quality. Seventy-four percent of the land acquired was later rated as class one. If we remove the two poor quality sections acquired by French settlers in township eight in range nine, this figure rises to nearly ninety percent.

The year 1887 is also the first year that we see any corporate disposals to companies other than the Hudson’s Bay Company. Railway companies received land subsidies from the Dominion to assist in the construction of rail lines. The largest and most important of these went to the Canadian Pacific Railway, which received $25 million and 25 million
acres to build the first transcontinental railway. In 1887
the CPR received four quarter sections of land in South
Norfolk. The Dominion also issued 3 patents to the Canada
North West Land Company Limited. All of the lands acquired
were of excellent quality.

In 1888 there were 21 patents issued along with 2
grants. The land was of good quality, but it was starting to
be taken from more distant areas. However, most of the land
being taken was still concentrated near the fertile center
of the municipality. Eighteen of the quarter sections
patented in 1888 were class one or two. The land patented
was spread across seven different township squares. The
greatest number of disposals occurred in township eight,
range nine. It is important to note that the man that would
later rent land to Charles Drury, acquired two quarter
sections in this year.

In 1889 there were 27 patents issued to individuals and
another 11 issued to the CPR. The majority of the land
patented by the CPR and by individuals was in the center of
the municipality and near the town of Treherne. Twenty-six

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69 Donald Loveridge. "An Introduction to the Study of Land
and Settlement Records," A Guide to the Study of Manitoba
Local History, edited by Gerald Friesen & Barry Potyondi.
(Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1981), 104.
of these quarter sections were in township eight in range eight or nine. The land patented to the CPR was of high quality. Ten of the eleven quarter sections were ranked in the first two categories. Seven quarter sections were ranked class one. Fourteen of the twenty-seven quarter sections patented to individuals were patent and preemption combinations. The quality of the land received by these individuals was nearly the same as that received by the CPR. Only two of the twenty-six quarter sections, or less than eight percent, carried a ranking of three or lower. In the next year there were 15 patents and 2 grants issued. Ten of the 15 quarters patented were preemption combinations and 2 patents were to the CPR. Eleven quarter sections of land being acquired were near Treherne, in township eight in range nine and ten. The land acquired by individuals was also of high quality. Two-thirds of it ranked either class one or two

As shown in Figure 3, the trends in sales mirrored aspects of the patent activity in the period from 1880 to 1890. Both sale activity and prices peaked in approximately 1883 and declined in the following years. In 1881 there were 65 private sales involving 50.5 quarter sections of land. The total consideration paid for all this land was $23,749.00 which produces an average price of $470.37 per
quarter section. Ten of these sales were in township 8, range nine. There were 51 transactions in township 9, range 8. Thirty-two of these were subdivisions of half a quarter section or less so the actual amount of land sold was equal to 36.5 quarter sections.

In 1882 there were 50 quarter sections involved in sales. Less land was involved than the previous year, only 42.125 quarter sections, but the total consideration involved almost tripled to $62,740.00. The average price paid per quarter was almost over three times as great jumping to $1,489.38 from $470.00. This jump may seem questionable but it is congruent with the information
revealed by other studies.\textsuperscript{70} A speculative mood was in the air. There were 21 quarter sections sold and these were evenly dispersed across 5 township squares. There were 31 sales in township nine, range eight. However, seventeen of these transactions were of a quarter section or less so just over 21 quarter sections were sold in this township. Many of those who did manage to sell in this period were fortunate. The frenzy of the years leading up to 1883 meant that these individuals often received excellent prices for poor quality land.

In 1883 the level of activity of private sales and prices declined as the speculative bubble burst. In 1883, there were only thirty private sales involving 26,225 quarter sections of land. The total consideration paid for this land was $17,077.00 for an average sale price of $651.17 per quarter section. This decline in price and activity corresponds well with both Loveridge’s and Dyck’s work.\textsuperscript{71} The decline was large and it would be many years before the number of land sales and prices approached the

\textsuperscript{70} Loveridge, "The Rural Municipality of Sifton.", 97; Lyle Dick, Farmers "Making Good", 30.

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
levels of 1882. The land sold in this year was spread mostly over two township squares. There were seven quarter sections sold in township eight in range ten. Another twenty transactions occurred in township nine in range eight.

In 1884 there were 36 private sales involving 29,925 quarters. The total consideration paid was $24506.00, for an average consideration of $818.91 per quarter section. Again the most active area was township nine, range eight. In 1885 there were 19 private sales. These sales involved 16.57 quarter sections. The total consideration paid was $7021.00 for an average sale price of $423.73 per quarter. Ten of these quarter sections were in township nine, range eight.

At this point, it seems useful to discuss the mortgaging habits of the residents of South Norfolk. The year 1881 marks the appearance of large numbers of mortgages. In 1880 there had been only 7 quarter sections mortgaged, but by 1881 there had been 25 more. Their character was also changing. In 1880 all of the mortgages appear to have been granted from individuals, but in 1881 almost half were from corporations. The dominant grantors were, "Dundee Mortgage and Loan" and "The Real Estate and Loan Company." In 1882 there were 54 new mortgages, but also 11 discharges. In this year, "The Landed Banking and
Mortgage Company” and “The Manitoba & North West Land Company” were the most frequent grantors of mortgages.

In each case the number of mortgages far exceeds the number of mortgage discharges. If we try to summarize these transactions we see that mortgages were granted on 187 quarter sections during a five-year period. There were only 53 discharges. This seems to suggest that in the period from 1880 to 1885 most of these farming operations were still immature struggling businesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Land Activity in South Norfolk: 1886-1890</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
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<tr>
<td>1888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we look at data for the period from 1886 to 1990, as exhibited in Table 5, we find several trends. The number of initial disposals to individuals via patent and grant is very comparable to the number of sales and mortgages. In this 5-year period there were 79 patents and 26 grants. Thus there were 105 initial disposals to individuals. There were also private sales involving 123 quarter sections. The new
mortgages numbered 160, while there were only 35 mortgage discharges. This disparity suggests that we are still looking at an area that was populated by a large number of marginal operations, but there were signs of change. Prices per quarter section were beginning to rise.

The year 1886 is notable for the amount of private sales. In this year, there were 34 quarter sections involved in private sales. A number of these sales were half sections near the town, so the actual amount of land sold was only equal to 25.176 quarter sections. The total consideration paid was $8,859.00. The average price per quarter was $351.88. Even in 1886 we are still seeing the activity of two distinctive groups. Eleven quarter sections were in township nine, range eight. Five were in township eight range nine and another nine were in range ten.

From this point prices began to escalate. In 1887 9.3595 quarters were sold for an average price of $523.32 per quarter section. There were three quarter sections in township nine range, eight and four in township eight, range ten. In the next year, 19.02 quarter sections were sold for an average price of $667.09 per quarter section. Only three quarter sections were in township nine, range eight. Three
were in township eight in range nine and another eight were in township eight in range ten.

In 1889 there were 34 private sales. There were very few partial sales, so 30.02 quarter sections were sold in this year. The total compensation for this land was $31,133.90, which provides an average of $1037.10 per quarter section. This may seem a bit high but this is easily explained by a number of factors. Many of the quarter sections were sold in packages of two or more quarter sections. This would suggest a high incidence of the sale of complete farms, which would skew the values upward. The land was also of very high quality and in the best location. Seventeen of these quarter sections were in the fertile township eight in range nine. Twelve others were in township eight in range ten. Ninety-four percent of the land was ranked class one or two. Seventy-three percent was ranked class one and twenty-one percent was ranked class two.

The mortgaging trends in the era from 1886 to 1890 were similar to previous years. This trend suggests an area populated mostly by struggling, immature businesses. However the era did exhibit some notable features. The year 1889 is significant because of the large number of new mortgages. In this year 60 mortgages were granted. The explanation can be
found by examining these mortgages. In 1889 we can see the arrival of large farm implements by looking at the mortgages that the residents of South Norfolk were undertaking. In 1889 we start to see mortgages to companies with names like "The Implement Loan and Insurance Company." We can find further evidence of this trend by looking at the agreements being made. In this year it appears that both J.T Thomas and S.N. Rothwell purchased steam tractors from the Sawyer Massey Company for $2200.00 each. John Knowes also made a similar purchase from the Waterous Engine Works Company and paid $2050.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Patents</th>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Mortgages</th>
<th>Discharges</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6
Land Activity in South Norfolk: 1891-1895

In Table 6, we can see that the period from 1891 to 1895 marks the beginning of the transition of the area. In this period initial disposals to individuals remained very comparable to private sales and numbered 119 and 129 respectively. The number of mortgages was noticeably larger, involving 258 quarter sections. What is more interesting is the number of mortgage discharges. In this period they
numbered 118. This was almost half of the number of new mortgages, verses a one to five ratio for the earlier period. The nature of these land title transactions speaks of a more settled area with conservative farmers beginning to be able to pay off their debts. Nearly every year in this five-year period is laden with the evidence of future trends.

In 1892 there were 16 quarter sections patented. One quarter section was acquired via grant. The settlers continued to acquire land near town of Treherne and the railway line in township eight in ranges eight, nine and ten. However, at this point the number of homestead and preemption combinations appears to be declining greatly as there were only 2 quarters acquired in this fashion. In 1891 patents were issued on 18 quarter sections of land. The but only 6 quarter sections were homestead and preemption combinations. After 1892 the patent and preemption combinations dropped to a level of insignificance.

The seventy new mortgages in 1892 were comparable to the number in 1891. However, there is a fairly striking change in the number of mortgage discharges. In 1892 there were also 35 mortgage discharges. From this point forward mortgage discharges occur at a rate of approximately half
the number of new mortgages. In 1895 mortgage discharges actually exceeded the number of new mortgages. In this year there were 19 new mortgages, but twenty mortgage discharges.

The year 1893 was important because we start to see the quality of land being patented was farther from the center of the municipality. In this year, patents were issued on 36 quarter sections of land. The land was of high quality, perhaps not as good as land acquired in previous years, but still very viable farmland. Twenty-six of the thirty-six quarter sections of the land acquired were ranked either class one or class two. However the location of the land acquired was different. It appears that both conditions and the psychology of the settlers were changing. With less of the best land available, they were now more willing to consider land farther from the town of Treherne. In 1893 fifteen of the quarter sections acquired were in township seven in ranges eight, nine and ten. Another ten were in township nine. Two were in range eight, another eight were in range nine.

In 1894 there were 23 patents issued to individuals and another 9 patents were issued to corporations. The CPR was issued 7 patents and the Manitoba Southwest Railway Company was issued two. The quality of all the land being acquired
was declining as foreshadowed in 1893. Ten of the twentythree quarter sections acquired in 1894 were rated class three and another eight were rated class four or lower. Of the patents issued to individuals, only four were homestead and preemption combinations. The trend of acquiring lands farther from the center of the municipality was also continuing. Sixteen of the quarter sections were in township seven in two different ranges. Thirteen were in township seven in range nine and another three were in range ten. Five of the quarter sections acquired were in township nine in range ten.

In 1895 there were 21 patents issued. The quality of this land was better than previous years, but only by a very small margin. Nearly half was later rated as class three or lower. Only two of the newly acquired quarter sections were in the center section of township squares. All other quarter sections were either to the north or south. Seven of the new quarter sections were in township nine, range nine. Ten quarter sections were township seven in either range eight or nine. We can see the “rural sprawl” clearly in the Map 3, which highlights patent activity in the period from 1891 to 1900.
Map 3
Patents: 1878-1900
Municipality of South Norfolk

Township 9

Township 8

Township 7

Range 10W
Range 9W
Range 8W

pre-1890
1891-95
1896-1900

Lake
Railway
River

T Treherne
While the quality and location of the patented land declined, the quality of the land being sold privately remained high. Its price was moving constantly upward. In 1893 there were 24 private sales, which were equal to 22 quarter sections. Eleven quarter sections were class one and eight quarter sections were class two. These quarter sections were spread over many township squares. Nine were from the fertile township eight, range nine. The total consideration paid for the land was $21,095.00 or $956.26 per quarter section.

In 1894 there were 25 private sales. The land was of excellent quality. Twelve quarter sections were class one, eleven were class two. Nearly half of these were in township eight, range ten. However, a number of these sales were among the members of the same family with a price of $1.00, so they have been removed from the calculations of average sale price. There were 19 arm's length transactions involving 18.02 quarter sections. The total consideration for these lands was $16867.60 for average price of $936 per quarter section.

The town of Treherne was developing with the same rapidity as the rural area. This economic development is
captured by local poet Allan Ross. Even by 1895 the town was remarkable in the number of services that it offered:

Town Directory 1895

E. Hamilton's our high school master;
D. Hamilton puts on the plaster;
Revds. McClung, Fraser and George Gill
On Sundays do our pulpits fill;
T.J. Lamont's our town M.D.;
One blacksmith's name is Thos. Lee;
Rogers sells dry goods and coffees;
Alexander keeps post office;
D. Williams and J.K. McLennan
Sell dry goods, cod, haddock finnan,
Ben Englewain repairs the clocks;
Our miller's name is Jas. A. Cox;
James Telford Reid's our legal light
One retired farmer's called John White;
'Tis G.A. Anderson that carries
The business on for Massey-Harris;
And S.L. Taylor sells the pills,
That sometimes cure and sometimes kill;
C.W. Barkwell is town baker;
Ed Roberts is the undertaker;
Tom Roberts helps his brother Ed.
Sell furniture and house the dead;
Joe Straube is town hardware man;
In athletics Paulin leads the van;
One livery's kept by the Parker Brothers;
And John Perrie keeps the other;
Jas. Stevenson keeps the "Manitoba",
With parlor, dining-room and lobby;
Fred Rocket keeps the "Rocket House";
Our tailor's name is Harry House;
D. Harvie harness makes and collars
Watt Smith irons wagons, sleighs and rollers
And general blacksmith shop controls;
His carriage maker's William Bowles;
Andrew Ross supplies the butcher meat;
Malcolm McClarty shoes the feet;
H. Watson, Senior health inspector;
James McAdam's tax collector;
Claude Somerville's mill engineer;
John Coulter is mill charioteer;
James Emmond sues for dilinquent debts,
And William Frame does serve the writs;
Robson deals in lumber, lime, and bricks;
The poem continues for a number of lines covering the identity of grain elevator managers, grain buyers and even the person in charge of the dog pound.\textsuperscript{72}

The period from 1896 to 1900 has a number of identifiable characteristics. In this period, private sales began to outpace initial disposals. The amount of land being patented in this period was decreasing. The land being acquired was farther and farther away from the town of Treherne and was of increasingly lower quality. From 1896 to 1900, there were only 119 initial disposals to individuals in South Norfolk. Only three of these transactions involved grants, the rest were patents. In 1896 there were 29 patents issued along with 2 grants. In 1900 there were only 18 patents issued. All were at least six miles from Treherne. In 1895 just over half of the land being patented was rated class three or lower. In the four years that followed this number would gravitate toward 60%. It seems that a farmer could only homestead land if he or she were willing to settle for less than the best lands and the increased transportation costs that went along with being so far from the town and the rail lines.

\textsuperscript{72} Allan Ross, Poems (Treherne: The Treherne Times, 1907), 179.
As shown in Figure 4, private sales reached new levels in the period between 1896 and 1900. Their number increased steadily as the new century approached. In 1896 there were 23 private sales. Of these, 21 were arm's length sales. The average sale price of these lands was quite high because of their quality and location. Nineteen of these quarter sections were ranked class one or two. Twelve of these quarter sections were in the center township. Eight were in township eight in range nine and four were in township eight in range ten. The total consideration was $26,359.00 for an average price of $1,255.19 per quarter section.

In the years from 1897 to 1899 there were 145 quarter sections sold. The average prices dropped to $974.29 per
quarter section in 1897 but had risen to an average of $1,199.04 per quarter section by 1899. Much of this land was of good quality and near the center of the municipality. In this period we see a larger number of transactions between members of the same family. It appears that land was being transferred between generations. The consideration paid was $1.00 and so these have not been included in the calculations of average price. In 1897 there were 13 of these transactions and another 26 between 1898 and 1899.

In 1900 the number of private sales vastly outnumbered the number of patents. They were over three times as great, involving 59 quarter sections. Among these transactions 14 were inter-family transactions involving a nominal amount. The actual amount of land involved in arm's length transactions was 48.0063 quarter sections. The total consideration paid for these lands was $67,211.00, which translates to an average price of $1,400.05 per quarter section.

In the period from 1880 to 1900, South Norfolk had already changed much. As late as 1890, a farmer with pioneering spirit could migrate to the municipality of South Norfolk and acquire a half section of the best quality land, close to the railway and town of Treherne. By 1900 this was
no longer possible. A settler arriving in 1900 was faced with several choices. None was particularly inviting. He or she could choose poor quality land far from the railway and town of Treherne or be faced with the prospect of paying other individual approximately $1400 per quarter section for their lands. The fact that the more established landholders were quickly paying off their mortgages foreshadowed even more intense competition for these limited land resources. The greatest changes that occurred in South Norfolk occurred gradually in the years from 1880 to 1900. This was the period in which A J. Cotton initially experienced the West. He was both a participant and a witness to the process.
Chapter III:
A Tale of Two Families: The Cottons and the Drurys

The story of A.J. Cotton has been well told by Wendy Owen. To facilitate a comparison between the Cottons and the Drurys it is useful to conduct a brief review of Cotton’s story and the details of Wendy Owen’s admirable work. When we do this, we find that some of Cotton’s success can be attributed to his early arrival in South Norfolk. Questions also arise about his ability to succeed in a more established community.

The story of A.J. Cotton is one of humble beginnings and increasing success. In many ways his experiences are a reflection of South Norfolk. In 1881 Cotton took over his grandfather’s 50-acre farm, paying $25.00 annual rent.\(^3\) Farming in Durham County, Ontario was like farming in Peel after 1860. Land prices were high and adequate returns were rare. Cotton tried to improve his lot by expanding his holdings, but the experience with the larger farm was little better. In 1887 Cotton decided to sell the farm and move to Manitoba.\(^4\)

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\(^3\) Owen, "Prairie Patriarch", 9.

\(^4\) Ibid., 9-10.
To finance his migration, Cotton borrowed $225 from his aunt. In March of 1888, he packed a rail car and left Ontario. On his maiden voyage to Treherne, Cotton brought livestock and implements, which he valued at $819.00. Though Cotton had begun too late in Durham County, he had come early to the Municipality of South Norfolk. In 1888 much of the area had never felt a plow. On arrival Cotton's net worth was approximately $630.00.

The virgin land that Cotton would farm belonged to Colonel William McLean of Port Hope, Ontario. McLean had been in Western Canada a year earlier and purchased a half section of land near Treherne. McLean's land was leased by Cotton for a term of five years with an annual rent of one dollar; providing that 200 acres be broken and McLean acquired all buildings and improvements. In all, Cotton broke sixty acres in the first year. A summation of assets and liabilities reveals significant progress. At the end of 1888, net worth was roughly $760.00, an increase of $130.00.

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75 Ibid., 11.
76 Cotton Account Book, 1888, PAM.
77 Ibid.
78 Treherne Area History Committee, Tiger Hills to the Assiniboine, 135.
80 Cotton Account Book, 1888, PAM.
The degree to which Cotton was an early settler can be seen in two ways. The first school in the area was in the town hall. G.B. Wilson was the first teacher. School opened June 11, 1888. Two of the seven pupils that attended were the sons of A.J. Cotton. Seven pupils were required to start a school. Herschel Cotton, who was only five years old, was allowed to attend with his older brother Nelson.\textsuperscript{81}

We can also see the degree to which Cotton was an early settler by revisiting the municipality’s development as gauged by land disposals. When Cotton arrived there was still so much cheap homestead land available that a patent and preemption of the best quality land could be acquired near the town of Treherne. We must remember that McLean had acquired his land only a year earlier. In the year of Cotton’s arrival there were 21 patents issued. The land being taken was still concentrated near the fertile center of the municipality. Eighteen of the quarter sections patented in 1888 were class one or two. Nearly half of the lands acquired were patent preemption combinations.

Cotton cultivated his first wheat in the spring of 1889.\textsuperscript{82} Between 1889 and 1892 Cotton continued to break new

\textsuperscript{81} Treherne Area History Committee, \textit{Tiger Hills to the Assiniboine}, 21.

\textsuperscript{82} Owen, 63.
land and his yields exceeded provincial averages. By 1891, Cotton was cultivating 130 acres of wheat and his crop averaged 28.0 bushels per acre. The year 1892 was better. Cotton’s 29 bushels per acre far exceeded the provincial average of 16.50.\textsuperscript{83} The results are shown quite clearly in the yearly reckoning. Net worth had almost tripled in the three years since Cotton had come to Manitoba and it was now $1825.25. After another successful year, it would increase to $2,547.75.\textsuperscript{84}

The year of 1893 was not so gratifying. Cotton’s lease with McLean had run out. Cotton would pay an annual market rent of $450.00.\textsuperscript{85} Despite considerable returns, Cotton calculated a small loss for the year and a reduction of $37.25 on the balance sheet.\textsuperscript{86} It would appear that paying market rent was having an adverse effect on Cotton’s fortunes. The outcome also intimates that even Cotton might not have been able to flourish so well, had he arrived later or been unable to consistently secure such low-risk leases.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 77.

\textsuperscript{84} Cotton Account Books 1892, 1893.

\textsuperscript{85} Owen., 73.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 75.
A.J. must have been aware of the advantages of his previous rental agreement. He quickly negotiated a similar contract on a half-section of land for a five-year period. Owen estimates that the cost of this half section would have been $62.00 per year. In 1893 this amount would be a paltry sum. Five years later it would seem like an absolute pittance. The negotiation of another rental agreement appears to have had an immediate effect. In 1894 Cotton cultivated 320 acres of wheat and threshed 8,400 bushels. Income was $2,991.90. Net worth was $3,864.75, an increase of 54\%.\(^88\)

Owen points out that the crop data from 1895 provides further evidence regarding the roots of Cotton's fortunes. The yields from crops grown the adjacent new land were 16% greater. Cotton was a skilled farmer, but the difference suggests that his early settlement and favorable rental agreements, which allowed constant expansion onto virgin lands also had something to do with his high yields.\(^89\) They called A.J. "Wheat King," but the title "Lease King" may have been equally appropriate.

\(^{87}\) Ibid., 76.

\(^{88}\) Ibid., 79.

\(^{89}\) Ibid., 81.
Between 1895 and 1897 Cotton's net worth grew at an astounding rate. By 1895 it stood at $6,237.15. At the end of 1897 was $11,350.80, an annual increase of 41% during the last two years.\footnote{Cotton Account Book 1895, 1897.} However, the most momentous event in 1898 was the expiry of Cotton's original lease with Isaac Mawhiney. A new agreement came into effect in January of 1899. Mawhiney was to have a third of all crops on the land.\footnote{Owen, 88.} It would seem that Mawhiney was taking advantage of tenancy customs to increase his own income. As a local resident, Mawhiney would have known of Cotton's productivity. Renting for a third share of a crop was an accepted practice, thus Mawhiney would not have endured any criticism from the community for asking this of Cotton.\footnote{Paul Voisey, Vulcan, 137; R.W. Murchie, Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier, Assisted by William Allen and J.F Booth, (Toronto: MacMillian, 1936), 196.} In 1899 Mawhiney's share amounted to 2,216.5 bushels of wheat. Owen calculates the value of this wheat to be $1,221.00, an incredible jump from the $63.00 of A.J.'s first lease.\footnote{Owen, 88.}

Cotton began to sound more and more like a later resident of Peel. Owen observes that his letters became filled with references to the way land prices were rising: "a farmer living 3 miles from Treherne who has a section of
good land with a house on it worth $1,600, a $600 barn, and $4,000 in chattels and he is offering the whole lot for $14,000 with $10,000 down." 94

This was not the kind environment in which Cotton could provide farms for his sons. Treherne was too far on its way to becoming an established community. Cotton responded in the same way as many in Peel. In 1901 he moved to a new frontier. The Swan River Valley had not yet been settled and land prices were low. When a large amount of capital was moved to an unpopulated area, it could be used to guarantee the future of one's offspring. This is what Cotton accomplished when he moved from South Norfolk in 1901.

The story of the Drury Family has some common points with the story of the Cottons. Upon his arrival in Treherne, Charles Drury Sr. was much like Cotton. But he and his family migrated 11 years after Cotton had arrived. Their experiences in South Norfolk would be very different.

Before moving to Manitoba, the Drurys occupied a small 100-acre farm in King's County, New Brunswick.95 It would appear that the farm was a marginal operation with an

94 Ibid., 30.
abundance of debt and little profit. When Charles Sr. would sell his farm in New Brunswick and the mortgage had been discharged, he would receive only $155.00\textsuperscript{96} The Drurys' situation was a little better than Cotton's experiences in Ontario, but Charles Drury Sr. was not a man to envy.

In contrast to the Cotton family, the Drurys did not migrate as a unit. Members of the Drury family came to Manitoba at different intervals during a period of two years. The oldest son, Cyrus, was the first to go. On March 13, 1898, his father bought him a ticket to Vancouver, British Columbia for $38.50.\textsuperscript{97} Charles Jr., the youngest son, was next. On August 15, 1909, he would leave to join his brother who was now in South Norfolk and working for Ebenezer Barron.\textsuperscript{98} The ticket that Charles Sr. bought for his son in St. John cost a mere $14.00.\textsuperscript{99} Harvest excursion trains had special reduced rates to encourage farm laborers to come west.\textsuperscript{100}

Almost a year later, the rest of the Drury family would move to Manitoba. On April 4, 1900, Charles Sr. would buy three tickets from Sussex to Treherne. One was for himself

\textsuperscript{96} Drury Account Book, March 14, 1900.
\textsuperscript{97} Drury Account Book, March 14, 1898.
\textsuperscript{98} Charles Drury Jr., "Autobiography", 16.
\textsuperscript{99} Drury, Account Book, August 15, 1899.
\textsuperscript{100} Charles Drury Jr. "Autobiography", 16.
and another was for his son, John. The remaining ticket was for his daughter, Fannie.\footnote{Drury Account Book, April 4, 1900.} Charles Drury Sr. had no wife at this point. She had died in 1895. His daughter appears to have taken on her economic role. Fannie managed her father's household until shortly after he sold the farm in 1912.\footnote{Ibid., May 25, 1900.}

Charles Drury Sr. and Cotton used a freight car to transport their goods and chattels. The price of Drury's car was $131.20.\footnote{Drury Account Book, March 28, 1900.} From an analysis of Charles Sr.'s account book we can get a good indication of the minimum value of property on board. Drury appears to have had at least one cow, as he would sell a "heifer" for $21.00 soon after he arrived in Manitoba.\footnote{Ibid., April 12, 1900.} At this point he had not purchased any livestock locally so the animal must have come on the train. It is much the same with finished lumber. Drury would sell $31.50 worth of the commodity a few days after appearing in Treherne.\footnote{Canadian Papers in Rural History 6 (1988): 137-53} The Drurys also brought at least three healthy horses. Charles Jr. described their use long
before any were bought locally.\textsuperscript{106} When these animals were sold they would bring $450.00\textsuperscript{107} Thus, the minimum value of the Drury family's property would have been $502.50.

Though this number is not quite as high as the value that Cotton placed on his goods, it would be a mistake to think the Drury family a less viable economic unit. The figure of $502.50 represents a minimum value, but the real value had to be higher. Once in Treherne, the Drurys did not purchase what it would take to fully equip a farm. Yet the days of sharing equipment had passed in the district. "Neighborliness" had been replaced long ago with a more "commercial standard."\textsuperscript{108} The purchase of plow irons indicates that Drury had transported other implements.\textsuperscript{109} In New Brunswick the Drurys had a mixed farm, similar in size to Cotton's farm in Durham County, so one would expect that they would have brought a similar amount of equipment. It also seems likely that the Drury family would have brought personal goods and furniture of some value.

Also important to the Drurys' viability was the level of debt. Unlike Cotton, Drury had no liabilities when he migrated. In his account books there is only one entry after

\begin{footnotes}
\item[107] Charles Sr., Account Book, Oct. 9 1900; Dec. 13, 1900.
\item[108] Owen, 72.
\item[109] Charles Sr., Account Book, April 7, 1900.
\end{footnotes}
the move to Treherne that involves a person from Sussex. In this instance the party was paying $25.00 owed to Drury.\textsuperscript{110} When we include all assets and liabilities, Drury's net worth upon arrival in Treherne would have been $543.25. Cotton's net worth was a little higher at $635.00. But we must remember that the figure for Drury is a minimum value. If we add a plow and some furniture, Drury was better off.

More importantly, Drury had advantages that Cotton did not have. Perhaps most crucial to the viability of Drury's enterprise was the fact that all three of his offspring were adults. All were between 20 and 30 years of age and in their prime productive years. They injected significant amounts of income into the family enterprise from outside work and their unpaid efforts lowered the farm's labour costs.

Upon arriving in Treherne, Charles Sr. rented a half-section farm from J.J. Darling.\textsuperscript{111} The economic value of Drury's offspring can be seen almost immediately. On March 5, Cyrus would give his father $113.70, which was earned by working for Barron. Total receipts for April, May, June and July (including Cyrus' wages) were not much higher at $198.45.

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., July 26, 1900.

\textsuperscript{111} Charles Jr., "Autobiography", 19.
Like the Cottons, the Drury family would endure considerable hardship in their first year. On August 1, 1900 Charles Sr.'s cash reserves would be down to $10.50. By August 2 that money would be gone. For almost three months (until the crop was sold) the Drury family would not make a single purchase. The only entry Charles Sr. would make reads: "No Money."\(^\text{112}\)

In 1900 A.J. Cotton had experienced yields below the provincial average. It was much the same with the Drury family as drought and insects had decimated the province.\(^\text{113}\) A plot of 116 acres yielded only 947 bushels for an average of a little more than 8 bushels per acre.\(^\text{114}\) Cotton's yields were slightly better at 8.5.\(^\text{115}\)

The money Drury received for the crop of 1900 amounted to $480.00.\(^\text{116}\) After the harvest, an additional $105.00 would come from the labours of Drury's sons. Despite the efforts of Charles Sr. and his offspring, the family farm operated at a loss for the year. The family's net worth since the move had decreased by $404.10. The value of trackable assets

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\(^\text{112}\) Ibid. Sept. 1900

\(^\text{113}\) Norman Criddle, "Field Notes", Sept 9 1900, Norman Criddle Papers, PAM. (Criddle was a Manitoba naturalist who specialized in grasshopper control.)

\(^\text{114}\) Drury Account Book, p. 80

\(^\text{115}\) Cotton, Account Book, 1900.

\(^\text{116}\) Charles Sr. Account Book, Oct. 24, 1900; Nov. 11, 1900.
remained fairly constant but liabilities had grown significantly. Drury had borrowed $56.30 from A.J. Cotton and John Ferguson was now owed $100.00. The largest debt was to J.J. Darling. Charles Sr. had agreed to a rent of $430.00 and he had only been able to pay $200.98.

The dire straits of the family are reflected in Charles Sr.'s entries during the holiday season. He would receive another $25.00 from his sons as a Christmas gift, yet he would not spend this money on himself or luxury items for the family. Instead, he would immediately give the money to Darling, so as to decrease the debt for the rental of the farm.

During part of 1900, Drury was busy breaking land on the Darling spread. In 1901 land under cultivation increased to 296 acres. The value of Drury's offspring is easily seen. Drury's sons would spend part of the winter working at "a tie camp for a C.P.R contractor...322 miles east of Winnipeg" and inject another $72.05 into the farm. In the period surrounding the harvest, another $256.20 would be

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117 Ibid. Nov. 12 1900; Dec. 12 1900.
118 Ibid., Dec 27, 1900.
119 Ibid. p. 80.
added.121 Thus income from outside labour totaled $328.25 in 1901.

The benefits of the Drury children's unpaid efforts are also reflected in the low labour costs of their father's operation. In 1901 Drury had 296 acres under cultivation, but his labour costs were only $270.00.122 The value of the efforts of Drury's offspring is even more obvious when we look at Cotton's labour expenses. In 1893, when wages were lower, Cotton's costs on a smaller area of cultivation (235 acres) were $411.00.123 In 1892 wages on an even smaller amount of cultivated land (186 acres) were also greater at $383.50.124 The difference cannot be explained by pointing to the higher labour requirements that resulted from A.J.'s strategy of constant expansion. Expansion on the farm under Drury's management was 130 acres. Cotton's increase on the McLean land for the period of comparison was only 49 acres.

The large increase of cultivated land was partly responsible for 1901's dramatic rise in revenue. Total earnings for the year would be $2,180.40. While income had risen, net worth had again fallen. Total assets increased to $1493.35, but liabilities had mounted at a faster rate and

121 Ibid., August 16, Oct. 24, Nov. 9, Nov. 30, Dec. 20.
123 Cotton Account Book, 1893.
124 Ibid., 1892.
now stood at $1,540.49. Once more the biggest debt was to
Darling, as Drury would delay his rental payment until
several months after the harvest. The reason for the delay
was that Drury, like Cotton, was constantly thinking of
expansion. At the end of the year he would advance $367.00,
to Ebenezer Barron to secure the rental of his half section
farm for the following season.\textsuperscript{125} Over the course of the next
four years Drury would make payments to Barron that would
amount to $1,888.00, translating into an annual rental cost
of approximately $472.00.\textsuperscript{126} Again this figure is close to
the fair market rent that Cotton had paid for McLean's land
in his second lease.

It would seem that Charles Drury Sr. had a strategy,
which had some of the same shrewdness as those of Cotton and
Mawhiney. The Barron farm was the land that his sons had
worked on for the past three years. There is little doubt
that Drury had an accurate appraisal of the farm's
productive capacity. This "insider" information that Drury
obtained and his use of it appears to have been on the mark.
Barron's farm would always be among the most productive and
profitable land that Drury rented.

\textsuperscript{125} Drury, Account Book, Oct. 25 1901.

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., March 25, 1902; Sept. 24, 1902; Sept. 27, 1902 Nov.
24, 1902; Feb 18, 1903; April 3, 1903; Sept 30 1903; Oct. 8,
In April of 1902, the Drurys would begin seeding two farms. The size of the whole operation was substantial. In 1902, 245 acres would be sown on Darling's land. Another 154 acres would be sown on the Barron farm. The wheat yield on the 245 acres sown on the Darling land would be 5136 bushels, for an average of almost 21 bushels per acre.\(^{127}\) Yields on the Barron farm were significantly higher. A plot of 154 acres produced 4068 bushels and resulted in an average of 26.4. This was slightly above the provincial average of 26.0.\(^{128}\) Though the size of the crop was large, receipts from wheat were small in comparison. In 1902 income from grain would total only $2,895.11. However, we must not think this year a failure. The year's work had allowed the family to build large grain stores of almost a thousand dollars in value. The Drury's would never have to buy seed again. They would also be able to take advantage of higher prices in the spring when they would sell more of their produce.\(^{129}\)

When we look to balance sheets and profit and loss statements, it would seem that the year had been a success. Income exceeded total expenses by over three hundred dollars. Net worth had increased to $282.31. In February of

\(^{127}\) Charles Sr., Account Book. p. 96.

\(^{128}\) Ibid.

\(^{129}\) Ibid. April 9, 1903, May 7, 1903; May 9, 1903, May 11, 1903; June 8, 1903.
1902 Drury had also purchased the West half of 17-7-9 for $1120.00. The land had little use as a farm but had some value as it possessed an abundance of wood. At the end of the year the decision must have seemed fairly sound. Income from the sale of wood in the first year of ownership was $355.00, almost a third of the initial purchase price of the property. The Drurys were now moving in the right direction.

Despite the advances of 1902, the Drury operation did not remain the same for the following year. Drury would not rent the Darling farm in 1903. The change may have been due to the low yields on the land. As mentioned, Drury had broken 130 acres as recently as June 1900 but was already experiencing yields below provincial averages. Prospects for future profits on the Darling land would have seemed remote.

In 1903, the Drury family again farmed the Barron land but replaced Darling's tract with land belonging to Dr. T.G. Phillips. Again Barron's farm was the most productive. On 183.5 acres the yield was 3030.5 bushels, for an average of 16.54. This may not seem high, but it was a poor year for

131 Charles Sr., Account Book, Jan. 10, Jan 23, Feb. 2, Feb. 21, Feb 22, March 5, March 12, April 2, July 8, Nov. 24, Dec. 10, Dec. 27.
132 Ibid., 97.
133 Ibid.
all of Manitoba. The yield on the Barron farm was actually slightly higher than the provincial average of 16.4. The numbers are significant for they show that Cotton was not the only one in the area who would produce at or above provincial levels.

The land belonging to Dr. Phillips did not do nearly as well. On 132 acres the yield was 1490 bushels for an average of 11.29.\textsuperscript{134} In light of the low yields, it is not surprising that Drury would not rent the Phillips land again. Drury’s difficulties in securing productive farm land at a reasonable cost may be seen as further evidence of a land crisis. Drury would purchase more land in 1903, but it was not prime farmland. In September he would buy the other half of 17-7-9. The land was not valuable because of its ability to produce wheat but because of its wood.

At the end of 1903 it would seem that the Drurys had made further progress. Total income was quite large at $3,682.15. Income from the sale of wood was surprisingly substantial at $736.30.\textsuperscript{135} Expenses for the year were also considerable totaling $3,393.77. As most profits were funneled back into the business, net worth increased by $286.28. In their fourth year in Treherne, the Drury

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.

family's net worth stood at $569.10. Though the Drurys were making progress, it was much slower than Cotton's. In his forth year in Treherne, A.J.'s net worth had stood at $1825.25.

In 1904 the Drury family would reduce their crop acreage. In this year they would rent only the Barron land, upon which they would seed 206 acres of wheat. In this year they would also bring some of their own land into production. In 1904, 22 acres would be brought under cultivation on 17-7-9.\textsuperscript{136}

In 1904 the oldest Drury son, Cyrus, left the family farm. Shortly after the crop was sown he moved to Prince Albert. It is not clear why he migrated. He may have felt that this was his best opportunity to leave the farm and pursue his fortunes elsewhere.\textsuperscript{137} The reduction in the size of the enterprise meant less man-hours were required. Labour expenses without Cyrus' help only increased by $128.00. In October, relatively soon after migration, Cyrus married.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{136} Charles Sr., "Account Book", p. 132.

\textsuperscript{137} If any of Drury's children could have recognized the difficulty of the situation in Treherne, it would have been Cyrus for he often conducted important business on his father's behalf. Ibid, Oct. 15, 1902; Nov. 4, 1902; Nov. 24, 1902; Jan 17, 1903; Jan. 25, 1904.

Though 1904 was a year of reduction, it was one of the most profitable years that the Drurys would experience. They were only paying rent on the Barron farm and that land had always proved to be the most productive. The cultivation of 22 acres on Drury's land meant little increase in expenses. Payments on it were already being made and its wood was producing substantial amounts of income.

These trends are verified by looking to financial reports for the year. Income was down by 19%, but expenses had dropped 27%. Profits were up to $500.21. All money was put back into the business and net worth increased by an identical amount and now stood at $1069.31.

The year 1905 was similar to 1904. Drury rented the Barron farm again and cultivated a small plot on his own land. In this year Drury was also expanding. He seeded 220 acres of wheat on the Baron land and 31 acres on 17-7-9.139

The summer of 1905 was extremely bleak. Drury's second oldest son, John, was ill for much of the summer. He would die at age 29 in September.140 While the death was an emotional blow for the family, it was also economic tragedy. Farming without John's help dictated that labour expenses

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139 Charles Sr., Account Book, p. 133.
140 Charles Jr., "Autobiography", 27
would be high. In this year they peaked totaling $664.64.\textsuperscript{141}
As a result little was gained. Net worth increased by a trivial $49.85.

The low profits of 1905 may have indicated to Drury that farming the Barron land without the aid of three of his offspring would be a difficult task. Drury did not rent the Barron farm in 1906. Instead, he traded the east half of 17-7-9 to John H. Ferguson for the north west of quarter of 25-7-10.\textsuperscript{142} The parcel of land Charles Sr. received was smaller than the one that he had given up but Charles Sr. may have been relying on a son's appraisal again. Charles Jr. had worked on Ferguson's farm in 1904 and 1905.\textsuperscript{143}

In 1906 Drury cultivated 93 acres of wheat on the Ferguson land and 30 acres on the west half of 17-7-9. A threshing receipt reveals his land more suited to tree growing. Wheat yields were only 13.6 bushels per acre.\textsuperscript{144} Yields on the Ferguson land, (which was quite close to Cotton's old farm) came in at 22.65. Again the Drurys had exceeded the provincial average of 19.49.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{141} Charles Sr., Account Book, Jan. 6, Jan. 23, Jan. 28, July 4, Sept. 1, Sept. 29, Oct. 16, Dec. 11.

\textsuperscript{142} Charles Jr., "Autobiography", 32; Charles Sr. Account Book, p.133.

\textsuperscript{143} Charles Jr., "Autobiography", 24, 25.

\textsuperscript{144} Charles Sr., Account Book Oct. 17, 1906.

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
The cash that Charles Sr. received in 1906 out-distanced expenses to a greater degree than in any other year but it would be misleading to think the year bright and cheery. A substantial amount, $1067.50, was from an insurance policy that Charles Sr. had taken out on John Drury. Upon receiving these funds Charles Sr. would embark on a mission of debt retirement. On Dec. 20, $191.00 would go to taxes. On Dec. 21 J.K. McLennan, who often acted as Drury's private banker, received $551.05.\textsuperscript{146} Payments such as these increased net worth by 78% to $2001.00.

Compared to the previous years, 1907 was uneventful. Total income was smaller but so were expenses. Net worth rose to $2277.61. Again Charles Sr. had made some advances, but his progress had not kept pace with the gains that Cotton had made when he moved to Manitoba. At the end of Cotton's eighth year in South Norfolk his net worth was $9333.36. The different fortunes summarized in Figure 5 suggest a Peel-like land crisis in Treherne. The case is made more compelling by examining the behavior of the Drury progeny.

\textsuperscript{146}Ibid.
Drury vs. Cotton. Net Worth. The First Eight Years in Treherne

During this period Cotton is renting at market rates and for once there is no increase.

Drury's largest increase occurs as he pays off debt with proceeds from son's insurance policy.

Net Worth at Time of Migration

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Net Worth

Number of Years In South Norfolk

Source: Part of the information presented is derived from Wendy Owen's work, "Prairie Patriarch: The History of Almon James Cotton, 1858-1942", 9-13, 63-88. It has been supplemented with data from the reconstructive work on the Account Books of Charles Drury Sr.
In this more limited environment all of Drury's offspring married late or not at all. The oldest son, Cyrus, would marry soon after he had left Treherne. At the time of marriage he was thirty-two.\textsuperscript{147} It was exactly as one would expect. In land-poor Treherne, Cyrus appears to have deferred the desire for his own family. In land-rich Prince Albert, these factors no longer mattered. Fannie Drury, like Cyrus, would not marry until her situation had been altered. In the fall of 1912 Charles Sr. retired from farming and moved into town. Relieved of her duties and now in a slightly more urban environment, Fannie married less than six months later. Her age was thirty-four.\textsuperscript{148}

Charles Drury Jr. would never marry. He would become an itinerant farm hand after his father retired from farming. He continued in this occupation for the next twenty years. Farming either by purchase or renting was not viable option. Unlike his father, Charles Jr. had no offspring to lower labour costs. Based upon his patriarch's experiences, farming with little capital and hired labour would have been ludicrous. In contrast, the transition to permanent unmarried, farm laborer would have been quite natural. Charles had already played this role for much of his life.


\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 51.
In a number of passages, Charles Jr. comes painfully close to realizing that economics dictated his behavior. Economic forces conspired so that Charles never earned what he thought he could expect. He writes:

The main reason that I never got married was that I made up my mind when I was a young lad that I would never, on any condition, get married unless I could have a home and enough money to use with anyone that I took with me. I do not know whose fault it was for I never got things fixed that way. I just kept going the best I could, alone. A good many tried to find out, but I just kept quiet. Some got sore, some did not.\footnote{149}

Aspects of Charles Jr.'s life also say something about the nature of farm laborers. Cecilia Danysk has argued that the high cost of farm mechanization that occurred after the First World War dictated that farm laborers would be less likely to become owner-operators.\footnote{150} Charles Drury Jr. was one of these individuals but the costs of mechanization made little difference to him. In fact, his ability to work with machinery made him a more valuable employee.

Charles Jr.'s fate had been decided much earlier. The late settlement date of his family and their failure to accumulate substantial amounts of land or capital in a world of rapidly increasing land costs were the determinants. They decreed that he would never hold his own family farm.


\footnote{150} Danysk, Cecelia. "Farm Apprentice to Rural Proletarian", 24-28.
must have been others like Charles. The correspondence between late settlement and a high incidence of landless laborers among the offspring of the rural population is something that merits investigation.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION: A SETTLED AREA

The patterns revealed by the data from the land title abstract books depict a mature community in the period from 1901 to 1915. In this era, the number of new patents issued to individuals declined to a level of insignificance. There were few quarter sections of cheap homestead land left. In the early part of this period, there was a large amount of land transferred via the patent instrument to the CPR. However, much this land was of lower quality, and not in the best location, far from the railway and town of Treherne. Private sales dominated and the prices for farmlands continued to increase to the degree that land sales tended to involve only certain individuals. Large land holdings continued to increase in both size and number. Those families that had established themselves early in South Norfolk came to possess much of its land. When we turn to census data, the case for a Peel-like transformation becomes even more convincing.
Figure 6 depicts the decline of new homesteads to a level of insignificance. What it does not illustrate is the low quality of this land. There were nineteen patents granted to individuals in 1902. Only one quarter section was rated class one, but another nine quarter sections were ranked as class two. Nine of the quarter sections were ranked class three or lower. As a group, these lands were farther away from the prime location and fertile center of the municipality. Only three of the quarter sections taken were in township eight, in range nine or ten. All of these quarter sections were in the most northern parts of these township squares. There were three quarter sections taken in township eight in range eight but these lands were generally of poorer quality. The greatest number of disposals took place in township nine range ten. In this township square, four quarter sections were taken by individuals.
The lands patented in the years 1906 and 1907 are particularly illustrative of this phenomenon. In 1906 there were patents registered on another eight quarter sections of land. All the of the land taken rated class three or lower and half of the land was rated class five or lower. All but one quarter section was in the most northerly portion of the municipality. In 1907 another five quarter sections were patented. Again the quality of this land was very poor. Eighty percent of the land rated class three or lower, and fifty percent rated class five or lower.

While there were few patents granted to individuals in the years from 1901 to 1915 there were a large number of initial disposals to corporations. In terms of new land disposals to corporations, the new century began with a bang. In 1901, patents on 127 quarter sections of land were granted to the CPR. The land was spread throughout the municipality, but tended to be in the peripheral townships. There was one quarter section acquired in township seven, range eight and forty-one quarter sections were taken in township seven, range nine. Another eight quarter sections were taken in township seven in range ten. Due to a limited selection, only two quarter sections were taken in the fertile township eight, range nine, but sixteen quarter
sections were taken in the more rugged area of township eight in range eight. One quarter section was taken in township nine, range eight but thirty quarter sections were taken in township nine, range nine. Another twenty-seven sections were taken in township nine range ten. Map 4, which includes the land the CPR would acquire, shows that virtually all the usable land South Norfolk was no longer in the Dominion's hands by 1905.

The quality of the land acquired by the CPR in 1901 covered the entire spectrum but was composed of more of low quality land. There was one quarter section of class one land. Forty-one of the quarter sections were ranked class two. Thirty-two of the sections were ranked class three. Twenty-seven sections were ranked class four and nineteen were ranked class five.

In 1902 the CPR acquired another seventy-two quarter sections. What is remarkable about this group of acquisitions is the amount of land ranked class three. In this year, the CPR acquired forty-seven quarter sections of land that carried this designation. Eleven quarter sections
were ranked class one or two. Fifteen of the quarter sections were rated class four or five. All of these land disposals were spread over two township squares. Forty-six of these quarter sections were in township seven, range nine. Another twenty-six were in township eight, range eight.

A large amount of the land, which was acquired by CPR in 1901 and 1902, was quickly transferred to the Canada North West Land Company. In 1901 the CPR transferred nine quarter sections to the Canada North West Land Company. Another three were transferred in both 1902 and 1903. The largest transfer occurred in 1904. In this year, fifty-four quarter sections were transferred to the Canada North West Land Company. These were the last lands in the municipality to be transferred from the Canadian Pacific Railway to the Canada North West Land Company. The quality of these lands was not stunning. Ninety percent of the land acquired was rated class three or lower. Thirty-four quarter sections or sixty-three percent of the land transferred was rated class three. Another ten quarter sections were ranked class four and five were ranked class five.
Considering the quality of the land, it seems surprising that the Canada North West Land Company was able to sell any of its lands. However, population pressures were such that in 1901 the Canadian North West Land immediately began selling the land it had acquired from the CPR. In 1901 the Canada North West Land Company sold seven quarter sections to various individuals. What good land the Company possessed went quickly. Two of the quarter sections were rated class one. The prices for these lands centered on the figure of $880.00 per quarter section. In 1903, another six quarter sections were acquired by individuals. Eighty-three percent of the land acquired was of class three or lower and sixty-six percent of this land was rated class four or lower. In the period from 1904 to 1905 the Canada North West Land Company sold five quarter sections to individuals. Again, the price of most of these quarter sections centered on the figure of $880.00 per quarter section.

In the next five years, the Canada North West Land Company sold another sixteen quarter sections to individuals. The composition lands involved in these sales speaks of the desperation of the populace. Nine of these quarter sections were rated class three, four were class four and three were class five and heavily covered brush and trees. Another two quarter sections of class three lands
were sold in 1912. Judging from the quality of the these lands, it seems likely that the small amount of land that remained in hands of the Canada North West Land Company was unfit for settlement.

The land sold by the CPR to individuals in the period from 1901 to 1915 was slightly better. In 1901 the CPR sold just one quarter section to M.A. Bazin. The quarter section was in most southern part of the municipality in township seven, range nine. It was later rated class one and was sold for the very reasonable price of $480.00. Between 1902 and 1905 the CPR sold 39 quarter sections of land to individuals in South Norfolk. Over 66 percent of this land was rated class three or lower. The Drurys acquired two of their quarter sections of land from the CPR in 1903. One was class three and the other was class four. The unfortunate experiences of the Drurys in trying to grow wheat on this land is a good indicator of the poor quality of land being sold in this period and the problems that faced someone arriving in this later era.
Figure 7 depicts both the activity and average prices in the period from 1901 to 1915. What is most striking about this period is the number of private sales in comparison to patents issued to individuals. When we break these into two blocks, we find that there were 407 quarter sections sold in the period from 1901 to 1905. In the same period there were only 64 patents issued. In the years from 1906 to 1910, the contrast is more striking. In this period there were 375 private sales but only 28 patents.

Good land was scarce. The established residents of South Norfolk forced prices higher as they competed for any land that became available. Many of them could afford this
because they had working farms and substantial net worth, much like Cotton in 1901. They also had little debt. As we have seen in previous sections, many of these farmers had been able to discharge their mortgages in the past ten years.

In the period from 1901 to 1915 the average price of a quarter section advanced to such a degree that we see an unusual phenomena as exhibited in Figure 8.

![Figure 8: Average Price and Mortgage Per Quarter Section](image)

After 1908, land prices no longer followed the mortgaging trend lines. At first glance this seems very unnatural, but upon further consideration, it does make sense. At these prices the market for land is different. The buyers are the established landholders, not the small struggling farmers. Many had considerable cash reserves and could buy land
without a mortgage. Thus, we see the two averages moving in different directions.

We can begin to gauge the dimensions of the consolidation process by grouping data on land ownership in South Norfolk by family name during various periods and supplementing this data with the short family stories which constitute much of the area's published history. The land title abstract books indicate that in the study period of 1880 to 1915, 517 different families owned land in South Norfolk. We can best see the process of consolidation by focusing on those families that owned 4 quarter sections of land or more. During the study period family groups with substantial land holdings went from being an oddity to constituting the ownership of a significant portion of the municipality.

By 1885 there were only 5 families groups that could claim ownership of a section or more of land: The Josephites, the Palmers, the Parkers, the Richards and the Sturtons. As a group they owned 21 sections of land. According to local histories, the Palmer brothers were among the first settlers in South Norfolk, arriving shortly after the surveyors.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Treherne Area History Committee, 259-261.
Herbert Sturton came to the area sometime before 1877.\textsuperscript{152} By 1890 another four families would join this exclusive club. As a group, the nine families together owned 38 sections of land. None of them owned much more than a full section each. By 1895, another 11 family groups would come to own over a section of land. In 1895 these 20 family groups owned 82 quarter sections of land.

The period from 1895 to 1900 marks the beginning of the transition. Only one more family would gain ownership of a complete section. However, the total amount of land owned by these 21 families grew considerably. By the year 1900, these 21 family groups would own 117 quarter sections of land. The gains made by some families were quite remarkable. George Forbes and members of his family migrated from Morris Township in Huron County, Ontario in 1882.\textsuperscript{153} Their holdings expanded steadily. By 1895 they owned 6 quarter sections of land in South Norfolk. Five years later they would own 15 quarter sections of land.

In the next five years, another 21 families would add to their holdings and come to own at least a full section of land. As a group, families with over a section or more of

\textsuperscript{152} Rathwell Historical Committee, 269-274.

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 164-171.
land held title to 228 quarter sections of land in South Norfolk by 1905. In the years that followed, expansion slowed. By 1910, only four more families were admitted to this exclusive group. But these 46 families now held 283 quarter sections in South Norfolk. By 1915 this group’s numbers and total holdings were virtually unchanged.

The strength of these families’ position can be seen by examining them more closely and integrating some land quality data. Nearly three hundred quarter sections were held by these forty-six families. This land constituted a large portion of the best land in the municipality. In order to fully understand this accomplishment we must remind ourselves of certain statistics. South Norfolk is comprised of just over eleven hundred quarter sections. In the municipality, 246 sections of land are rated class four or lower. Factors such as land quality, high prices, heavy undergrowth and distance from the railway ensured that not all land in the municipality would be acquired by the end of the study period. Even today, aerial photography shows large areas covered in brush. By 1915, 890 quarter sections had passed from the hands of the Dominion. The rate of land disposal in South Norfolk fits well with what Loveridge has

revealed in the Municipality of Sifton. In 1921, 83.65 percent of the land had been taken Sifton.\footnote{Loveridge, "Sifton", 130.} Considering these factors, we can conclude that area was fully populated. In light of these facts, the ownership of nearly three hundred quarter sections by this group is quite remarkable. It becomes more remarkable when we take into account the quality of their land. In South Norfolk only forty-nine percent of the land is rated as class one or two. Yet nearly sixty percent of this group’s land is in the first two classes.

If there is a defining characteristic among the large landholders, it is early migration and the acquisition of land. Among the 46 families that owned a section of land or more in 1915, 41 or 89\% were landholders before 1900. If we go back further, we find that 33 or 72 percent were already landholders in South Norfolk before 1895.

The ownership of large amounts of land was not restricted to extended family groups of fathers, brothers and cousins. Individuals often assembled large tracts of land. This is revealed by the land title data and is substantiated by the local histories. The small section on
the McCoig Family is particularly striking as an example of a settler using early arrival to full advantage:

Donald and Duncan came at the same time from Inshrale Southend by Campeltown, Argyllshire Scotland in 1883. Duncan died in 1886. He had been a contractor. Donald had very uncertain health and with very little capital he took up farming on the N. 17-8-10. He eventually owned twenty-one quarter sections of land. He died January 6, 1923, at the age of 64. He owned fourteen quarter sections at the time of his death. 156

It is clear that a man such as this could easily out-bid Drury and even Cotton when the competition for land intensified after 1900. It is also clear that this is exactly what he did in this time period. McCoig migrated in 1883 to South Norfolk. By 1894 he owned a full section of land. An examination of his mortgage data reveals that he had little debt. In the years between 1895 and 1910 he purchased 17 quarter sections. 157

The timing of migration, and the quick acquisition of land also determined the period of residency in South Norfolk. Among those nine families who had acquired land by 1880, 100% still owned land in South Norfolk in 1915. Those

156 Treherne Area History Committee, 243.

who had acquired land by 1885 were similar. By 1885, another 78 families had acquired land. In 1915 60 of these families, or 77% still owned land in South Norfolk.

It was much different with later residents. Those settlers that arrived after 1900 were less likely to stay a part of the community. In the period between 1900 and 1905, 116 new families acquired land in South Norfolk. Just ten years later over 36% of these families no longer held any land in the municipality. These trends and statistics are very similar to those that Lyle Dick has revealed in the Abernethy District of Saskatchewan.\(^{158}\) The Drury's were part of this group of late arrivals. The quick disappearance of many other late arriving families from the South Norfolk landscape leads one to believe that Charles Drury Jr.'s transition to landless farm labourer was not unique.

\(^{158}\) Lyle Dick, Farmers "Making Good": The Development of Abernethy District, Saskatchewan, 1880-1920. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1989), 27-49.
The case for a Peel-like transformation becomes even more persuasive when we look at census data. In Peel, lower fertility rates and expansion by large landholders caused a population decline by 1871. South Norfolk's demographics were the same. Population began to approach its limit at the turn of the century. After twenty years of intensive growth, it peaked in 1906 and was smaller in 1911.\textsuperscript{159}

In Treherne and Peel the trend was more striking in the most rural areas (those without towns or villages.) In 1901 the population of township 8-9 was 381. By 1906 it had risen to 429, but in 1911 it had dropped to 378 and in 1916 was down to 300.\textsuperscript{160} In 9-9, population in 1901 was 307. In 1906 it had dropped to 300 and in 1911 it stood at 285.\textsuperscript{161}

The case for a Peel-like transformation working its way across the Prairies becomes more compelling when we look at data from recent population studies. In his article on population change on the Prairies, William J. Carlyle, makes note of an extensive area in Southwestern Manitoba in which the population of most townships had peaked by or before 1911. This area includes South Norfolk.\textsuperscript{162}

By adding an abundance of land title and census data, I do not mean to call in question the validity of using farm accounts alone as historical sources. Rather, I mean to promote farm account books on their own, but also as vital parts of larger studies. Farm account books are useful for

\textsuperscript{160} Census of the Prairie Provinces, Population and Agriculture 1916.

\textsuperscript{161} Census of Canada 1911, Special Report on Area and Population, 48.

they can raise new questions and link the behavior of individuals, especially that which is related to economics, to the macro-process of history in a way no other record can.

In this instance, the farm account books of Cotton and Drury have suggested Treherne was victim to the same process that Gagan has documented in Mid-Victorian Peel. By 1906 South Norfolk, like Peel, had ceased to be "an area in which the a low ratio of population to cheap and abundant land favored the objectives of the small agrarian capitalist."\(^{163}\) The transformation of frontier area to an established community could take place with startling quickness. In both places, the window of opportunity for the small farmer was less than twenty years.\(^{164}\)

In Peel before 1860, economic security and social betterment were predicated by favorable family/land ratios. It was much the same in Treherne 1888. Settlers like Cotton came early when demand was low. They grabbed cheap homestead land, negotiated favorable purchase prices or advantageous land rental agreements. In either situation there was the opportunity for large gains. To his credit, Cotton appears to have understood this dynamic. When population pressure

\(^{163}\) Gagan, 42.

\(^{164}\) Ibid.
increased prices to the point that they no longer agreed with his expectations, Cotton did what many of the residents of Peel County did. In 1900 he moved once again to a "new agricultural frontier where the emigrant farmer's expectations of relentless improvement might be fulfilled." For Cotton that place was the Swan River Valley. When large amounts of capital were moved to an area that was still unpopulated it could be used to guarantee the future of one's offspring. This is what Cotton accomplished when he migrated in 1901.

The experiences of the Drury family are further evidence that a transformation had occurred in Treherne and might be working its way westward. In many ways Charles Sr. was comparable to Cotton. The minimum value of goods he brought was analogous to that which Cotton had arrived with and the real value of Drury's net worth may have been higher. Like Cotton, Drury possessed considerable business sense. This is reflected by his habit of renting the productive lands that his sons had worked on. Similarly, he could produce at or above the provincial average. The operation that Charles Sr. headed might have been better suited to the demands of agricultural production. While Cotton's offspring were children, Drury's descendants were

165 Ibid., 7.
adults. They would lower their father's labour costs and inject income into the family farm. Despite these factors, Drury would not make the same gains in net worth. He had come too late. In 1901 there were no more leases like Cotton had enjoyed. In this more limited environment, the Drury family adopted coping strategies corresponding to the behavior of Peel's later residents. Charles Sr.'s offspring remained a part of their father's household well into adulthood. They delayed their marriages, or did not marry at all. South Norfolk had changed that much.

The data derived from land tile abstract books substantiates this interpretation. The patterns of settlement in South Norfolk are complex. However, a few points are quite clear. By the time of the arrival of the Drury family, South Norfolk had been depleted of virtually all land, which was both high in quality and low in cost. Families that had migrated to South Norfolk at early date were often able to accumulate substantial land holdings. By 1915, these large land-holding families owned a significant portion of the municipality.

In the period between 1875 and 1890, the proving of a homestead was of central importance and the patent was a prolific land title instrument. During this time, most
quarter sections being homesteaded were undertaken in combination with a pre-emption so that an entire half-section of the best quality land was gained at a comparatively low cost. However, many of these earlier farms were meager struggling operations without the ability to quickly reduce debt. Large farms were rare and new mortgages far outnumbered mortgage discharges.

The period from 1891 to 1900 marks the transition to a settled area. In this era, the number of initial disposals in relation to private sales was declining. There were many more mortgages but also a far greater number of mortgage discharges. The nature of the land title transactions speaks of an era of consolidation. Settlers were beginning to be able to pay off their debts. As a result, many of those who had arrived early began to expand their holdings and families owning a section of land or more became more common.

The patterns revealed by the data from the land title abstract books depict a mature community in the period from 1901 to 1915. There were few quarter sections of good cheap homestead land left. The prices for farm lands continued to increase to the degree land sales tended to involve only certain individuals and prices actually became uncoupled
from wider mortgaging trends. Those settlers that arrived after 1900 were less likely to stay a part of the community. Some initial work with census data seems to support this interpretation. That an area on the Prairies could be transformed in this way has serious implications for scholarship on Western Canada, especially that which relates to agricultural laborers.
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