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LETTERS OF LOVISA McDOUGALL, 1878—1887

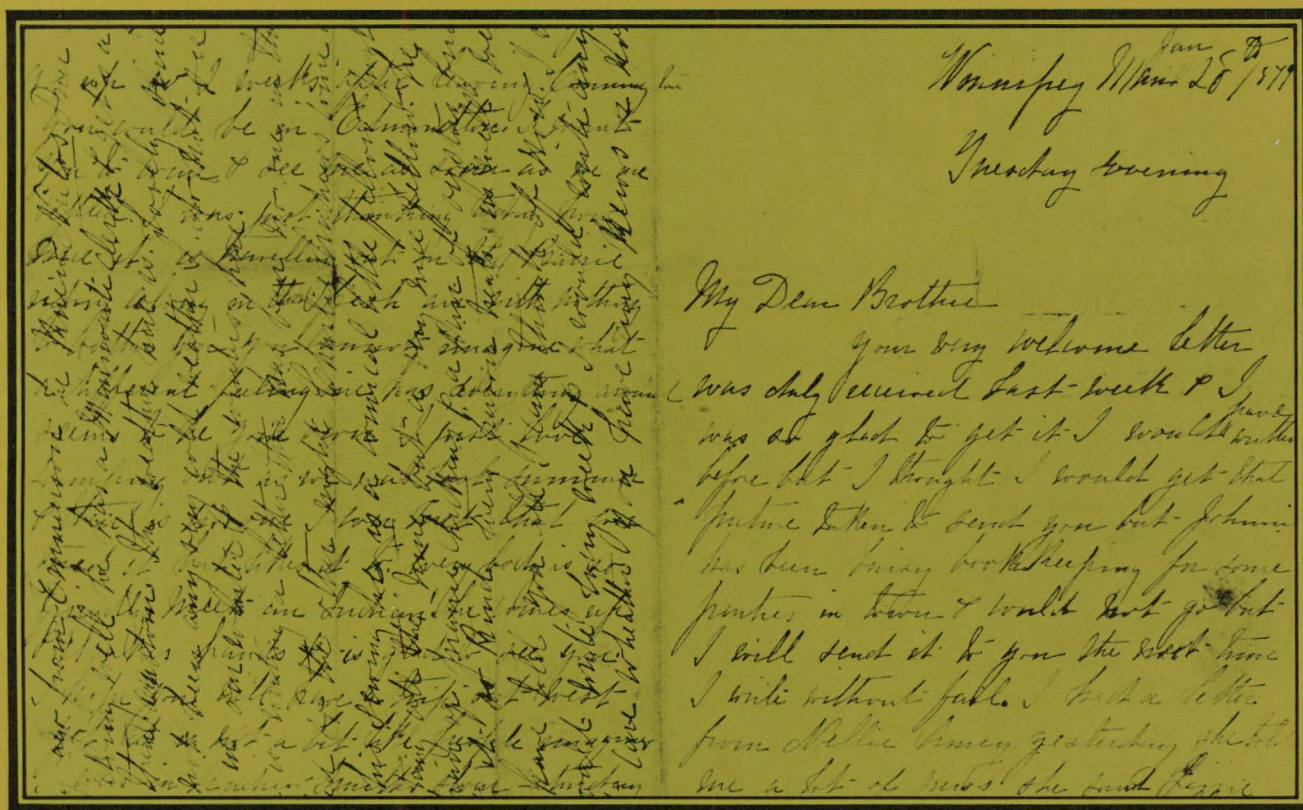
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Edited By

Elizabeth M. McCrum



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OCCASIONAL PAPERS

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Objectives

These Occasional Papers are designed to permit the rapid dissemination of information resulting from Historical Resources' programmes. They are intended primarily for interested specialists, rather than as popular publications for general readers. In the interests of making information available quickly to these specialists, normal production procedures have been abbreviated.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	ii
List of Plates.....	iv
Preface by the Hon. Horst A. Schmid, Minister of Culture..	v
Foreword by Mr. E. H. McDougall.....	vi
Introduction.....	vii - x
Edited Text and Plates.....	1 - 71
Appendix A: two letters from John A. McDougall.....	72 - 76
Footnotes.....	77 - 89

LIST OF PLATES

Plate	Page
1. Lovisa McDougall.....	1
2. Letter of 28th January, 1879, with cross writing.....	16, 17
3. Fort Edmonton 1879.....	23
4. Portion of illustrated letter of 11th December, 1879...	35
5. Report of the New Year's party - <u>Saskatchewan Herald</u> , 26th January, 1880.....	39
6. Map showing the route taken, 1878.....	90, 91

PREFACE

The West was truly "a lone land" then.

The only inhabitants were the native peoples, a few traders, a few missionaries and -- after 1874 -- those intrepid men in scarlet: The North West Mounted Police.

Into the vast, lonely and waiting land that is now Alberta came John Alexander McDougall, merchant, and his wife Lovisa. They came in 1878. John was a pioneer merchant. Lovisa was a pioneer wife and mother. John fostered commerce. Lovisa wrote letters that helped make history.

These letters of Lovisa McDougall shed an intimate light on the opening of the West ... the long and tiring journeys across the plains, the loneliness of life in the pioneer hamlet that Edmonton was then, the frightening days of the Rebellion of 1885, the everyday trials and tribulations, tears and laughter of a pioneer woman in the West.

These letters are a priceless addition to our accounts of those days and of the spirit that went into making the West we now call home.

Horst A. Schmid
Minister

FOREWORD

These letters were written by my mother to her folks in Ontario after she left home as a young bride with her husband in 1878 to go away out west to Edmonton. My mother had a photographic memory and would often recount to my wife and me many very interesting experiences and events during her travels and early life in Edmonton. The letters form a special link with my parents' early married life and with a world which has now disappeared. Mother and father crossed the prairies before the railways came -- they settled in Edmonton when there were fewer than 200 people in the fort and hamlet. They saw the new west in its dawn and I believe their letters capture the atmosphere and spirit of the time so well. This is why I donated the letters some years ago to the Provincial Archives of Alberta. I wanted to be sure that they would be preserved permanently for all citizens to read and enjoy in the future.

When the Provincial Archives of Alberta proposed to publish the letters I was naturally in wholehearted agreement because this would make them available to even more people. Mrs. E. McCrum is to be congratulated for her care in editing the texts which were seldom easy to decipher, and for her masterly narrative which links the letters so well. I hope you find the book as fascinating and as rewarding as I have.

E. H. McDougall

INTRODUCTION

The letters of Lovisa McDougall in the Provincial Archives of Alberta were written over a nine year period, beginning with her first trip west over the Carlton Trail in 1878. Those that follow were penned during her second journey and in the period when the McDougalls were first establishing their home and trading business in the hamlet that had come into being near the Methodist Mission, Fort Edmonton. The correspondence concludes in 1887, a month after the small community on the North Saskatchewan had enthusiastically celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. Between April 1881 and January 1887, only two letters are contained in the collection, but additional letters belonging to one of her grandsons, indicate that Lovisa remained in touch with members of her family in eastern Canada during these years and for some time after.

Lovisa's letters from western Canada to her mother and brother in Ontario were carefully saved by them until they were eventually turned over to one of her daughters who passed them on to other members of the family in Edmonton. The twenty that are now being published were in the possession of Lovisa's youngest son, Edmund H. McDougall of Edmonton, who, appreciating their general interest and historical significance, donated them, in 1971, to the Provincial Archives of Alberta (Acc. 71.365/1-22). Since the ink had faded and the condition of the paper had deteriorated during the intervening years, the originals could no longer withstand excessive handling; they were therefore transcribed in 1972 to meet the needs of students and historians. So popular have the transcripts become with researchers of diverse interests that it has now been decided to publish them.

The originals are written on several different kinds of paper, varying from the lined note-pad type to a plain folded stationery that bears an embossed flower, usually a fleur-de-lis, at the top of the first page. The handwriting is firm and flowing, but peculiarities in forming a number of letters of the alphabet, present occasional problems for the reader. In some letters, particularly those written while she was travelling across the prairie, Lovisa added to the difficulties of deciphering her message by resorting to cross-writing: a style that was commonly employed by correspondents earlier in the century to escape high postal rates, but which she used, it would appear, chiefly when writing paper was in short supply. On filling both sides of single-page stationery, or the fourth side of a folded sheet, the paper was turned at right angles and the writing continued from the bottom to the top of the page across the previously written horizontal lines.

All the letters are directed to Cannington, Ontario, Lovisa's former home: fifteen of them to her brother, Charles Amey, who was a few years her junior; and the remainder, numbering five in all, to her mother, Mrs. James Amey. Two written by John A. McDougall to his brother-in-law appear in the Appendix. It should be mentioned that the final three letters written in January, June and July 1887, have at sometime had their dates altered by a later hand to 1897. However, internal evidence such as references to new arrivals in Edmonton and the description of the Jubilee celebrations - all corroborated by news items in the Edmonton Bulletin at that time - confirms that the date should definitely be 1887. Apart from this verification, it is quite improbable that any correspondent as date-conscious as Lovisa, could repeatedly err by a matter of ten years on three separate occasions within a six month period!

In preparing these letters for publication, the spelling has been corrected or words added only when it is evident that the error or omission has been the result of hasty writing. Such amendments are few and appear throughout in square brackets. Almost all punctuation is editorial, as Lovisa's total disregard of commas and infrequent use of full stops make it difficult to follow the many abrupt and unrelated changes of topic occurring within a single paragraph. The paragraphing and underlining of some words are entirely her own, as are the additional notes and postscripts, which, as a matter of convenience, have been placed at the end of the letter. The only passages that have been deleted are those containing personal remarks and inquiries about relatives and acquaintances whose identity is of interest solely to members of the immediate family, and is of no historical consequence to Albertans. These omissions, regardless of length, are indicated in the text by the use of three dots. The information contained in the introductory commentaries and footnotes is based chiefly on news items appearing in the Edmonton Bulletin (EB), the Saskatchewan Herald (SH), and to a much lesser extent, on transcripts of the letters written by Lovisa and her husband, provided by Mr. John F. McDougall of Edmonton (PAA. Acc. 75.388). These and other sources are acknowledged in the footnotes.

During the nine years covered by the letters, many changes took place in Lovisa's own life and in the community of which she was a member. Her first three children were born, her husband's various business ventures expanded and prospered, and the little trading settlement that she found so friendly and pleasing when she first arrived, lost none of its charm as it began developing into a larger commercial centre for the district. In her newsy letters to her mother and brother, she naturally discloses a great deal about herself, but even more valuable is the contribution she unwittingly makes to

local history by recording the simple activities of the residents of a frontier village. She writes of a time, almost a hundred years ago, when the Hudson's Bay post was the dominant feature on the river bank, and the cluster of unprepossessing buildings on either side of the Company's reserve gave no hint to the passing traveller that they contained any potential for growth. Lovisa, however, was no casual visitor. She was part of this new settlement; a proud citizen and chronicler of the earliest beginnings of what was to grow into a Provincial capital city.



Plate 1: Lovisa McDougall

LOVISA

Lovisa Jane Amey, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Amey, was born in Cannington, Ontario, in 1854. Little is known of the family background, but it is believed that her father was a descendant of one of the Amey families that entered British territory at the time of the American Revolution as United Empire Loyalists. Cannington, with a population of over 1,000, was a manufacturing and agricultural centre in Ontario County, about sixty miles northeast of Toronto.⁽¹⁾ Lovisa and her only brother, Charles, received their schooling in the village, and were able to develop their musical talents through participation in the church life of the community. It was here, in the early seventies, that she became acquainted with John A. McDougall, a young man of her own age, who was serving as a clerk in a local store.

After his departure for Winnipeg in 1873, and for the Victoria Mission on the North Saskatchewan River in 1876, the courtship was carried on by correspondence until he returned two years later. Lovisa and John Alexander McDougall were married in Cannington on 20th March, 1878, and six weeks later left the comforts of the well-established Ontario village to make a home for themselves in western Canada. Travelling by boat from Collingwood to Duluth, and then by train to Fisher's Landing (now Fargo, North Dakota), they eventually reached the city of Winnipeg after a steamer trip down the Red River. Some thought was given to establishing a store at Portage la Prairie, but lured by prospects of selling large quantities of goods at the treaty payments scheduled to be held that summer on the prairies, John abandoned his plans and prepared his carts for the western journey.

In spite of the fact that they were ten weeks on the trail because of the extra distance they had to travel to Sounding Lake, Lovisa took the hardships of camping in her stride and enjoyed each day's new adventures. During the time that she stayed at the Victoria mission while her husband was attending the Treaty at Fort Edmonton, she became familiar with the country along the Saskatchewan, and being favorably impressed, was quite willing to return the following year and take up residence in the hamlet near the Fort. Whether John was managing stores for eastern businessmen or striking out on his own on several new ventures, Lovisa kept herself occupied establishing a comfortable home and taking part in the settlement's church and social affairs.

In November 1880, her first daughter, Alice Amey (later Mrs. W. Inglis), was born, and in March 1883, John Charles joined the family. A second son, James Gordon, arrived in 1884. The youngest members of the family -- Annie Electra (Mrs. A. Chilcott), born in 1888, and Edmund Howard, born on 14th December, two years later -- are still living at the present time. As the McDougall family increased in number and their financial situation improved, the original log structure was exchanged for a succession of larger and better built dwellings. Eventually, after 1900, the spacious brick house on the southwest corner of 100th Avenue and 103rd Street became the headquarters for all future family activities and the setting for many private and public events. (2)

To her familiar role as wife and mother was added that of official hostess to civic and government dignitaries in 1897 and 1908 when her husband was mayor of the city, and from 1909 to 1913 when he served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. On other occasions, she shared her home with cultural

groups in the community who gathered to view the paintings and sculpture that the McDougalls had discovered on their trips abroad. But primarily, the McDougall house was a family home where both parents and children could pursue their own interests and enjoy the company of their friends.

Although Lovisa was, by inclination and choice, a homemaker, she found time to take part in community organizations as well. Her association with the Presbyterian Church, dating from its beginning in 1881, continued throughout her life, as did her affiliation with the Old Timers' Association, of which she was a charter member. As one of the St. John's Working Committee, she donated an ambulance in the early years of World War I, and later provided a fully equipped residence where the Committee could carry out its work.

John A. McDougall died in December 1928, just ten months after he and Lovisa had celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. For the next fifteen years she continued to live in the brick house along with her sons, James and Edmund, and the latter's wife, Vena. Until her death in November 1943, Lovisa was an interested observer of the city's new developments, ever impressed at the changes that had occurred in the years she had been a resident. She watched as the jumble of stores and office buildings at the centre of the city spread out over the site of the original hamlet, erasing almost all signs of its humble beginnings. Only in her memory did the early settlement and its people still survive intact, and these recollections she passed on to her children and grandchildren. Now, for later generations of the public, her letters perform a similar service, providing another perspective of the Edmonton that existed in the last quarter of the 19th century.

LOVISA'S TRAVELS

When Lovisa and her husband began their journey to the west in June 1878, they followed the Carlton Trail, at that time, the main route for traders, explorers, missionaries and settlers. Many had made use of it only as far as Fort Carlton, branching off there on a trail that would take them by land and water through northern Saskatchewan to Lake Athabasca and the MacKenzie Valley. Others had followed it throughout its entire length of nine hundred miles from its eastern limit at Winnipeg to its western terminal at Fort Edmonton

By the time Lovisa wrote the first letter in this collection, she had travelled almost half the total distance of the trail, and had added a number of incidents -- not all of them pleasant -- to her long list of new experiences. The low-lying areas between Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie had been traversed without difficulty, and only once had a cart wheel broken in the descent of one of the many high-banked creeks that cut across the trail west of Fort Ellice. More rapid progress was made in the portion that skirted the Touchwood Hills, and had it not been for the country lying to the north of the Quill Lakes, the trip, as a whole, would have been relatively uneventful. Here, however, on what was commonly known as the Great Salt Plains, they encountered the most desolate stretch of their journey. They found themselves exposed to blistering heat and violent summer storms in an extensive area where there were no trees to provide shelter from the elements or fuel for their camp fires. A further serious drawback of the region was the scarcity of good drinking water and the existence of numerous saline water holes and brackish sloughs whose contents brought extreme discomfort to thirsty humans and animals.

The McDougalls suffered no lasting ill affects from their brush with the alkaline water, but it was a relief to reach the wooded country at Bat-
oche where fresh water was again plentiful. Once the South Saskatchewan
was crossed by means of a ferry at this point, the next stopping place was
the small settlement at Duck Lake which lay about halfway between the two
large rivers. As this was the first extended stop they had made in the
weeks of travelling, Lovisa took the opportunity to bring her brother up-
to-date on the events of the past month. Refreshing her memory from en-
tries in their daily journal, she included not only the highlights of the
journey, but also her impressions of the country and the people.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/1

Duck Lake July 29, 1878
Monday Morning

My Dear Brother

I wrote you last about a month ago from Yeomands
farm near the Portage⁽³⁾ & I have not had any chance
since to write untill now. We have been travelling for
5 weeks steady and had no chance to post a letter any
place. We are at Duck Lake now, 10 miles from Carlton -
you can see on the map where it is. Johnnie expected
to stay for the treaty at Carlton but now he is going
to the Hand Hills to attend one of the largest Treaties
in the North West. It is about 250 miles south of Bat-
tleford. If he sells out there he will not go up as
far as Edmondton at all. We will be back in Winnipeg,
all being well, the Middle of Oct. I feel so sorry

about not being able to hear from home for so long, but you must send me a good long letter so it will be their when I get back & tell me all the new's. I am afraid I will not be able to send you another letter untill after the Treaty as their is no way to send a letter at all. Their is not a white person where we are going. Their are a lot of Indians going to the treaty.

Now I must tell you something about the country we have passed over after we left Yeomands. We did not see another settlement until we came to the Little Saskatchewan.⁽⁴⁾ A fine looking country, only poor water, the greatest draw back to this country all over. We bid Mr. Garrett good by then & went on our way. That was the 3rd of July. The 6th, we reached Shoal Lake, a Mounted police Station & a very pretty place. We saw a few Indians their. We scarcely ever see one. The 8th, we got to Fort Ellis,⁽⁵⁾ one of the prettiest places in the North west. We met some Squaws their and bought some strawberries. I preserved them. I went in a half breed house to clean them. They did not know a word of English, all French. The houses out here are log with straw roofs and no floor, a great big mud fire place, no furniture, only a bed & a kind of table, but they always eat on the floor, & the house full of young ones. We crost the Assineboine river on a ferry. July 10th, we came to Cut-Arm Creek. Johnnie broke the wheel of the buckboard their, but John, that is one of our boys, tied it up with Shaginappie⁽⁶⁾ & we got along all right. We over took 5 nuns and a preast going away north of Carlton. The next place we came to was the Toutchwood Hills, a Hudson Bay stoar, only one

family living their. After we left their we had to go over a great plain 60 miles acrost. The water was awful bad, Johnnie got very sick by drinking it. I did not drink any. It was salt water, it made the oxen sick. July 23 we got caught in a big thunder storm, I was frightened & went into Prudens Camp, a half breed family camped near us. We went on after the storm was over & saw 4 Buffalo but quite a [few] peices off. That night we was a little behind Prudens train a[nd] some Scotchmen travelling out here, & they was camped when we caught up to them. When we came up they were all in great excitement about their horses. They were all getting sick, & two of the best horses was dead. They had only been camped about half an hour. We highed up as fast as possible & went on. We all travelled until about 11 O'Clock.

When we camped for the night Johnnie had his horses tied up for a while to the carts to see if all was right there, & it was the cause of their getting sick by eating poisoned grass where some poisoned animal had died. I was awful frightened. July 26th, we got over the bad plains & I was very glad. We got lots of berries & it was pleasenter after that. Last Saturday we came to the South branch of the big Saskatchewan -- a lovely river. We had to wait their all day getting the carts over the river on a ferry. We had some good spring water, the only good water I have tasted since I left home. Yesterday we got to Duck Lake, that is quite a settlement about 8 miles from the river & here we are yet. I am all alone sitting in the tent writing to you. Johnnie has gone down to the stoar to get some things. The stoar is a mile from our camp. The carts have gone on ahead. The next place we stop at is Fort Carlton. I will write a few lines to Ma

their & post this letter. O how much I would like to see you all at home, I do get so homesick. Johnnie says he will let me go home in about 2 years. He says he is going to send for you to come up and help him in the stoar as soon as he gets settled. That will be this winter and he wants you next summer. I must close now as I have not time to write any more. Give my love to all enquiring friends & believe me, your

Loving sister Lovisa

I will write again the first chance I have but I am afraid I wont be able to send another letter untill we get back from the treaty. Dont be alarmed if you dont hear from me untill October. I feel so sorry, but if I can send a letter at all I will.

P.S.

I saw a woman eating lice.

The day after writing the preceding letter, the McDougalls left the main trail at Fort Carlton for a lesser used route that led in a southwesterly direction to Sounding Lake. They were not alone in their travels, for other traders were also willing to make the two hundred mile journey over treeless prairie in order to trade with the Indians who would be gathering at the lake on 15th August to receive their treaty money. Because some bands had not yet signed Treaty Six, Lieutenant-Governor David Laird accompanied the government agents in anticipation that all of them -- and Big Bear and his followers in particular -- would agree to the conditions and accept the allotted payment. Despite lengthy discussions between the Chief and government representatives, Big Bear, continuing to find fault with the low annual

allowance, refused to add his signature to the document, even though members of his own and other bands signified agreement by accepting their annuities.

The strong competition among the thirty-three trading parties initially cut profits to a minimum, and when on the third day, an American company, by lowering its prices, forced the Hudson's Bay Company to follow suit, the smaller traders had no recourse but to pack their goods and leave.⁽⁷⁾ Some followed the treaty party to Fort Pitt, while the McDougalls set their course for the Victoria mission and Fort Edmonton where payments were scheduled to be held in September.

Once their guide left them at the Battle River crossing, Lovisa and her husband made their own way over an old trail originally made by Indian hunters and war parties. Angling northwest between Beaverhill and Birch lakes, it led them through rolling, wooded country to a point on the south bank of the Saskatchewan, across from the small settlement at the Victoria mission. Established as a headquarters for Methodist missionaries by the Reverend George McDougall, the Victoria mission had been a spiritual centre for Métis and Indians since 1862. Attracted by signs of settlement, the Hudson's Bay Company had found it expedient to erect a post beside mission property in 1864, for the purpose of trading with the Métis in the settlement as well as with the bands of Crees who made their camps in the surrounding countryside. Over the years, the Indian population had steadily decreased, until by 1878, when treaty payments were made on 10th September, only \$700 was paid out in annuities. John McDougall, one of the five traders present, finding himself with goods still unsold when the Indians left the grounds, headed for Fort Edmonton where

the same procedure of payment and trading would be repeated the following week.

In the meantime, Lovisa remained at the mission, the guest of the young mission teacher and his wife. There, on a quiet Sunday afternoon, she had leisure time to attend to letter writing.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/2

Victoria Mission

Saskatchewan

Sept. 22nd 1878

Sunday Afternoon.

Dear Charlie

I have set down now to write you a good long letter to tell you all about what we have been doing this summer. It is an odd life to me but rather pleasant to travell around as we have been doing. Well, I wrote a short letter home at Fort Carlton.⁽⁸⁾ We started away for the Hand Hills 30th of July. The weather was very warm, we had to travell on the open plain all the way. We over took some traders going to the treaty also and they said it was to be at a place called Sounding Lake,⁽⁹⁾ 50 miles this side of the Hand. We reached the south side of the plain the 9th of August & camped on an old Indian battle ground, the Indians say it is haunted. We fell in with a lot of traders going to the treaty. We camped their untill Monday & then went on to the treaty ground where

the Indians were. It was only 4 miles. Their were a lot gathered but not all. The 13th, the Govener & Mounted Poliece arrived,⁽¹⁰⁾ 40 poliece, they looked splendid. The 15th they commenced paying the Indians, paid out \$8,000 before evening. Their was about 25 traders, it was just like a little town. I send you a pencil sketch of our stoar, the carts are behind & boxes of goods in front.⁽¹¹⁾ John used to sit up all night to watch the place. There was some nice gentleman their. The govener is a very plain gentleman. Most of the Poliece are a set of roudies. As soon as they commenced paying the Indians, Johnnie opened out his goods. He done well. We left the 20th, all the Indians were gone & not a camp left as soon as the treaty was over. They were nearly [all] plain Crees, a dirty looking set. It was wild to here them every night drumming & singing in their tents. Johnnie & me went in a tent one night to see them, they made us sit down. Their was a fire in the centre, 4 Indians nacked except a breech clout with drums drumming away, the wemon and children dancing as they call it, bobing up and down like making a courtesy, & humming. Nothing like singing at all, & drinking tea & Painkiller. Their was two or three old men sitting down. They gave us some tea to. I got frightened for fear I did not drink it all they would be mad, & drank all they gave me. It made me sick, their was tobacco in it to. It was the awfulest dose I ever took.

Well, as Johnnie did not sell out their we started for the treaty at Victoria⁽¹²⁾ we hired an Indian guide to put us on the right road. His father is a Chief. His name was Go[1]d Eagle, a very nice Indian. He had a lovely horse, a Buffalo runner, & a

good gun worth \$60.00. He is a big bug among them. He went nearly to Battle river with us & then went back to meet his party. I must not forget to tell you that all this time we were in the great Buffalo Country where there used to be thousands & we did not see one. The Indians shot a few but they are very scarce & every person says there will be hard times with the Indians this winter. They say when Indians are hungry beware. Well, 10 days after we left Sounding Lake we reached Victoria. We came into a lovely country about 40 miles south. Before that we were travelling over a very barren track of country not fit for anything. After we left Fort Carlton we had no wood until we got to Sounding Lake, had to burn Buffalo chips. Well, when we came to the Saskatchewan river we had to cross before we got into Victoria. The banks are very high & steep. Johnnie & me drove [on] & walked down to the river, & he called to a man on the opposite side to bring the boat over. There is only one little boat here to cross in. Mr. Sinclair⁽¹³⁾ saw Johnnie with his spy glass & came down to meet him & took me home with him. They were all the next day taking the carts across. We were here a week before the treaty. Victoria is the prettiest place I have seen yet. The people are all half breeds. Look at some of the people in Mara & you see the half breed style, only the people here are all protestants & know more than they do there. George Whiteman is not here he is at Edmondton. He heard Johnnie was here & came right down to see him. He is a nice little fellow. The treaty came off here the 10th of this month. As soon as it was over, Johnnie went to Edmondton & left me here, & here I am now at Mr. Sinclairs. I do not expect Johnnie until Thursday. As soon as he comes

we will be off for Winnipeg. They have had frost & snow here all ready. The leaves have all turned & everything is killed with the frost. The 15 the ground was covered with snow, it snowed a little today but the ground is bare. They say they will have fine weather yet. Every person farms a little here. They have splendid wheat & barley & potatoes, it is a very rich soil. There are lots of berries grown here also. Mr. Sinclairs sets as good a table as you see down in Ontario, only not such rich food.

[unsigned]

About 700 Crees, Stoneys and Iroquois attended the treaty payments at Edmonton⁽¹⁴⁾ on 18th September, 1878, when a sum of approximately \$8,700 was paid out. As soon as business was concluded, a few of the eight traders on the grounds followed the government party to Tail Creek, but John McDougall returned to the Victoria mission to prepare for the homeward journey. Although it was a long, cold trip eastward over the Carlton Trail, the newly purchased covered wagon provided the travellers with some comfort and protection when they camped for the night.

Winnipeg was reached in the middle of November, a house was rented, and while John worked and made plans for their future, Lovisa contributed to their savings by taking in boarders. By the beginning of 1879, the decision to settle in Edmonton had been made. John was hired by Villiers and Pearson to establish and manage a store in Edmonton, and on 13th May, Lovisa and her husband began the slow trek west from Portage la Prairie. Besides their wagon and rig, they now had eleven carts loaded with merchandise and household goods in the care of three drivers.⁽¹⁵⁾

As Lovisa had observed on her first trip, a buffalo herd of even moderate size was a rarity on the prairies, and now, a year later, at Battleford, she witnessed the effects of their disappearance from their usual grazing land. While she was voicing popular opinion in placing the blame on Sitting Bull, the scarcity had been evident long before he arrived on Canadian soil. The increasing demands of traders all over North America for buffalo robes, the introduction of the repeating rifle, the increase in number of white settlers and hunters, had all led to massive slaughters that brought the animals to the verge of extinction. The few that managed to survive were gradually driven to the south by the press of desperate prairie hunters, and by 1879 the Indians of the northern plains searched in vain for the buffalo that had been their mainstay for centuries. Deprived of the food, clothing and shelter which the buffalo's flesh and hide had provided, and faced, that year, with a general scarcity of all smaller game, they turned to the government for help. The bewildered starving people that Lovisa saw and described at Battleford were indeed, to borrow her phrase "the Miserables lot of Indians".

I will give anything to see
 all Chinnis sometimes I
 know we have lots of
 young fellows we have
 the right a fine
 brought a good finger up
 but that is about all he does know his
 up to the top of his ears
 made a good one seen
 the place we had lots of sun that
 night right after that Mr Matthe
 was made Mr Matthe is
 he doing to me rich
 I often wish you
 I think we have
 times we never play lands
 Chinnis we have not had
 we would be
 we have never home
 I only wish
 it is the nicest one

in Winnipeg everyone says they never saw
such a beautiful coat! it cost Johnnie
about \$60.00 to get it - all together
it is worth \$150.00. About it he will
take home it is lined, with brown
satin. I was so surprised to hear
about Uncle Edmund how I would
like to see Ma tell her she ought
to feel young again when she has a
brother just getting married. The idea
I cannot help but laugh almost when
I think of them two old things it is
very annoying but I would not care
about us going back to Edmundtown
I cannot say for sure yet whether we
will or not but I would much rather
go out there to live I like the country
better the only thing is it is so far but
as far as going home is concerned I
will get home as soon & sooner than
I could if we lived here Johnnie can
make far more out there & we can live

PAA Ref.: 71.365/3

Winnipeg Man. Jan 28th 1879

Tuesday Evening.

My Dear Brother

Your very welcome letter was duly received last week and I was so glad to get it. I would have written before but I thought I would get that picture taken to send you, but Johnnie has been buisy bookkeeping for some parties in town and would not go but I will send it to you next time I write without fail. ... I would give anything to see some of my old chums sometimes, I often get so homesick. We have lots of company, nearly all young fellows. We have some good music sometimes. The other night a friend of Johnnies brought a good singer up. His name was Mr. Vick, he is a good singer, but that is about all he does. I know his collar was near up to the top of his ears & when he made a bow his nose near touched the floor. We had lots of fun that night. A night or two after that Mr. Mathe & Charlie Andrews was here. Mr. Mathe is a good singer, he sang some french songs. He is French. I often wish you was here, so does Johnnie. We have pretty good times, we never play cards, nothing but chequers. We have not had a card in our house yet. It would be just splendid if we lived nearer home. I have a new jacket, I only wish you could see it. It is the nicest one in Winnipeg. Everyone says they never saw such a beautiful coat. It cost Johnnie about \$60.00 to get it up altogether & it is worth \$150.00. Wont it be nice to take home? It is lined with brown satin. ... It is annoying but I would not care about us going back to

Edmonton. I cannot say for sure yet wheather we will or not, but I would much rather go out their to live. I like the country better, the only thing is it is so far but as far as going home is conserved, I will get home as soon & sooner than I would if we lived here. Johnnie can make far more out their & we can live cheaper. Next summer the steamboats will run direct from here to Edmondton & will take only a week or ten days to get up, so 2 weeks after leaving Cannington you could be in Edmonton. I want you to come & see me as soon as we are settled. I was just thinking today how nice it is travelling out on the Prairie riding along in the fresh air with nothing to bother you. You cannot imagine what a different feeling one has. Everything around seems to be your own. I just love camping out as we was last summer, & their is no one I ever met that ever tried it but likes it to. Every body is so friendly, meet an Indian he comes up & shakes hands & is glad to see you. I hope you will have a trip out west yet. It is not a bit like people emagine. I was in Andrew Smiths stoar Saturday he says Mrs Smith writes from C_____ & says half of Cannington is coming out in the spring. ... The weather here is lovely since New years, their has not been any very cold weather. I do not see any difference in our winter and the winters here.

Johnnie is writing a letter. Their has been no one in this evening. I laughed so the other night, Charlie Andrews come up & brought his sewing. He is a comical little fellow, just keeps you laughing all the time, but a very nice fellow. He brought me a pan of prairie chickens & a can of oysters

friday. I thought it is so kind. Every person treats us well. Well, I think I have told you all I can think of now. I wish you would write every week & I would write anything. I dont care wheather you have any news or not. If you only knew how I love to get letters from home.

Johnnie will write to you before long. I was so glad of that little bit of cake, I have some of it yet. I think anything Ma makes nicer than any person else does. Now good by, write immediately, & ever believe me your

Loving sister Lovisa

P.S.

I intend to write to Ma tomorrow night. Johnnie send his love to you all.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/4

Battleford

July 7th 1879

Monday

My Dear Brother

We arrived here Saturday morning all safe & sound, although we were near eat up with Mosquitoes on the way. Their are about 1000 Indians camped here, nearly starved. The Govener is feeding them. They are the Miserables lot of Indians I ever saw. They have sold nearly all their horses

for flour & C.,⁽¹⁶⁾ 2 bags of flour for a horse. Some of them came in here that had not tasted food for 7 days. They have hardly any ammunition & know nothing about catching fish. They seem willing to work & very little satisfies them. In their way of feeding them last week, about 500 went out to work on the railroad & on the Government farm & they say they work very hard, squaws & all. They just work for their meals. Sitting Bull is keeping the Buffalo south & won't allow them to pass North. There is not one Buffalo through all the North West. Sitting Bull has been robbing an American train of carts & murdered the men & more desperation. He & big bear wanted to join together last winter & kill all the Whites in the North West, but I think the Canadian Indians would not join them. Big bear is the worst Indian among the Canadian Indians. Nearly all his men has left him. I think that is all the Indian news I know so I will drop the subject. I had a very pleasant time here Saturday. I had my tea at the Hudson Bay officers, they used me tiptop. I have been treated better by the Hudson Bay people than any one since I came to this country, both in Winnipeg & out here. Mr. McKay is in charge here.

All the white people here are the Governor & officials, & Mounted police, one trader, & the H.B. Company.⁽¹⁷⁾ A great many wants Johnnie to stay here but Edmonton is the best place. Mr. Laurie,⁽¹⁸⁾ the editor of the Battleford paper, had dinner with us yesterday. He brought us some fresh vegetables & a lot of papers to read on the road. ... We expect to be in Edmonton in less than 3 weeks. Tell Ma

I will write to her as soon as we arrive their.
Tell her I am well & hope she is the same. Give
my love. Tell Ma I wish she had some of the
strawberries out here, their are lots. ...

I have about 365 letters to write when I
get to Edmonton.

[unsigned]

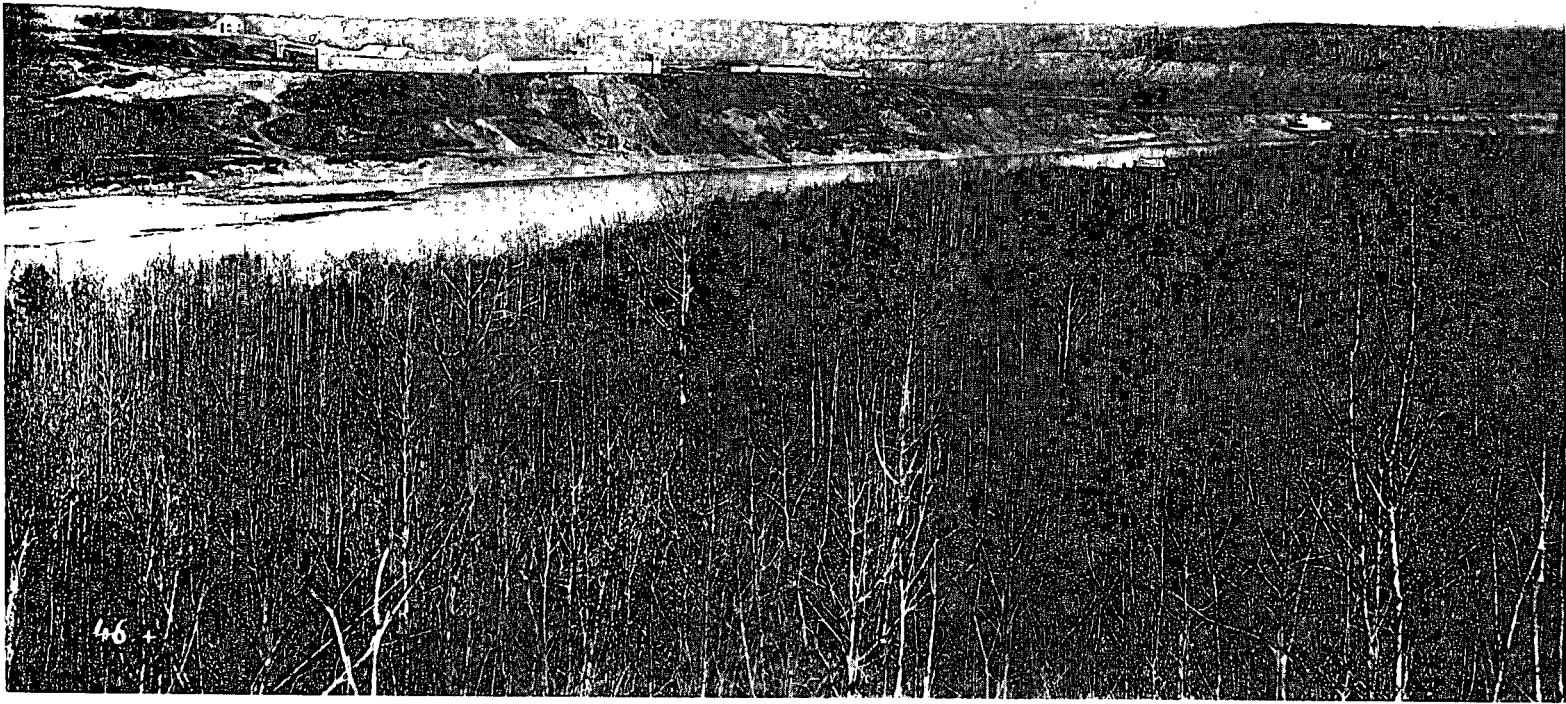


Plate 3: Fort Edmonton 1879

LOVISA'S EDMONTON

According to the unofficial census of 1878,⁽¹⁹⁾ the settlement of Edmonton, with an adult population of 153, was more than twice as large as the Victoria mission, but smaller by twenty-five inhabitants than the Roman Catholic centre at Big Lake (St. Albert). As this figure included the officers and employees of one of the largest Hudson's Bay Company posts in the northwest, as well as the settlers occupying land both east and west of the fort, it fails to make clear that the number of people living in the hamlet of Edmonton, close to the Methodist mission, made up less than one third of the total population. Although the number had increased slightly by August 1879, when Lovisa and her husband arrived, it was still a relatively insignificant pocket of settlement, being comprised of about a dozen roughly built dwellings, some places of business, a hotel and, of course, the Methodist Church and mission house. Its people were mainly merchants and tradesmen providing the basic needs of their fellow residents, and general laborers and itinerant workers who supplied a variety of necessary services within the frontier community.

Remote though it might be from the distribution centre of Winnipeg, Edmonton was by no means an isolated dot on the prairie. Besides being connected to eastern Canada by way of the Carlton Trail, less well-beaten tracks from Jasper House, Fort Assiniboine, Athabasca Landing and Hay Lakes brought men and goods from these points to the hamlet. The proximity of established farming communities at Big Lake and Fort Saskatchewan, and those recently opened up at Little Mountain (Belmont) and Poplar Lake (Namao) assured its inhabitants of surplus farm produce, and its business places of increased

trade. In addition to these land routes, it was expected that once the vagaries of low water levels and shifting sand bars on the North Saskatchewan had been overcome, steamboat service would improve to the point where regular passenger schedules to the east could be maintained.

These links with other settlements and central Canada brought a steady flow of people in and out of the hamlet, and eventually, regardless of the nature of their business, most of them gravitated to the little shops to exchange the news they had gathered in their travels for word of local happenings. After the middle of August 1879, they added the newly opened Buffalo Store to their list, calling in to make the acquaintance of its manager, John A. McDougall, and to size up his stock and prices.

From Lovisa's standpoint, the location of shop and home in one building was an ideal situation, as it allowed her to share in these social calls as well as in the day to day activities of the store. For a short time after her arrival, however, she was more concerned with unpacking her belongings and putting her house in order than with people and their gossip. By the end of the month she was able to send her mother a detailed description of her home, and report on some new friends she had met.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/5

Fort Edmonton

August 28, 1879

My Own dear Mother

Since the last time I wrote you we have got comfortable settled. We rented a nice large house

untill our own is finished.⁽²⁰⁾ They are buisy building it but I hardly think it will be done before spring. The house we have rented is very nice. The stoar is up stairs and we live down. I have 4 large rooms, sitting room, bedroom, kitchen and a large hall. It is not plastered, but finished of very nice. It is all wood work. I had to scour it all. My carpet just fits my sitting room. I have lace and blue damask curtains to the windows, some nice pictures, and the organ table for my books, and one we eat on. We have not many chairs, but 2 good ones, and I covered a little box with damask. So my room looks splendid. Johnnie is going to make a lounge this week. In my kitchen I have shelves for my dishes and we use the organ box for a table. Henry eats in the kitchen. I have no cooking stove yet so I have a great times cooking by the fire place. I find it so unhandy, but Johnnie is getting 2 stoves from Winnipeg this fall. I bake in the frying pan and I am baking all the time, but Mrs. Coleman,⁽²¹⁾ one of the white wemon here, is going to set a batch of bread for me tonight and I will bake it in her stove. She lives not far from us. The fireplace is pleasant in the evening, it is always coole here in the evening. My bedroom is of the kitchen, it is nice and large. I have it fixed very nice. I only wish you could come and see me now, it would be so nice. Johnnie says he wishes you could. Do try & come next summer. The boats carry passengers now from Winnipeg up here.⁽²²⁾ Mrs. Walton gave me her house plants before she left.⁽²³⁾ The geranuim is all is blossom, I have Migonette and balsams besides. I send you a little nosegay. We have a nice little cow we bought from Mr. Walton but I have not made any butter yet as I had no place to keep the milk so we gave it to the calf. But Henry is building a milk house then I will make butter. Henry milks the cow, he is a splendid hired man. George Whitman is here to. He is building the house, and Aleck Haigraft, the

fellow that came up with us, has not gone yet. He is waiting for the mail, so you see I have been pretty busy since we moved. This week I had a halfbreed woman washing my bed clothes. They are all dry now and put away. I changed the feathers into the new bed tick this week to. All the things I brought from home are as good as ever. I did not use them before. Today Johnnie bought 2 pails of huckleberries. I intend to preserve some and use the rest for pies. I bake pies in a bake kettle and they are splendid. We expect to get 2 bushels of cranberries from Victoria and that will be all the fruit I will have for winter. I often wish I had some plums or cherries or something like that. I had a taste of plum preserves in Winnipeg but they were sent from Ontario. I get along splendid house keeping. I like it, and I do not find it a bit dull up here. There are lots of people coming and going all the time. There are only 4 white women here besides myself. 2 of them called on me but the other 2 are Hudson Bay officers wives, and the Hudson Bay Company is vexed at Johnnie for selling cheaper than they do, so I don't expect the wives will call on me. ⁽²⁴⁾

When the new Minister comes I expect to have a nice friend in his wife. Last week Johnnie took me out to Big Lake, the Catholic Mission. We had dinner with the Nuns, they were very nice. They have a beautiful flower garden, they gave me a nice bouquet. I was asking them about making butter. They make splendid butter, I bought some from them. They told me to wash it in cold water after I took it out of the churn until all the milk was out. Is that the way you do it? I wish you would tell me all you can about it please.

Friday Aug 29th

My Dear Dear Mother

The mail just got in today and brought me 2 letters, one from you written July 13th and one from Charles Henry written July 1st. I was so glad to get them and hear you are all well at home. It was such a long time to wait for to get a letter, but after this I hope you will write so I will be able to get letters from you every mail. ... I would give anything to see you, we would have such a good talk. If you could only come and see me, it would be so nice. I never was so happy in my life as I am now, but I often feel so lonely to see you, but Johnnie says he will let me go home in a year and a half more. He is the best fellow in the world. I have never never been sorry for marrying him. He would do anything for me. He felt so bad today when he read your letter.

[unsigned]

[P.S.] Please send me the receipt for wine, any kind will do. I think I will make some of cranberries.

It is apparent that Lovisa was acutely aware of the great distance that separated her from her family and friends, and although she admitted her loneliness and frequently urged them to send letters and newspapers that would keep her in touch with local events around Cannington, she was not one to brood on the matter. Fortunately, the hamlet was usually a busy place, and if her

many contacts with neighbors and visitors did not entirely dispel her occasional bouts of homesickness, it would seem, from the next two letters to her brother, that the antics of her newly acquired hired help managed to make the household a lively one.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/6

Saturday Afternoon

Aug. 30th [1879]

[The concluding fragment of a letter written to her brother.]

I will now try to finish your letter, I have all my work done untill tea time. It is a very warm day. The Preasts are not here yet but I will not seal this untill they fix the organ so I can tell you about it. Bob Sleigh⁽²⁵⁾ is in the kitchen. Johnnie is talking galic to her & making her laugh. She is a great old pill. You must get a nice ring made for Ma out of that gold Johnnie is sending her. I think a plain one like my wedding ring is the nicest. Johnnie wants me to learn to ride on horse back, perhaps I will next summer. We have 5 horses & 3 colts. The Poney is my favorite, so gentle & so nice to ride, the boys are always quarling who will ride him.

I suppose your team is wild & you would frighten me if you took me for a drive.

Sunday Afternoon. Aleck has just started for Winnipeg. The mail man will catch him tomorrow & he will go down with him. The Preasts did not come yesterday. I guess the one that was going to fix the organ is sick, the reason they did not. I expect Mr. & Mrs. Colman here to tea this afternoon. There is no church to go to until the new minister comes, & Dr. Newton, the English Church Minister, away to.⁽²⁶⁾ It is always dull on Sunday. It is very warm today. I am sure you have good times going to Jaime's & C. I would like to go to some of them, but I have been picnicking all summer. Johnnie & me was just down to see our house, I think it is going to be just splendid. We will be living there when you come. Don't I wish Ma could only come to see me then. O dear, she must. I tell you what, I would not exchange places with Edna, Eathel or anybody else I ever saw. I bet I have a better time than one of them. If you are as lucky getting married as I was, you may consider yourself pretty well off. ... I am sure if you ever see E___ you will never like any place else.

Now I have told you all I can think of. Send me your picture & your girls. Try & get Ma to get hers before she writes again. I want it so much. Tell her my preserves were splendid I made yesterday. Johnnie posted her letter yesterday, so I could not tell her any more. ... Now I must close. Be sure & write so I can get letters from you & Ma every mail because if I

dont I will be in a fearfull state for fear you
are sick at home. Write every week & send me the
Gleaner.⁽²⁷⁾ Good by from your loving Sister

Lovisa

Two months later, the longing to hear from her family was still present --
but then, so was Bobsleigh.

PAA. Ref.: 71.365/7

Fort Edmonton

Oct 7th 1879

Wednesday Evening.

My Dear Brother

I feel so provoked at you for not sending me
a letter last mail I had half a notion not to write
this mail, but if you dont write oftener I shall
stop to. Now then, Johnnie is siting at the table
writing some letters too. He has been digging pota-
toes all day, old Bob Sleigh was helping. She is a
splendid worker, and then we have such fun with her.
I only wish you could see her, it would make you
laugh just to look at her. She has light blue eyes,
hair sticking out in all directions 2 or 3 old print
dresses on & about 14 hankerchiefs tied on her head
& neck. She talks some English & she is learning me
to talk Cree. I have her washing for me every week.
Monday her & me went down to the river & washed.

She sings Cree songs, 'dancies', & so we have lots of sport with her. Today I had a half breed woman & her sister here. They were very nice & talk good English. The woman is married to A Canadian, Mr. Noise.⁽²⁸⁾ She is coming to help me quilt my quilts before long. There are lots of people in Edmonton now. A party of Canadians came in from across the Mountains last week, also the men that are to learn the Indians to farm came in from Winnipeg. They are from Ontario. I think you had better sell out in C_____ & move up here, you would make money. Johnnie says Pa could do well here farming & not work a bit, just oversee it.

I hope you are all well at home. Try & get Ma Ma out as much as you can. I dreamed last night she got hurt awful bad, I could not sleep any more. I always dream something like that when I do not get a letter from home. How is that girl of yours? Do you have any sons? ... I will tell you all about the fair next time.⁽²⁹⁾ I was showing all the quilts I brought from home to them women today. They thought it was splendid, especially the wollen counterpane Ma made. Tell me this. I send you the Battleford paper⁽³⁰⁾ please send me the gleaner. Johnnie[']s Mother is sending out the Advocate, we see lots of news in that. Now please write me every week so I can get letters every mail. Give my love to all. ... Now good by with love from your

Loving sister

Lovisa

P.S. Johnnie expects 4 out fits of goods before Xmas. Got the invoices yesterday.

By December the carpenters were at work on a new house and store for the McDougalls, and while the building would not be completed until the following spring, the prospect of living in a place of their own buoyed up her spirits considerably. The sketch of the carriage that was included in this letter, served to explain to her brother her earlier reference to shaganappi and to give him a hint of what she was talking about when she wrote of the small, dog-drawn sleigh in a later one.

PAA. Ref.: 71.365/8

Fort Edmonton

Dec. 11th 1879

My Dear Dear Brother

Your very welcome letter came to hand yesterday. We were so glad to hear from you & see the Gleaners. I always see something new in them. ... We take the Times (a Winnipeg paper) & the Globe & Saskatchewan Herald & Woodville Advocate. We generally get a good mail this mail. I got a beautiful seal cap, cost \$12.00, a present from Johnnie. Also a nice pair of kid mits, a present from Mr. Villers⁽³¹⁾ in Winnipeg. I tell you, Johnnie is good to me. He is nicer than any of the other fellows used to be. We look exactly the same as ever. Johnnie is sitting by the stove reading the paper. The men are always out in the evening, thank goodness. I like them very well, they are nice & George Gouler is a splendid fellow around.

I was getting you a little Xmas present to send this mail but I went to see if it was finished yesterday but it was not. Not untill next mail can I send it. I am so glad you are so comfortable at home. If you are happy their I am all right. I hope you will send your picture soon. I would like to see that young Lady you speak of. ... The weather here keeps so cold that they cannot shingle the house but they all prophesy a mild spell. I am going to have a nice place when it is completed, but it costs a great deal to build here. Everything is so dear & lumber so hard to get. Just fancy, all done by hand. I often have people in to hear me play, they think I am a splendid player here. I am trying to get up a class. The people of this country are all so good hearted, not so crafty as they are down in Ontario. They do not think as much of \$5.00 here as they do their of 100. The Natives of this country call Canadians North American Chinaman.

I must close now as it is late. Good by
from Your Loving

Sister Lovisa

Despite the exceptionally cold weather that prevailed through most of December, the activities planned for the Christmas season were held as scheduled. Low temperatures did not prevent the Hudson's Bay men at Lac La Biche and Jasper House from making the long trek from their posts to take part in the annual festivities at the fort, nor did it hinder them from paying their New Year's call on the McDougalls. Seven sleigh loads of people from the Victoria mission also arrived to spend the holiday week in Edmonton, attending the dances and renewing friendships at special private gatherings.

player here. I am trying
to get-up a chess. The people
of this country are all so
~~the~~ good smart & not-so-crafty
as they are down in Ontario
they do not think as much
of \$5.00 here as they do there
of 1.00. The natives of this
country ~~call~~ call Esquimaux
North American Chinamen.

I must close now as
it is late. Good by
from your loving

Sister Lydia



Shagwappie hie

Tamieal

Tell Mrs Holmes I cannot answer
her letter until next mail

It was an exciting time for Lovisa, and even though she and her husband did not go to dances, she thoroughly enjoyed the faster pace of life and the stimulating novelty of having guests in her home every evening. Because of all the interruptions, she was not able to complete her letter to her brother, but she did have time to convey the impression that Edmonton was far from dull at Christmas.

PAA. Ref.: 71.365/9

Fort Edmonton

Dec. 27th 1879

Saturday night

My Dear Brother

Johnnie & me are all alone tonight. Johnnie is laying on the bed asleep & I am seated in one of the cosiest rooms imagineable writing on the table beside him. Since writing last we have made a change in our house. The sitting room we have taken for a kitchen, & the kitchen for a sitting room, so we could have the fire place in it, & we moved our bed in this room. We have the cheerfulest room now I ever was in, carpeted curtined & C. The weather continues so cold they cannot get our house shingled but they are doing all the inside work in their carpender shop. The thermometer was down to 56 this week but is getting milder. People say it is the coldes weather they ever experienced in the country. John Conkrite⁽³²⁾ told us his potato peeling froze beside his plate as

soon as he peeled his potato. "How is that for high?" But it is pretty to see the dog trains & the carryalls. The dogs all have little beaded saddles & bells, 4 in a train. The driver snaps his whip & says "Marsh", then away they go faster than any horse can travell. I never saw any in Manitoba as nice as they are here.

Xmas was a quiet day with us, the usual rouetine, only an extra dinner. No fowl of course, only roast beef. Xmas Eve Mr. McGilvery⁽³³⁾ came in from Victoria, he is our visiter untill after New Years. Xmas night I had Mr. Sinclair, our Land lord, for tea. He came up with Mr. Mc. After tea Mr. Little berry⁽³⁴⁾ came to spend the evening. Mr. Sinclair & Mr. McGilvery went down to t[he] Fort to spend the evening with Colonel Stuart.⁽³⁵⁾ Our first door neighbour, Colin Fraisher,⁽³⁶⁾ had a dance, so George Gouler our Man went. We had great fun getting him ready to go. Johnnie lent him a white collar & George his neckties & I put some scent on his hankerchief, & I tell you he thought he was rigged out. Johnnie went over about 10 o'clock to see what was going on & they was hoeing the red river gig & clog dances right down. The girls had on red and plain dresses & lots of red ribbons. He said the babies was rolling around in every direction. The bed was piled up full near to the ceiling & some mischievus person changed the shawls on them so the wemon did not know their own young one. He said they had a big brass kettle setting on the coals full of beef, & the tea in a dirty old boiler. They had potatoes & plum pudding, cakes, & I tell you it takes the half breeds to enjoy them selves, and the white people goes to.

When Lovisa returned to letter writing in the New Year, she penned her account of the past week's activities across the lines of the previous letter. The high-light of the festive season was Chief Factor Hardisty's New Year's Eve party. Traditionally, an annual social gathering for present and former Hudson's Bay employees and traders, its guest list had expanded, as time passed, to include officers of the N.W.M.P., government agents and those members of the outside community who were deemed socially acceptable by the Factor's standards. For that night at least, business rivalries were forgotten as Company and independent trader joined in applauding the performers who took part in the concert. Although the solos, duets and choruses represented all parts of the British Isles and French Canada, it was only natural, considering the occasion and the nationality of most of the audience, that many of the songs and recitations should be drawn from the works of Robert Burns. Tea was served following the entertainment, and guests returned home only after a salute of six guns in front of the fort officially announced the arrival of the New Year. It was a thrilling evening for Lovisa, for not only had she been part of a select group, but she also had experienced the added delight of hearing again the familiar tunes she enjoyed so much. What better word than "elate" could precisely describe her recollection of this exclusive and happy affair?

Jan 4. 1880

My Dear Brother

Your letter came to hand yesterday. I was very glad to get it. I suppose it is too late to wish you a Merry Xmas & happy New Year. Johnnie and me went to a

NEW YEAR'S AT EDMONTON.

THE CONCERT.

The following is the programme of the concert given at Edmonton on New Year's Eve by the Hudson's Bay Company's employees:

Duet, Medley, Mrs. Hardisty and Mrs. Wood.
Song, "Don't you go, Tommy," Mr. Fraser.
Recitation, "Address to the Deil," Mr. W. E. Traill.
Song, "Merry Christmas,"..... Chorus.
Song, "Billy Dobbs the Poet,".... Mr. Ross.
Duet, "Jamie and Jeanie," Mrs. Wood and Mr. Wilson.
Song, "The Anchor's Weighed," Mr. John ston.
Recitation, "Tam o' Shanter," Mrs. Wm. Leslie Wood.
Song, "John Hielandinan,"..... Mr. Ross.
Song, "Come where my Love lies Dreaming," Messrs. Fraser and Littlebury.
Recitation, "Yarn of the Nancy Bell," Mr. M. Aldous.
Recitation, "The Soldier's Return," Mr. W. Leslie Wood.
Song, "Yorkshire Farmer," Mr. Johnstone.
Song, "The Irishman,"..... Mr. M. Aldous.
Song, in French Mr. C. Gauthier.
Canoe Song, by "Jimbo" and Iroquois crew.
Song, "Pemican," Mr. Ross.
Recitation, "Liberty," Mr. McHugh.
Song, "There's nae luck about the house," Mr. Ross.
Song, "Old Folks at Home," Mr. Jas. Mowatt.
Recitation, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," Mrs. Wm Leslie Wood.
Song, "Auld Lang Syne," Mr. M. Aldous and Chorus.
Song, "The Englishman,"..... Mr. Ross.
Recitation, "'79 and '80," Mr. W. L. Wood.
God Save the Queen... .. All present.

party New Years Eve at Mr. Hardesties.⁽³⁷⁾ It was splended. All the "Elate" of the country was their, but I was the only lady except Mrs. Hardestie & her sister Mrs. Wood. They and Mrs. Whitesides⁽³⁸⁾ are the only wemon here [I] associate with. The rest are not much.

We have company nearly every evening. T[he] organ is as good as ever. Mr. Little burry came up one day & took it all to pecies. He was from 10 o'clock in the morning untill 12 at night fixing it. Some part inside had come unglued. He took the back out first & then took it all to peices. Their are lots of nice young fellows up here, all nearly professionall. Mr. Littlebury is an engineer. I had Mr. Brearden and Mr. Trail calling on me yesterday.⁽³⁹⁾ Mr. Brearden came down from Jasper House in the Mountains to spend his holidays, & Mr. Trail is from Lac La Bich, 180 miles north of us. That Indian was hung on 20th of dec., Johnnie sold the rope, black gound & C for the occasion.⁽⁴⁰⁾ We had an invitation to spend Xmas at Mr. Taber⁽⁴¹⁾ bu[t] it was to cold to go. The telegraph is right into Edmonton now. Colonel Garvis⁽⁴²⁾ got a telegram from Toronto New Years morning. It is \$3.50 to Toronto. Their was races New Years Day down to the Fort.⁽⁴³⁾ S[n]ow shoe race, old wives race, & dear knows what all. I must close now as my paper is full. I send you a watch pocket a half breed woman made. I will send you the words of that song next mail.

Now I must say good by. Send you picture soon. I guess you will see me before you see my picture.

Write soon, & in the meantime believe me Your loving sister

Lovisa

Almost lost in Lovisa's recital of names is Edmonton's most notable event of 1879, the extension of the telegraph line from Hay Lakes to a point on the south bank of the Saskatchewan River, directly across from the settlement. Money to pay for the poles and labor was provided by the Hudson's Bay Company and other businessmen in Edmonton, and when the work was completed in the late fall, Alex Taylor assumed the position of telegraph operator.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Apart from occasional disruptions of service caused by broken lines, the system became the speediest and most reliable link between Edmonton and eastern towns and cities. Over its lines in March 1880, came the message that sent Lovisa's husband on a hurried trip east to locate his cartloads of goods, and brought about her gloomy letter to her mother.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/10

Fort Edmonton

March 28/80

My Very Dear Mother

It seems a long time since I had a letter from you. I was so pleased to get Charlies last night & to hear he is so happy since he has been converted. I never was so pleased to hear any thing as that. I love him more now than I ever did. I wish I was as good as he is.

Well dear Ma, Johnnie got a telegram today from Duck Lake telling him to come down at once to see after his outfit of goods that a freighter started with from Winnipeg last fall.

He did not come through as it got to late so he wintered at Duck Lake. So Frank Smart, a young fellow that was up here about 6 weeks ago, started back to Winnipeg and he enquired about Johnnies goods, and Shannon the freighter, and was told he was going to skip out of the country with out delivering the goods. So he telegraphed at once to Johnnie about it, so Johnnie has to go down at once. He will start as soon as he can get ready. Perhaps he will sell that stock at Duck Lake or Prince Albert and go to Winnipeg for another stock. If so, he will not be home for 3 months. Just fancy what a bad trip it is for him at this time of the year and how lonely I shall be. Poor dear Johnnie, I shall miss him so and I feel so sorry for him. I will stay at Mr. Whitesides untill he comes back. I only wish you was near enough to come and stay with me or I could go home, it will be such a dreary time for me. I feel completely upset ever since I heard it. If you see Mrs. McDougall you better not tell her because she might be fretting about Johnnie's business, but everything is all right. I send you a letter I wrote 2 or 3 weeks ago. I am 2 years married. Just fancy, but if you could see me you would not think I had been married at all. Johnnie says I look better now than ever. I must say good by now. I will write again next week.

from your loving
daughter Lovisa

The chickens are in the stable now. The hen layed 3 or 4 and eat them up. I got some lime for her.

By the time Lovisa wrote her next letter to her brother, the errant freighter and the carts had been found, and the McDougalls had been in their

new store and home for nearly a month. The shop was a great improvement over the former one, but because the lack of lumber in the settlement prevented the carpenters from installing partitions or completing the finishing in the upstairs living quarters, Lovisa was forced to forgo, for a few months, the normal arrangements of a proper home. Spring came grudgingly to the northwest that year, and the mud and washouts along the trail slowed down the arrival of supplies to the extent that oil and candles for lighting, and staples such as sugar and salt, were not to be found on any merchant's shelves.⁽⁴⁵⁾ It would seem as well, that weekday social activities in the hamlet were also non-existent, while Sunday church services, with few attenders and no choir, did nothing to relieve the monotony. In the hope of convincing her brother to come west, Lovisa was quick to point out, however, that present conditions were only temporary, and that Edmonton was a place with a good future for any ambitious young man who had the money to get started in farming or business.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/11

Fort Edmonton

June 16th 1880

My Dearest Brother

Your welcome letter came to hand today. I was so glad to hear you were all well but so sorry to hear you were in trouble over that lumber. I do hope you will get you[rs]. It is too bad. Be sure & tell me everything about it, how you make out. If some of those people would come out here & commence farming their would not be

such hard times down their. Here it does not cost much to live, everything mostly people make. Down their they spend in dress & such like, then are not able to pay their debts. O, it makes me so vexed when I think of the people that try to cheat honest people, I do not know what to do. Tell me all about your affairs at home please, I feel so anxious.

I am sure it must be very pleasant for you when you have so much to pass the time away with. Here there is no place to go, only to church on Sunday, & that is pretty dry. No choir, & only 2 or 3 people besides the minister. Last Sunday evening there was only Johnnie & me & 3 besides. The people here are too bad to go to church. I never saw such a daring lot in my life. It is not the half breeds, but white people. ...

I have no company scarcely, & I am not sorry, it is nice alone in your own house. I find plenty to keep me busy, but I expect if I live to go home I will have a good time. I hope you will have lots of apples & preserves. I would give a good deal for some good preserves now. I hate the canned fruit we have, & that is all you can get here. Shannon is near here at last with those long looked for carts. Some people past him 4 days ago opposite Victoria. The steamboat started of yesterday, it had 6 passengers going down.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Donald McLeod's grist & saw mill is up.⁽⁴⁷⁾ They expect the boiler and engine on the boat when it returns. That is all that is going on up here this summer. ...

... O how much I would like to be travelling on the prairie this summer, I love that kind of life. The next time I go it will be on my road back home & perhaps you will come back with me. I don't wonder at people not liking Manitoba, I never liked it. It is

no comparison to this place, but a person must have some money before he comes here, as there is no work yet but taking up land, & they must have something to work with. I know lots of young fellows that come up here & got dead broke because there was nothing to do. They come expecting to get in a store or something. Johnnie had a young fellow here helping him make garden & after he was through he asked Johnnie to let him stay a day or two. So he stayed a week, but Johnnie told him he could not keep him any longer so he left. He had no money & was in a great fix, but there will be more work before long when these mills get running, & they are making bricks at the barracks now. ⁽⁴⁸⁾

I was so thankful for that piece of music you sent, Johnnie & me eat the Lozenge[s]. I learned all those pieces you marked in that book. I like "My Redeemer" & "Bulah Land" the best. If there was only a Choir or something here, it would be so nice.

I have not much more to write now. Johnnie sold \$1000 worth of goods & leather within the last 3 weeks. He expects to make a good deal this summer, there are 50 carts on the road now from Winnipeg for him. I have hardly anything to do now, not like it was last winter. We have no hired man at all. George Gouler went to Winnipeg with carts this spring.

Now be sure & answer this as soon as you get it & tell me all the news. Take Ma out often, I am sure she is lonesome. Give my love to all enquiring friends. I expect I will hardly know the place when I go home, there will be such changes. ... Now good by

from your loving sister

Lovisa

... I suppose the garden looks nice now. I wish I had some of the flowers you have out here.

The eventual arrival of the carts from the east replenished the storekeepers' stocks, but by July a new food problem had developed. Flour was now in short supply because the grist mills in the district were temporarily out of commission and the new ones under construction were still awaiting the machinery that had been ordered the previous summer. Shortages of food-stuffs, lumber and other necessities were not confined to this period alone, but continued to recur in one form or another for many years to come. Not until the settlement obtained a rail link with larger distribution centres, and had itself become more self-sufficient, was it possible to achieve a better balance between the increasing demands of a constantly growing population and the production and supply of its basic needs. In the meantime, Lovisa and her fellow citizens learned to live with their problems or, more frequently, found a way to surmount the periodic restrictions that were part of a pioneer society.

In the letter that follows, with its emphasis on her husband's successes as a trader, Lovisa's attack on the Reverend George McDougall and his family is both unexpected and unexplainable. Her comments smack, in fact, of a repetition of store gossip, indulged in by those who viewed with envy the prime Methodist mission property in the hamlet, but who were totally ignorant of the work that had been done by the missionaries among the Indians and Métis in other parts of the District of Alberta.

Her criticism of the two women, Mrs. Hardisty and Mrs. Wood, is also questionable, since her opinion of them vacillates remarkably within a two year period. She prejudged them when she first arrived because of their association with her husband's chief competitor, the Hudson's Bay Company, and yet, only a

short time later, she implied the existence of a friendly relationship. Six months after this letter was written, her attitude changed again, when their attentiveness, during the time she was confined to the house after the birth of her daughter, forced her to admit that they were "the only people here after all that are my friends".⁽⁴⁹⁾ What prompted the outburst against the missionaries is not known, but it seems likely that her criticism of the former McDougall daughters arose from her own feeling of uncertainty as to her place in the rudimentary social structure of the community.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/12

Fort Edmonton
July 25th 1880
Sunday Morning

My Dearest Brother

Your very short note enclosed in Ma's letter was gladly received. I hope a longer one is on the road now to make up for that short one. I hope you will make a good deal selling washers. If I was their I would buy one. You must save all the money you can so you can go into Buisness for your self. Their will soon be lots of openings out here as soon as the country is a little more settled. Their are a lot of people coming in here this summer. 2 men came up 2 weeks ago from Manitoba to start farming, one has 40 cows, he will make money. The machinery for the H.B. and Noris & Belchers steam mills will be up on the boat this week.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Flour cannot be bought here. Lamories Mill⁽⁵¹⁾ is broke down, and the mill acrost the river⁽⁵²⁾ only can grind a little, and that is as black as dirt. Last week some

men from Prince Albert brought up a lot for sale. Before that half the people here were living on rice & cracked wheat, could not buy flour for love or money. We never got out, but had lots asking to let them have just a little. Johnnie bought 20 bags from the freighters last week to sell at the treaty that comes of in 3 weeks. Johnnie has \$12000.00 worth of goods on the road now from Winnipeg, the freight alone comes to \$3000.00. He is doing very well, far better than he ever expected to. Expects to clear, out of this summers stock, \$5000.00 for himself. That is what Mr. Pearson⁽⁵³⁾ told him this last mail. The whole profit will be about \$10000.00. These men in Winnipeg say they have every confidence in Johnnie, that is the main reason they send him so many goods. Johnnie bought \$200.00 worth of fur the other day from a trader from Peace River, the most I ever saw. 2 silver foxes valued at \$60.00 a piece, besides otter, fisher, Mink & C. He sold the fur for flour. The crops look splendid out here, but of course they are a great deal later than down home. Barley is just in head. I have not been out any place lately so have not seen any wheat. The weather is intencely hot, but we have a nice shower every little while.

2 weeks ago Johnnie had to go down to the Barracks for the asizes, he was one of the Jueryman. They sent the Indian that killed his son last winter at La[c] La Bich to Penetenchery for 7 years. Their was a lot of cases but none of much importance. I will send you the Battleford paper if their is anything about it next mail.

Last Sunday evening Johnnie & me went to Church but no one came but us so Mr. Whitesides came home with us & had tea & a good sing. We sang all those

pieces in that book you sent me, all you marked. He was looking at your picture & Ma's. He said he liked Ma's looks very much. He said he thought you was of a lively turn. He is a very nice man & it is a shame how the H.B. Company use him because he tries to do good. I dont think much of the McDougalls,⁽⁵⁴⁾ the[y] get a bigger name than they deserve. Old George McDougall & John makes the people in the east believe they have evengolized this country but every person that comes out here fails to see any good they have done, only get a hold of all the property they can for them selves. You know George McDougall is the missionry that was frozen to death 2 or 3 years a go, and John is his son. Mrs. Hardestie & Mrs. Wood are his daughters, married to H.B. men here. They try to rule the Church & Minister altogether here. Mr. Whitesides has told them pretty plainly what [he] thinks of them. So they never go to church now at all. They are the proudest set I saw in my life.

... I will be so glad when the time comes for me to go home. I expect to have a good time. I will never tell you when I am comming untill near their, but I dont know yet when it will be. Now I must close, give my love to all enquiring friends. ...

Hope you are well as this leaves us, I remain

Your loving sister
Lovisa

Johnnie send his love to you. We get the reading of the Christian garden⁽⁵⁵⁾ all the time from Mr. Whitesides. Do you take it? Be good to Ma.

The year 1880 must have held some kind of record for shortages, delays and postponements. Seeding was late in the spring and harvesting extended well into October, because of bad weather. The mills stood idle most of the summer months for want of machinery, and even the fall fair, an important event in a young agricultural community, was so poorly supported that it had to be put off until the following January. Originally, the Agricultural Society, at its September meeting, had planned that livestock, vegetables, and handcrafts would be shown on 5th October, while cereal grains would be exhibited on 1st January in conjunction with horse races and other sports events.⁽⁵⁶⁾ The weather cleared as the October date drew near, with the result that farmers were more concerned with the vital task of getting crops safely harvested than with the incidental chore of preparing exhibits. Probably more disappointed than anyone in the district was the creator of the beautiful jacket which Lovisa describes in her next letter, who was deprived of the opportunity of having her skills recognized and acclaimed by the judges and general public.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/13

Fort Edmonton

Oct 20th 1880

My Dear Brother

At last I received a letter from you, I thought you was not going to write me any more. You had quite a lot of new's. ... I am glad you are doing well with your agency, I hope you will make a lot of money. When I go home you can make up your mind then what you think of coming out here. I will give you notice before I am ready to start, but time enough yet. Johnnie is doing a splendid business, his average sales this last 2 mont[h]s have been \$300.00 a day. He wont have half

enough goods to keep him over winter, he does the biggest trade here by far. He bought a farm the other day, paid \$1000.00 to be paid in one year. It is improved, good buildings, fences & C, 300 acres, about 4 miles west of Edmonton.⁽⁵⁷⁾ He sold the improveing he made on the farm he took up himself. The crops here are good this summer as ever. Every person thought their would be scarecelly any wheat the weather was so bad this summer, but it is all right. They have just finished harvesting. I dont think they will ever be able to raise fruit of any kind the frost is so early. The Mill is sawing away now. Johnnie is getting lumber drawed up this week to build a stoar house up stairs. The carpenders are comming tomorrow. The weather is lovely here now. Although last week we had quite a snow storm, but we will soon have winter for good. The fair here was a failure this year. It was to be the 5 of this month but as their was no grain thrashed it was postponed untill New Year's day. Johnnie got a lovely leather coat made. The woman that made it intended to show it for silk work. It is all worked with silk like that little watch pocket I sent you, & the same kind of leather only smoked yellow. On the pockets is an Indian tent, dogs, & other Indian fixtures. The sleeves is a deer, & around the collar is flowers. The sleeves are fringed with leather. It cost him \$30.00, it is only for a courisity. I expect he will sell it to some one that takes a fancy to it. It would bring \$75.00 in Winnipeg easy, several here would give him \$50.00. I just wish you could see it. Their is no news to tell you from here about our home affairs. We have a good hired Man, Jim Glass, from Kentucky.⁽⁵⁸⁾ He was in Memphis 2 years ago when the yellow fever was so bad, thousands died. He help[ed] nurse lots. No one was allowed to leave the city then so he had to stay. He

is just your age, but so tall, over 6 feet I believe. Their are lots of people around all the time but I often get so lonesome as their is no one for me to associate with. What white wemon that are here are not much so I dont visit them. I like the half breeds better than any one in the country. Some are very nice. I had some of Johnnies old acquaintences up from Victoria 2 weeks ago, they stayed a week. Mr. & Mrs. Whitford & their 2 daughters.⁽⁵⁹⁾ They talk good English and are very nice people. They brought a big box of cranberries. Johnnie paid \$9.00 for the box full.

Now I think I have told you nearly all I can think of, I must write Ma now. You must write oftener, you surely have more time than me. Johnnie never got an answer to his letter yet. Give my love to all my old friends, if I have any, and except a big share for yourself, & ever believe me

Your loving Sister

Lovisa.

From Lovisa's remarks in earlier letters and the one that follows, it appears that while her opinions of the wives of the Hudson's Bay officers swung from one extreme to another, her attitude towards the white women in the hamlet remained constant during the first few years. They were, to use her often repeated expression, "not much", a generalization which, in two simple words, sweeps all of them out of her life entirely. On the other hand, she had nothing but praise for the married Métis women who, like herself, were occupied with their homes and families, and regularly attended the mission church. The single ones, however, who were slovenly in their personal appearance or careless in their work habits were in a different category, and as hired help, were

to be avoided whenever possible, as she was to point out so bluntly a few years later.

Towards the end of September, a new white woman arrived in the hamlet, one who immediately won Lovisa's approval and received special mention from the Edmonton correspondent of the Saskatchewan Herald. Mrs. Henderson, the woman in question, was an exceptional person by anyone's standards. In 1873 she had travelled from Ontario to British Columbia with her husband, and now, seven years later, she accompanied him in his move to less isolated farmlands in the Edmonton district. By this time, there was the safety of their six young children to consider, but by securing them in rawhide pouches slung across the horses' backs, she completed the arduous trek through the rough trail in the Yellowhead Pass, thus gaining the distinction of being the first white woman to have made the transmountain journey.⁽⁶⁰⁾

PAA. Ref.: 71.365/14

[1880]

[Part of a letter written to her mother, on a Thursday
in late fall: n.d.]

I suppose I have not many friends down their now. I often imagine if I should go home I would be like a stranger. I got a nice lot of papers and music last mail from that nice old woman I used to tell you about in Winnipeg, Mrs. Smith. I thought it ever so kind Mr. Villiars send me a lot of papers this mail, British Workman and British Work Woman.⁽⁶¹⁾ I got the Gleaners all right, I was very glad to get them. I have been making flannel underclothes for Myself lately. Their has a nice woman come in the country lately. They moved from British Col-

umbia here, came acrost the Mountains this summer. Just got in 3 weeks ago. She has a knitting machine so I gave her yarn to knit me a pair of stockings, the first I have had since I left home. Their names are Henderson. They are from the County of Oxford, Ontario, left their 7 years ago for British Columbia. She is the nicest woman that has come here yet. A middle aged woman, has 6 children. Johnnie dont get along well with the wemon around here at all. Old [hags] he calls them and they are not much. Mostly all of them had young ones before they were married. They run after me so I can scarcely get rid of them. I often think how I would like to tell you all about Edmonton and the people here.

The weather here is lovely now, we have not had snow yet, but the ice is beginning to float in the river so it will soon freeze up. I dont dread the winter at all, it is nicer here in winter than summer. Johnnie is kept buisy in the stoar all the time. He has sold nearly all the goods he got up this fall, but their are some more carts on the road some where. He is doing so well. I will leave this now for tonight and perhaps I will think of something new to write tomorrow. I went out this evening and bought a nice willow basket, the first basket I have seen in the country. A man brought a lot in from Fort McLeoud.

Friday Noon

Dear Ma I must finish your letter now as the mail leaves this afternoon. I cannot think of Anything more to tell you just now. I was so pleased for the little bit of lace you sent me. I treasure everything that you give me above everything else.

After a while I will tell you all about when I am going home and lots of things, but just wait a little. If you have seen Mrs. McDougall lately no doubt she told you. Johnnie told her when I intended to go but I will tell you all about it before long. ...

[unsigned]

Two important events occurred in the last two months of the year that Lovisa did not mention until later: the one affecting the McDougalls, and the other of interest to the hamlet and district. In November, Lovisa's first child, Alice, was born; and on 6th December, the first issue of the Edmonton Bulletin appeared in the settlement.⁽⁶²⁾ Despite its diminutive size, the weekly paper carried a fair sampling of world news received by telegraph from eastern Canada, along with accounts of local and district events relayed to subscribers in the informal but often dogmatic manner of its editor-publisher.

With the arrival of 1881, the conviction that the Edmonton district was on the threshold of developing into the most prominent trading and agricultural centre in the far west became wide-spread. New buildings were constructed, property changed hands, and arrangements were made for further surveys of the settlement to accommodate the influx of settlers who would naturally follow the transcontinental railroad to the area. A general mood of optimism and anticipation prevailed during the winter and early spring, but this gave way to disappointment in June when it became known that survey parties had been withdrawn from the proposed northern rail route through the Yellowhead Pass, and were being concentrated in the vicinity of the Kicking Horse Pass, two hundred miles to the south.

Although former enthusiasm was noticeably lacking, there was still sufficient vigour in the hamlet to lead to the installation of a ferry downriver from the fort, and to gain the financial support of several businessmen in erecting a public school on land donated by the Hudson's Bay Company. In October, the Company went ahead with its plans to sell some of its subdivided property, and within two days it had collected \$12,000 from eager purchasers. (63)

Lovisa's husband bought five lots at this time, but neither that piece of news, nor mention of the organization of a new Athletic Association and a Masonic Lodge, or of the arrival of the Reverend Andrew B. Baird, the hamlet's first Presbyterian minister, have been recorded in her letters. In fact, the only piece of correspondence in 1881 was written before she, or anyone else, realized that the railroad tracks would stretch across the treeless prairie instead of following the more scenic route of the Carlton Trail and the telegraph line. This single letter, devoted almost entirely to the baby, provides very little in the way of local news, but it is exactly what a doting new mother would write, and what Grandmother Amey would most want to read.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/16

Fort Edmonton April 15th

1881

My Dearest Mother

The mail arrived yesterday bringing your welcome letter and the parcel with the babys stockings and bib. I cannot thank you enough for them, they are just what I like. The stockings are pretty large but that is all the better. She has on a pair now.

The poor little darling has a very bad cold, it just came on her yesterday. We were awfully frightened last night she was going to be sick. Mr. Harrias⁽⁶⁴⁾ was here to tea last evening, he told me to bath her chest and neck well with hen oil, and give her a little, put some onions on her feet. So I done as he directed. She sleep well all night and was better this morning. The dear little pet, you have no idea how pretty and nice she is. Johnnie just dotes on her. I would not like to part with her now I can tell you, but some day, all being well, I will leave her with you a while to go to school, but that is a long time yet. It will not be long now before you will have the pleasure of seeing her. I will be on my way home a year from now if I dont go before, but I am comming sure next spring. You must not get lonely. Just fancy having your little grand daughter prattling around after you. She can almost creep, she is very strong. She gets nicer all the time. She can play with her rattle box and tare up paper's. I have had her to church twice and she never cried at all. Several came to see her before we left, Mr. Anderson⁽⁶⁵⁾ the Indian Agent here and lots more. I tell you, it makes Johnnie and me pretty proud to see our baby noticed so much. I made her a little blue silk bonnet. I took that hankerchief you sent me for a crown and trimmed it with narrow blue ribbon and perel beads. It looks lovely on her. I have a little white hood for every day.

Jim left us this week.⁽⁶⁶⁾ It is real lonesome with out him, but he is in every day. He has gone to cook at the Mill. The weather has been very cold this Month so far. We have had lots of snow, but it is all gone again. I hope it will be a better

spring than last. I had a long letter from Mrs. Whitesides this Mail. ... Mrs. McDougall said you had been to see her. I am so glad you went. I will be glad when she comes out here. I am sure I can agree with her, as I can do anything for Johnnies sake. ...

[unsigned]

The child recovered in spite of the treatment, and in May 1882, was healthy enough to stand the long journey east to visit her grandparents and other relatives. It was a family reunion that Lovisa had dreamed about for four years, and which set at rest her fears that none of her friends would remember or recognize her. Before they left in May, however, some important changes took place in the McDougalls' personal affairs. In February, Lovisa's husband purchased a choice piece of real estate that fronted on Jasper Avenue,⁽⁶⁷⁾ and on which the greater part of the hamlet was situated. The entire stock of the Buffalo Store was sold by the end of April, and once the building and lot had been disposed of, John was free to begin making plans for a new commercial venture by entering into partnership with the Winnipeg firm of Stewart and Bannerman.

By the time the McDougalls returned from Ontario in September, a number of cart trails had been opened up from Edmonton to the end of steel at Swift Current Creek, about five hundred miles away. The shortest and most commonly used trail ran south by way of Hay Lakes to the Salois settlement on the Battle River,⁽⁶⁸⁾ continuing in a southeasterly direction from that point, past Buffalo and Sullivan's lakes, to Red Deer Forks (near Empress), and thence to Swift Current. As the route was still relatively new, it was usually a rough trip, and a difficult one in the northern section in wet weather; but whatever its condition it was a

great improvement over the more tedious Carlton Trail. Before 1882 ended, a Presbyterian Church⁽⁶⁹⁾ and mission house had been completed, and Lovisa and her husband became involved with the work of various church committees.

It is possible that in 1883 food shortages, similar to those of the previous year, plagued the residents of Edmonton,⁽⁷⁰⁾ but if the quality of flour continued to be poor, if butter again was scarce and beef was still tough and tasteless, there are no comments on the situation from Lovisa. There are, in fact, no letters at all providing sign posts as to the developments in the hamlet or in the personal lives of the McDougalls, and it is necessary, therefore, to guess at what news she may have sent east. Most certainly she would have devoted many letters to the new baby, John Charles, after his birth in March, and would not have failed to mention the preparations being made for the opening of the new store, J. A. McDougall and Company, in June. No doubt she would have supplied some details about its appearance and extensive stock of goods, and would have drawn her family's attention to the fact that the wide wooden platform in front of the building was the one and only sidewalk in the village. It is questionable, however, that even she, who was so proud of her husband's achievements, would have described it in quite the same terms as the Bulletin which reported, "The building is fitted up in city style, and is both roomy and elegant ---[it] will give Edmonton quite a metropolitan appearance".⁽⁷¹⁾ Considering that Edmonton's adult population numbered somewhat less than three hundred at this time, the Bulletin was demanding a great deal from one utilitarian structure sheeted in what was called rustic siding.

There would surely have been references in Lovisa's letters to the numerous dances, minstrel shows and church socials that were held, and maybe she even wrote of Canon Newton's second Anglican congregation, St. Michael's, holding

services in the Masonic Hall. Her list of new arrivals might have included Captain A. H. Griesbach, commander of the N.W.M.P. at Fort Saskatchewan; the Reverend Father Henri Grandin, who had been put in charge of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Joachim, on Groat property at the west end of the settlement; and Richard Secord, formerly of the Victoria mission, hired in April to teach at the public school. Along with some of the foregoing news, perhaps she also added a line or two about the first Territorial election ever held in Alberta,⁽⁷²⁾ or the two stage coach lines carrying passengers, mail and express between Edmonton and the end of steel at Calgary. It is apparent, however, that with such a variety of topics to chose from, she need never have been at a loss for something new to write about in her letters.

In comparison, 1884 was an uneventful year in the Edmonton community. A small number of settlers continued to filter in to settle on farmsteads in the district, but the hamlet itself, as though stunned by Calgary's booming development as a railroad town, showed few signs of growth. Business was poor, and after crops were severely damaged by frost in the middle of August, it became evident that the farmers would also be suffering financially. The hardest hit by the economic recession were the Métis, who could find no work as laborers or freighters to enable them to supplement their meager farm incomes. Since they were already disturbed by the high-handed treatment they had received from the surveyors, their resentment of government authorities in general grew stronger as the year wore on.

A few houses were constructed, and the appearance of Fort Edmonton, the oldest building in the settlement, was notably improved when the old stockade and bastion that ran in front of it were torn down and replaced with a picket fence.⁽⁷³⁾ But all in all, 1884 was a rather dull year as far as activity and

development in the hamlet were concerned, although it held some bright spots for Lovisa. During the winter, both she and her husband had attended the social affairs sponsored by the Bachelors' Club and the Masonic Lodge, and after the Church of England concert in February, she had added "O Fair Dove", "The Lost Chord" and some "gentlemens songs" to her list of favorite melodies.⁽⁷⁴⁾ By the end of April she was settled in her new home, and later in the year, gave birth to her second son, James Gordon. Her letters in 1884 are very brief, the first one containing more inquiries about acquaintances in Ontario than local news.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/17

Edmonton

May 7th 1884

My Dear Brother

I thought I would not let this mail go without sending you a few lines. We are living in our new house, and it is a lovely place. We have been very buisy fixing it up since we came here. The weather keeps very cold, we have not our garden in yet. How are you getting along? Johnnie is talking of going up to Jasper house in about 2 weeks, he has a trading post their.⁽⁷⁵⁾ He will have to ride on horseback all the way, it is in the mountains...

Mr. Baird⁽⁷⁶⁾ told me sometime ago a friend of his had gone to Cannington to keep stoar. I forgot his name. ...

I wish, if you ever have a chance, you would buy Alice a wax doll if you are in Toronto

or any place. She has an old rubber one, with the nose wore off, she sleeps with every night. The rubber ones are so ugly & china breaks up so.

Please write soon & tell me all the new's.
I have now to tell you everything is very quiet here.

Hoping you are well, I remain your loving
sister

Lovisa

The second letter is merely a note to accompany the snapshot of her family and their new home. Apart from the reference to the speedy mail service between Cannington and Edmonton, it provides no insight into community activities.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/18

Edmonton

June 17th

[1884]

My Dear Brother

I send you a view of our house. I am sorry he has none of the babys photos finished so you will have to wait untill next mail. Alice is sitting on the swing & I am beside her. Johnnie is holding the baby⁽⁷⁷⁾ & Bella⁽⁷⁸⁾ is behind the swing in the trees. The houses you see is along the road down to the stoar. The first one you see is the Methodist Parsonage.

I put a little mark above our old stoar where Alice was born, the new stoar is down below that. Alice had a dreadfull frown on in her face. She was tired & said she had had enough. Your last letter to Johnnie just took 2 weeks from Cannington to Edmonton. I dont think that girl is very good looking, neither does Johnnie. Dont forget to get Alice a nice doll please. ... Now write and tell me all the new's soon, & ever believe me,

Your loving sister

Lovisa

For the first three months of 1885, business in the hamlet continued to be slack, but the usual round of social gatherings and concerts helped to relieve the monotony of everyday life and make the winter pass more quickly. A Literary Society came into being, and early in February Lovisa heard her husband, as a member of the negative team, present his forceful arguments on the topic, "The pen has done more for civilization than the sword". The defenders of the sword were declared the winners. (79)

During the closing months of winter it became apparent that the government was doing very little to alleviate the famine and poverty that continued to exist among the Indians on the reserves and the Métis in outlying settlements. Frustrated and angry, having reached the limit of their patience with the white man's system, they were now prepared to solve their problems by their own set of rules. If any member of the Edmonton community was unaware of the gravity of the situation at this time, he was abruptly brought face to face with plain fact towards the end of March when, just before the telegraph line was cut, it became known that the Métis had attacked Duck Lake. Deprived of the usual means of communication, the people came to rely more and more on word-of-mouth reports

from uneasy travellers and frightened families seeking refuge in the hamlet.⁽⁸⁰⁾ Fed by false rumors of appalling atrocities, fanned by the bone-chilling reality of the Frog Lake incident, the citizens' original anxiety grew into panic. They demanded the return of Captain Griesbach and his men from Fort Saskatchewan, and sent James Mowatt to Calgary to secure the assistance of more troops to aid in the defence of the settlement.⁽⁸¹⁾

Although the rebels were defeated at Batoche on 12th May, the news that the uprising was over did not seem to travel as quickly as had the earlier wild stories. As late as 21st May, Lovisa was writing about a rumored Indian attack on Edmonton that night, adding that it would probably not take place as, "I think they will not venture in the rain".⁽⁸²⁾ In less than two months life had returned to normal, and except for the presence of returning troops and the arrival of the battered Northcote at the end of July, the rebellion was all but forgotten. Economic conditions began to improve, voters went to the polls to elect a new representative to the Territorial Council, and Fort Edmonton once again became the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay district.

The McDougalls were also in the news with word, in July, that John had sold his entire stock of merchandise to Peter Pruden of Lac La Biche, and had moved his wife and family into a larger, more impressive house. Unfortunately, there are no letters from Lovisa in this period, and consequently, there is no description of her new home, or any explanation of why her husband decided to go into temporary retirement.

The same situation exists in 1886; Lovisa's personal reports of current events have been lost with her letters. From a cursory review of newspaper items that year it appears that even though Edmonton's population figures in-

creased only slightly, the commercial community was expanding quite markedly. Side by side with the older shops of blacksmiths, tinsmiths, and general merchants, there now stood farm implement dealers, a drug store, a specialty shoe shop, and one that claimed to be a direct importer of English goods. A branch of a private bank had opened, several insurance agencies existed and two lawyers and doctors were available to provide professional services to the residents of village and district. During the year, 1,200 tons of coal were mined in the area, and contracts for building construction amounted to \$31,240, almost twice the previous year's total.⁽⁸³⁾

Among the new buildings erected were two that played an important role in the community's future development. In August, an enlarged St. Joachim's Church, built by the Oblate Order, and still under the care of Father Grandin, held its impressive opening service; and towards the end of October, a general store, owned and managed by John A. McDougall, was ready for business on a new site near the Post Office.⁽⁸⁴⁾ There were improvements taking place outside the settlement's boundaries as well, with attention being given to upgrading the trails linking Edmonton with southern and northern points in the area. The route to Calgary was straightened and culverts were installed in some places to facilitate the operators of freight and stage coach lines; while the Hudson's Bay Company spent \$3,000 in its first phase of improvements to the Athabasca Trail in order that north-bound supplies and southbound furs could be transported more readily.⁽⁸⁵⁾ In comparison with pre-rebellion times, 1886 was an active and progressive year, and prospects of continuing development were promising.

According to Lovisa's first letter in 1887, this presumption appears to be correct: her husband's store was prospering, and social life was on the upswing now that there were more women who shared her interest in concerts, dances, and parties. If the quality of life in the village had changed in nine years, so

had Lovisa's circumstances and attitudes. Her first little home could not have accommodated one tenth of the people who "took supper" at the party she describes; nor in those early years, would she have considered dancing or the card playing she mentions in a subsequent letter as proper entertainment at any gathering in her house. Now she found them both socially acceptable and delightful, but knowing that her parents would not share her views, she was careful to conclude her brother's letter with a few words of warning.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/20

Edmonton, Jan 26th 1887

[wrongly amended in another
hand to 1897]

My Dear Brother

Your welcome letter came to hand 2 weeks ago. Since then we have had a surprise party here & had a big time, 60 took supper. Their was 2 fiddles, besides Watson & Mrs. Walker⁽⁸⁶⁾ for the piano, besides several lesser lights. They danced in the kitchen & dining room, we had Johnnies room for smoking, & the sitting room for the Ladies. The supper was served up stairs. Willie Fredlers⁽⁸⁷⁾ got it up & it was splendid. We have a Jim dandy of a fellow as Jane says out her[e]. His name is Paton⁽⁸⁸⁾ the young fellow that painted our house. He is splended looking & a whole host in himself, everyone likes him. He was one of the leaders getting it up. The Masons Ball is Friday Night, we are going.⁽⁸⁹⁾ I expect Mrs. Gresback & Miss Wragge⁽⁹⁰⁾ up for it. Miss Wragge came out from England about the time of the Rebellion. She has been living with General Strange⁽⁹¹⁾ at Calgary &

just came up here this winter. General Strange is an old friend of her fathers. I am sorry to tell you Jane is going to get married 5 weeks from to-day to Jack Grahame.⁽⁹²⁾ She refused him the first time but he came back last week & asked her & she is going to take him. She is doing well but I am sorry to loose her. I wish I could get one without a nose or some deformity that would keep the fellows away. I shall have to go back to the dirty half-breeds, it is to much slavery to wash dishes & cook all the time, & Johnnie does not want me to do it. He would pay any price almost first. Wilson⁽⁹³⁾ & Grey⁽⁹⁴⁾ the New Banker is comming up tomorrow night. Their is something going on all the time. Johnnie is doing well. I hope you will not tell at home about these dancing parties

[no signature]

From the names of guests she supplies in this letter, along with the people she mentions in her next one, it is possible to obtain an idea of how the village was developing. It was no longer a hamlet geared to the needs of traders and trappers, but an active village, providing a variety of goods and services to its citizens as well as to the residents of outlying districts. Its economy was flourishing, and so, it would seem from Lovisa's letter, was its sense of patriotism.

The Queen's birthday, on 24th May, was celebrated less exuberantly than usual, with only a rifle match marking the occasion. It was not for lack of loyalty to the Crown that the customary observances were not held at that time, but rather that 21st June had been set aside as the day when the whole country would join in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. Preparations began the week before when the N.W.M.P. from Fort Saskatchewan arrived

and pitched their tents on the flat below the fort. On Tuesday,⁽⁹⁵⁾ crowds of villagers and visitors were thrilled by the spectacle of military manoeuvres and a sham battle between members of the Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan detachments. When the pageantry concluded, they were treated to horse races, foot races and a variety of games that lasted until eight in the evening. A display of fireworks at ten o'clock preceded "the grand supper" that Lovisa describes, and this, in turn, was followed by a dance that continued well into the early hours of the morning.

PAA. Ref.: 71.365/21

Edmonton June 28th 1887

[wrongly amended in another
hand to 1897]

My Dear Brother

Now the Jubilee week is over I will endeavor to write you something about how we celebrated the event out here. All the Mounted Police from Fort Saskatchewan came up the Thursday before. Magor & Mrs. Gresback & all the Gresbacks brought their cook & camped at the Fort. Mrs. Walker gave a small party on Friday evening in honour of a few of the privates, the nicest ones. On Tuesday evening the ladies of Edmonton gave them a grand supper in a large room in the H.B.C. Fort, 8 ladies was chosen as waiters, myself among the No---. The supper was splendid. One of them passed a remark it was worthy of the God's let alone them. After it was over they gave the Ladies 3 hearty cheers & sang for "they are jolly good fellows". A dance followed in the evening, we all

stayed of course & had a good time, & the next night we had a party. All the officers except Sargent-Major O-Conner⁽⁹⁶⁾ was here. He was so buisy he could not come. Major & Mrs. Gresback, Mr. Snyder the Inspector,⁽⁹⁷⁾ two sargents Belcher & Little,⁽⁹⁸⁾ also Inspector Casey⁽⁹⁹⁾ & his wife, & about 6 pri-
vates, all nice fellows. Mr. Cameron & Markely,⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Mr. Conan,⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Mr. Watsons partner. Mr. Watson could not come. Mr. Stiff⁽¹⁰²⁾ played the fiddle for dancing. The ladies were Mrs. Walker & Miss Wragge, Mrs. Tayler⁽¹⁰³⁾ & Miss Garnet - Miss Lee⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ Miss Ross⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ & Mrs. Hardesty. They danced in the kitchen & Had the dining room for refreshments, the sitting room for music, & Johnnies room for cards. It was all very nice. Mr. Markely told Johnnie it was the nicest party he was ever at, so did Mr. Cameron. For refreshment we had Iced tea & lemonade, Ice cream, cakes & lemon Pie. Mr. Snyder used to be at Brechen⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ since I left their. ... Did you ever hear of him? I think he had something to do with timber.

We got the Jubilee No of The Graphic. It is fine, a lovely Portrate of the Queen.

They say the crops look well out here.

Every one admires your photo with the Guitar. I wished you had been here at the Party. That fellow has not got his place fixed up yet that takes Photoes. I must close now & write a few lines to Mother. Hop-
ing you are well as this leaves us, I remain your lov-
ing sister

Lovisa

When Lovisa wrote to her mother a month later, the excitement of Jubilee week had passed and the tempo of life had returned to normal.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/22

Edmonton, July 13th 1887

[wrongly amended in
another hand to 1897]

My Dear Mother

There is no ink in the house, Alice took the bottle to school, so I am obliged to write with a pencil. Alice is going to school every day & learning fast. Johnnie & myself are going out to tea this evening at 7 o'clock. I was out this morning & I called at Hendersons to see when he would take the childrens photoes.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ He said any day, so I must take them some day next week. The weather is very cool out here, the nights especially, but that is all the better for comfort. Johnnie & me were down to Dr. Newtons last week. ... I send you a gold sovereign for a jubilee gift, buy something for your self.

Hoping you & pa are well, I remain your
loving daughter

Lovisa

Alice will gather some flowers the next time I write. Last Sunday Johnnie & me went out to see old Mr. McGilvery & took him a bottle of wine & a lot of reading matter. He is splendid company, but he is paralyzed in both legs & cannot walk. He is 71 years old. [He] was at school at Lachine near Montreal 50 years ago.

[unsigned]

On this quiet domestic note the letters and Lovisa's personal history of Edmonton come to an end.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ The ungainly hamlet of 1879 with its hodge-podge of log shacks and shops, has become a small village with an orderly collection of business places and a few fine homes. Where formerly fifty settlers congregated in the shadow of the Methodist mission, now close to five hundred residents move along its carefully laid out streets.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

For nine years Lovisa's pen has served as a guide to the early west and the little community on the North Saskatchewan, pointing out people, places and events that might otherwise have slipped by unnoticed. Whether significant or commonplace, these personalities and incidents are the substance of her chronicle. When set in a framework of time, they are the factors that give depth and vitality to a pioneer woman's account of herself and the pioneer settlement which she called home.

APPENDIX A

The two letters that follow, written by Lovisa's husband to her brother, were included in the original collection. No attempt has been made to edit them.

PAA Ref.: 71.365/15

Fort Edmonton

April 15, 1881

Dear Charley

I thought I would sit down and write you a few lines by this mail although I have nothing of any importance to tell. Our little pet is growing prettier and nicer all the time, and can laugh and talk & play. I would like for you to see her for I am sure you would think a great deal of her. Lovisa and I are getting along splendidly. I will soon commence making garden. The weather is now fine and we have Every Appearance of having a fine spring. I hope it may be a good year for farmers for I will have forty four (44) acres under crop this summer, and on that account will feel considerable interest in the weather.

I dont know wheather I ever told you about me buying this farm I bought last summer for One Thousand dollars. Their is a good House, Stable and Grainery on the place and (44) acres has been under crop, and it is all fenced. Should this turn out to

be a good Season I will clear \$1000.00 good by the crop. And if I get a good chance this fall I shall sell the place, that is if I get a good advance on what I paid.

Lovisa and the Baby will be going home next spring for sure to pay you a visit, if all is well.

I sold all the grain I bought and got \$1.00 for Barley and 2.25 for wheat, all cash. I am Expecting some Carts in about ten days. I will be having a large stock up this year. I Expect to do a larger business than last year.

I shall be glad to hear from you when you can find time to write a few lines to

Yours truly

John A. McDougall

PAA Ref.: 71.365/19

Edmonton April 29th 1885

Dear Charlie

I expect you will all be very anxious on our account since this Rebellion has broken out in the Saskatchewan Country. It has turned out a much more serious affair than anyone here ever expected, and the worst feature of the whole concern is that of the Indians having joined in. They have been committing some terrible crimes murdering and plundering saturating the dead bodies with Coal Oil and piling a lot of wood around them then setting all on fire, and dancing

round and round. We hear some fearful yarns of how they have been carrying on. One young man that I was acquainted with and who had just been married to a young Ontario girl about three months ago was shot down by his wife's side and she was taken by the Indians and outraged by over a dozen of them, and traded from one to the other every day until she was about dead when they put an end to her misery by cutting her open. They have still got one white woman among them. So far, both Riel and the other Indians have met with so much success and have now had their own way for over a month that it has encouraged them a lot and they now think that they can carry everything before them and I believe it will take all summer to quell the trouble and can only be done after suffering the loss of many a brave young fellow's life.

I believe that Riel and the Half B's can be put down easier and quicker than the Indians, but they both have a great advantage over the troops on account of them all having Horses and knowing every inch of the Country. They can do a lot of mischief and harm without as great a risk as the Soldiers who are nearly all on foot. The Rebels know also that there will be no mercy shown them if taken alive and so they will fight hard and they are encouraged by reports stating that there is a large number of Fenians across the line ready and willing to assist them at any time if they require assistance. We were pretty badly alarmed here as we had every reason to be and we would most certainly have been in the same bad fix as the Fort Pitt and Battleford people if we had not sent for assistance in time and it did not start a day too soon as the Indians all around us

were plundering and Killing cattle, destroying everything they could not carry away. People had to run for their lifes, having their cattle shut up in the stables, the pigs in the pens. The Doors of their stores unlocked everything left behind no time to think of anything we were besiged on all sides. The mails could not come or go, no one dare travel far from home, and the worst of it was the settlers were all very poorly supplied with arms and ammunition and could make but a very poor fight if necessary. Guards and scouts are kept out all the time and scarsely a day passed but what we would hear and do yet reports and every report worse than the last, and all turned out to be true, and the whole place town and country was completely paraylaised. Their was a mass meeting called and we decided to send for outside assistance and a young fellow offered to carry the dispatches to Calgary our nearest Telegraph Office 200 miles distant and through 4 or 5 Indian Reserves he was supplied with authority to take horses wherever he found them, he started one night at 12 oclock and rode that distance in 36 hours without any rest. That was a pretty good ride.

After he left we were kept in great suspense for 10 or 12 days until he got back again bringing the welcome news of the troops coming which had a wonderful affect on the Indians. Those that had not done anything very serious returned to their work and the most of them started down to join Big Bears Band. And as I said before they have gone to far and done to much to back out.

so they will do a lot more harm before they are subdued. I think though our danger here is about past unless Big Bear should be driven back this way and he might induce a lot more Indians to assist him in cleaning out the white people. As they say the H.B. Coy. had no right to sell this country for it belonged to the Indians and The Govt. since getting the country they claim, has not treated them right or as they agreed to do. There is general dissatisfaction among all classes of people in this country against the Govt. and for many good reasons. And I believe that this will be the means of having everything made right. I have a lot of other letters to right. Am writing to Thos. Conant this mail, have sent you some Bulletions giving further particulars.

John A. McDougall

FOOTNOTES

1. Lovell's Business and Professional Directory of Ontario for 1882 reports that Cannington was an incorporated village having a population of approximately 1,200. (Archives of Ontario)
2. The house was sold in 1946 and was dismantled in 1974 to make way for the new Y.W.C.A. building.
3. Portage la Prairie.
4. The Little Saskatchewan was an early name for the Minnedosa River which flows into the Assiniboine west of Brandon, and it appears thusly on John Macoun's map in Manitoba and the Great North-West. The settlement on the river at Tanner's Crossing was known as Little Saskatchewan until it was given the name Minnedosa, a Sioux word with the same meaning. SH., 26th Jan., 1880.
5. Fort Ellice, a North West Mounted Police post.
6. Shaganappi is a thong of rawhide, an integral part of the Red River cart and a versatile tool in effecting a variety of repairs.
7. A full report of the treaty payments at Sounding Lake appears in SH., 25th Aug., 1878.
8. Fort Carlton was located on the North Saskatchewan River. A ferry was in operation at this point.
9. Sounding Lake is located halfway between Provost and Consort. John Macoun in Manitoba and the Great North-West (1882) describes it as "a sheet of brackish water, seven miles long and four miles wide, surrounded on its north, east and south sides with wood, the poplar averaging about six inches in diameter". (p.107)
10. The Lieutenant-Governor was David Laird (1876-1881). The Mounted Police in attendance were made up of detachments from Battleford and the Cypress Hills under the command of Major Walker and Sub-Inspector Dickens. SH., 25th Aug., 1878.

11. The sketch is not included. According to a letter in PAA. Acc. 75.388, Lovisa wrote a note on the back of the page and sent it to her mother.
12. The name of the settlement was changed to Pakan in honor of a Cree Indian Chief on the Whitefish Lake Reservation when a Post Office was opened in 1887. Information on treaty payments at the Victoria mission appears in SH., 7th Oct., 1878.
13. Mr. Sinclair was a teacher at the Methodist Mission school, and occasionally conducted church services when no minister was available. He and his wife had been at the Victoria mission when John A. McDougall first arrived in 1876, but concerned about the growing restlessness of Indians and Métis in the northwest, they left in 1879.
14. The Edmonton treaty payments are described in SH., 7th Oct., 1878.
15. Information on the return trip, the stay in Winnipeg, and their departure is found in PAA. Acc. 75.388.
16. Lovisa uses "&C" throughout as an abbreviated form of "etcetera".
17. Battleford, formerly Telegraph Flat, was chosen as the site of the capital of the North West Territories in 1877. It became the headquarters for the Lieutenant-Governor, a few government agencies and a detachment of N.W.M.P. until 1883, when the government centre was moved to Regina.
18. Patrick Gammie Laurie began publishing the Saskatchewan Herald at Battleford, N.W.T., on 25th Aug., 1878.
19. SH., 10th Mar., 1879. The Victoria mission had a population of 58; St. Albert, 178.
20. The combination house and store was situated on land on modern Jasper Avenue near 97th Street, that was owned by John Sinclair of the Victoria mission. He is not the same Mr. Sinclair with whom the McDougalls stayed in 1878.

21. Mrs. Coleman was the wife of J. Coleman, who travelled around the hamlet and district digging water wells. EB., Jan. 1881.
22. Lovisa is here referring to the arrival of the Lily on August 5th, with the vice-regal party consisting of Lieutenant-Governor Laird, his secretary A. E. Forget and Mrs. Forget, and a stipendiary magistrate, Colonel Hugh Richardson. Regular passenger runs were not started until the navigation season opened in 1880.
23. The Reverend John Walton, in charge of the Methodist mission at Edmonton since 1877, left on the Lily on its return trip, 7th Aug., 1879, for his new assignment at Salisbury on the Minnedosa River. The McDougalls bought some of their household effects, the garden, and apparently, their "small cow".
24. The two Hudson's Bay officers' wives were Mrs. Richard Hardisty, wife of the Chief Factor at Fort Edmonton, and Mrs. Leslie Wood, wife of the Chief Trader; both were daughters of the Reverend George McDougall. The third white woman was Mrs. J. Coleman and the fourth one who came to call was either Mrs. Donald Ross, wife of the proprietor of the Edmonton Hotel and Feed Stable, or Mrs. Taber who lived at the barracks at the fort.
25. According to E. H. McDougall, his parents later learned that the amusing and happy Bobsleigh had been responsible for the brutal death of an Indian child during a raid on the camp of a rival band.
26. The Reverend Canon William Newton arrived in Edmonton in 1875, and after building a small mission house, the Hermitage, on the north bank of the river, about six miles east of the Methodist mission, he began work on a church at the extreme west end of the settlement on property purchased from Malcolm Groat. The Church of All Saints was officially opened on 15th September, 1878 (SH., 7th Oct., 1878). It is assumed that either the original mission house was enlarged or a new one built because carpenters were again working on the Hermitage in 1879 (SH., 10th Mar., 1879). Dr. Newton retired in 1899.

27. The North Ontario Gleaner was a weekly newspaper published by a printing office in Cannington, Ontario.
28. Dan Noyes, at this time, owned a farm on the Big Lake road, and in December 1880, became part owner of the threshing machine known as the "Little Giant" that did custom threshing in the district.
29. The Agricultural Society of the Edmonton district was formed in September for the purpose of sponsoring an exhibition of cereal and vegetable crops and various handcrafts (SH., 6th Oct., 1879). The Agricultural Exhibition, held on 15th October, was the first of its kind ever held in the Territories, and prizes amount to \$200 were distributed to the winning contestants. EB., 6th Dec., 1880.
30. The Battleford paper was the Saskatchewan Herald, published every second Monday. The Edmonton correspondent, until December 1880, was Frank Oliver.
31. Mr. Villier of Winnipeg was one of the owners of the Buffalo Store.
32. John and Robert Conkwright had moved from the settlement to British Columbia in August 1878, but returned in October of the following year with a party that came through the Yellowhead Pass. SH., 20th Oct., 1879.
33. E. McGillivray, a former employee of the Hudson's Bay Co., was the Indian agent at the Victoria mission.
34. J. Littlebury was a stationary engineer employed by the H.B. Co. in Winnipeg. In 1883 he became the first engineer on the Company's steamer, the Grahame, when it began operating on the Athabasca River between Fort McMurray and Fitzgerald.
35. Colonel James Green Stewart was a commissioned officer with the H.B. Co., who was appointed Indian Agent for the Edmonton District in 1879. He resigned in August of the following year, and died at the Hermitage on 1st September, 1881. SH., 18th Sept., 1881.

36. Colin Fraser, son of Governor George Simpson's piper of the same name, was born at Jasper House on 15th December, 1849. Formerly a buffalo hunter, scout and fur trader, he was, in 1879, the owner of land near what is now 98th Street and Jasper Avenue. In May 1887, he moved to Fort Chipewyan where he operated a trading store. He was buried there on 6th February, 1941. Ed. Journal, 4th Feb., 1941 and the Register of St. Paul's Church, Fort Chipewyan. (PAA. A.13/1.)
37. A full account of the program and the list of guests appears in SH., 26th Jan., 1880. Richard Hardisty, born in 1831, entered the Hudson's Bay's service in 1849. He was in charge of Fort Edmonton from 1872 - 1883 and after serving for a short period in Calgary, he returned to Edmonton in 1885. He was appointed Inspecting Chief Factor in 1887, was called to the Senate in July of the same year, and died in 1889.
38. The Reverend and Mrs. Arthur Whiteside of Montreal, arrived in the hamlet in September 1879 to replace the Reverend Walton at the Methodist mission. They left in August 1880. SH., 13th Sept., 1880.
39. W. R. Brereton was the Hudson's Bay Company's clerk at Jasper House until it was closed in 1884; at that time he was transferred to Athabasca Landing. W. E. Traill, stationed at the H.B. Co.'s post at Lac La Biche, was the son of Catharine Parr Traill, and the nephew of Susanna Moodie and Samuel Strickland, all Canadian writers. He was later assigned to Lesser Slave Lake, Fort Vermilion and other northern points.
40. Lovisa is here referring to the hanging of an Indian known as Swift Runner, who had been apprehended in June 1879, at the request of Indian bands in the area eighty miles northwest of St. Albert. Charged with murder, Swift Runner was alleged to have slain and eaten his mother and brother, his wife and six children. While he maintained he was not responsible for the deaths of his mother and brother, he was tried at Fort Saskatchewan on 6th December and found guilty of the other deaths. This first public court ever held in the district was presided over by Colonel H. Richardson, Magistrate, assisted by Richard Hardisty. Colonel Jarvis conducted the case for the Crown. SH., 12th Jan., 1880.

41. Mr. Taber was an employee of the Hudson's Bay Co.
42. Colonel W. D. Jarvis, commander of 'A' Division of the N.W.M.P., arrived in Edmonton 1st November, 1874, after a difficult trip from Roche Percée. He established his company's headquarters at Fort Saskatchewan in 1875 and was in charge there until his transfer to Fort McLeod in July 1880.
43. The races Lovisa refers to were part of an annual event held in the H.B. Co.'s sports field on 1st January, in which the Indians and Métis employees and their children took part. Following the competitions and the men's tug of war, a game of blindman's buff rounded off the festivities in the evening. SH., 26th Jan., 1880.
44. The telegraph office was occupied on the 18th December, and three days later the first message was sent to Winnipeg (SH., 26th Jan., 1880). Colonel Jarvis received the first incoming telegram.
45. The shortages are mentioned in a letter in PAA. Acc. 75.388.
46. The Lily had berthed at Edmonton during the winter, and began her first trip of the season downstream on 15th June.
47. Donald McLeod was co-owner with John Norris and the Belcher brothers of a steam grist and saw mill that had been erected near the river, east of the hamlet.
48. Lovisa is referring to the barracks at Fort Edmonton.
49. Lovisa to her mother, 1st Feb., 1881. PAA. Acc. 75.388.
50. The machinery for the mills owned by the H.B. Co. and McLeod, Norris and Belcher was brought to Edmonton by the Lily, but not until the middle of August.

51. Lamorie is the Scottish pronunciation and spelling of Lamoureux. The Lamoureux brothers, François (Frank) and Joseph, operated the Sturgeon River mill.
52. This mill, owned by William Bird, was located on the south side of the river at the mouth of what is now known as Mill Creek. It was never a successful operation because of the irregular flow of water in the creek.
53. Mr. Pearson was the other partner in the Winnipeg firm that owned the Buffalo Store.
54. The Reverend George Millward McDougall, born in 1821, came to the west as an itinerant missionary of the Methodist Church, and was responsible for the establishment of the Victoria mission in 1862 and the one at Edmonton in 1871. In 1873 he moved to Morley, in southern Alberta, where he resided until his death in 1876. His son, the Reverend John McDougall, born in 1842, assisted at the Victoria mission until his ordination in 1872; a year later he joined his father at the Morley mission. He died in 1917, at Calgary. (Canadiana Encyclopedia).
55. Lovisa means The Christian Guardian, published by the Methodist Church in Canada since 1829. At the time of church union in 1925, it amalgamated with The Presbyterian Witness and The Canadian Congregationalist, and bore the title The New Outlook until 1939. At that time the title was changed to The United Church Observer.
56. SH., 10th Oct., 1880.
57. John A. McDougall leased his farm on the St. Albert trail in March 1881 to two men identified only as Henderson and Stewart. EB., 28th Mar., 1881.
58. J. M. Glass, freighter and handyman, accompanied the McDougalls on their trip east in 1882, and returned to his home in the United States. It has not been determined whether or not he was related to E. B. Glass, the Methodist teacher, who spent part of 1880 and 1881 at the mission school.

59. As there were several families of Whitfords living in the vicinity of the Victoria mission at this time, it is not clear which one Lovisa means.
60. Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Henderson and family, in company with his brother and others, arrived in Edmonton in late September 1880 (SH., 8th Nov., 1880); he eventually established a farm in the Rabbit Hill district south of Edmonton. His listing as a mineralogist in Henderson's Directory, 1887, and the reference to the enlargement of his premises near the Methodist Church in order to accommodate a photographic studio (EB., 1st Oct., 1887), suggest that he did not move to the south side farm until later.
61. The full titles of the papers are: The British Workman and Friends of the Sons of Toil, published in London from February 1855, until September 1921; The British Workwoman Out and at Home, published in London from November 1863, to June 1913.
62. The first issue of The Edmonton Bulletin appeared on 6th December, 1880. Published by Frank Oliver, it was at first printed on a small press which produced a newspaper consisting of four pages whose printed area measured 5 x 6 inches. The page size increased on 4th November, 1882, and the reading area expanded to 6 x 8 inches, after the installation of a larger press.
63. Individual lots, 50 x 150 feet, were sold at \$50 for corner lots, \$25 for side ones, with the stipulation that buildings were to be erected within eighteen months on at least every second lot. Some blocks of lots were sold, and others were set aside for schools, churches and a market square. When the sale closed in December, 400 lots had been purchased; R. S. McGinn, Hudson's Bay Co. land agent, was in charge of the sale. EB., 29th Oct. and 17th Dec., 1881.
64. J. Harris began teaching at the public school in December 1881. He died in Edmonton in March 1882.

65. W. Anderson, formerly of Fort Pitt, was appointed district Indian Agent in March 1881, to succeed Colonel J. G. Stewart.
66. Jim Glass (see note 58)
67. The property, formerly owned by Colin Fraser, fronted on Main Street. The thoroughfare was renamed Jasper Avenue in 1882, but the original name continued to be used for some time. EB., 1st Apr., 1882.
68. This farming community, originally named after Abraham Salois and his two sons who had established farmsteads along the Battle River in 1875, became known as the Laboucane Settlement, after the arrival of the six Laboucane brothers and their families in 1878. Also known as Battle River Crossing, it was given the name Duhamel in 1892 when a post office was established at that point. A description of the short route to Swift Current appears in EB., 11th Nov., 1882.
69. The Presbyterian Church at 104th Street and 99th Avenue, was opened on 5th November, 1882. EB., 4th November, 1882.
70. Lovisa to her mother, 20th Mar., 1882. PAA. Acc. 75.388.
71. EB., 16th June, 1883. The new store was located at the corner of 98th Street and Jasper Avenue.
72. Frank Oliver was elected Alberta representative of the Territorial Council.
73. EB., 23rd Aug., 1884.
74. Lovisa to her brother, 16th Feb., 1884, PAA. Acc. 75.388. Other new songs she heard that night were "Cleansing Fires" and "The Clang of the Wooden Shoon". The "gentlemens songs" were "Warrior Bold" and "The King's Highway".
75. After the Hudson's Bay Company closed down the post at Jasper House in 1884, J. A. McDougall established a trading post there for a few months.

76. The Reverend A. B. Baird, Presbyterian minister, arrived in Edmonton in October 1881, and began holding services in the J. A. McDougall Hall. Under his supervision a building fund was established that made possible the erection of a church and mission house by November 1882. When he left Edmonton in August 1887, to take charge of the new Indian Residential School at Battleford, he was succeeded by the Rev. D. G. McQueen.
77. The baby was John Charles, at this time, over a year old.
78. Bella was McDougall's current domestic help.
79. EB., 21st Feb., 1885.
80. Stories such as those contained in John A. McDougall's letters of April 1885, (see Appendix) and in some of Lovisa's letters in PAA. Acc. 75.388, later proved to be entirely false.
81. James Mowatt left Edmonton on 8th April and arrived in Calgary thirty-six hours later. Word was received on the 20th that General Strange's troops were on the way (EB., 25th Apr., 1885). The first group of the Alberta Field Force arrived on 1st May.
82. Letter of 21st May, 1885, in PAA. Acc. 75.388. The presence of close to two hundred troops in the settlement may also have influenced their decision.
83. EB., 7th Jan., 1887. One hundred tons of coal were shipped to Battleford, the rest was used locally. A summary of building contracts from 1880 - 1887 is given in EB., 31st Dec., 1887.
84. The Bulletin, 4th Sept., 1886, states that St. Joachim's was opened on 15th August, while a history of the parish, St. Joachim's 1859 - 1959, gives the date as 22nd August. The report of the opening of McDougall's store near 102nd Street and McDonald Drive appears in EB., 23rd Oct., 1886.

85. EB., 2nd Apr., 1887, contains a report of the previous year's improvement on the trails.
86. George A. Watson, who advertised as a barrister, solicitor and money lender, arrived in Edmonton in 1884 (EB., 19th Jan., 1884). Mrs. Walker was the wife of W. Johnstone Walker, proprietor of an English importing store that opened on 20th Oct., 1886.
87. W. Friedlers, a freighter, had been a resident of Edmonton since 1882.
88. W. Patton was a partner in a firm that provided "painting, sign writing, paper hanging and kalsomining" services in the community. EB., 24th Apr., 1886.
89. The Masonic Ball was held on the 28th January. EB., 15th Jan., 1887.
90. Miss Wragge was living at Fort Saskatchewan at this time; her name appears frequently among the performers at Church of England concerts.
91. General T. Bland Strange, a cattle ranch operator at Blackfoot Crossing, was appointed military commander of the District of Alberta in 1885. He organized the Alberta Field Force which provided support to Edmonton and various other small points in the north during the Rebellion.
92. The identity of Jack Graham cannot be definitely determined. Earlier issues of the Bulletin had mentioned a W. J. Graham of Fairview Farm, and on 18th June, 1887, it carried a notice that W. J. Graham was the owner of a stage line between Edmonton and Calgary. If the wedding Lovisa writes about actually did take place in five weeks, the announcement did not appear in the paper.
93. Wilson: there were at least four men with the same surname living in Edmonton at this time, but it is believed that Lovisa is referring to Frank D. Wilson, a salesman with the Hudson's Bay Co. since 1879, who had taken part in many musical affairs in the community.

94. P. G. Grey was the manager of the private banking firm of Lafferty and Smith (Calgary), that opened an Edmonton branch on the 11th December, 1886. EB., 11th Dec., 1886.
95. EB., 25th June, 1887. The Bulletin records the day of celebration as Monday, 21st June; Lovisa writes that the dinner was held on Tuesday. As 21st June fell on a Tuesday that year, it would seem that the Bulletin reporter mislaid a day amidst all the festivities.
96. All that is known of Sergeant-Major O'Connor is that he was a member of the detachment stationed at Fort Saskatchewan, and was transferred to Calgary in August of that year. EB., 30th July, 1887.
97. Inspector Snyder, in command of the Edmonton post "G" Division of the N.W.M.P., was transferred to Fort Saskatchewan at the end of April 1887. EB., 9th April, 1887.
98. Sergeant R. Belcher joined the N.W.M.P. in 1873 and was stationed at Fort Saskatchewan in 1875. He later became an Inspector and then a Major, before retiring from the force in 1908. (A. O. MacRae, History of the Province of Alberta, Vol. 11). No information on Sergeant Little has been found.
99. Inspector Casey was Inspector Snyder's successor at the Edmonton N.W.M.P. post.
100. It is believed that Lovisa is referring to John C. Cameron who had been associated since 1881 with A. McDonald and Company, general merchants. He and his wife, like the McDougalls, were supporters of the Presbyterian Church and were involved in many church activities. W. B. Cameron, land agent, arrived in Edmonton in January 1887. A. W. R. Markley was an insurance agent.
101. C. H. Connon, a lawyer, became G. A. Watson's partner in May 1887.

102. William Stiff, a former soldier who was a resident of Edmonton in 1879, organized the Edmonton Volunteer Company to defend the settlement in the early days of the 1885 Rebellion. He was in great demand as a musician at concerts and dances, and also served as secretary of many organizations.
103. Mrs. Alexander Taylor (née Harriet Marsh) married Alex Taylor on 29th July, 1885, at All Saints' Church (from Lovisa's letter to her mother 30th July, 1885, in PAA. Acc. 75.388).
104. Miss Garnett was a relative of Mrs. A. Taylor; Miss Lee was related to Mrs. H. C. Wilson, the doctor's wife. Both women accompanied Mrs. Taylor when she returned from a visit to Calgary towards the end of April. EB., 30th Apr., 1887.
105. Lovisa's other guest was probably the Miss Ross who opened a millinery and dressmaking shop near the Edmonton Hotel in 1885.
106. Brechin, Ontario, is located a short distance north of Cannington, Ontario.
107. Ballentyne Yates, who advertised as a "photographic artist", opened a studio in temporary quarters in T. B. Henderson's building on Main Street in June 1887. (EB., 2nd July, 1887). The Bulletin of 1st October, 1887, carries the announcement that Mr. Henderson is going to build a new photographic studio on the southeast corner of Jasper Avenue and 101st Street, but says nothing more about the "artist".
108. The only other letter after this date is one written on 22nd November, 1897, in PAA. Acc. 75.388.
109. Since Henderson's Directory lists Edmonton's population as 500 in both 1887 and 1888, the figure used here is an approximation, as is the one for 1879.

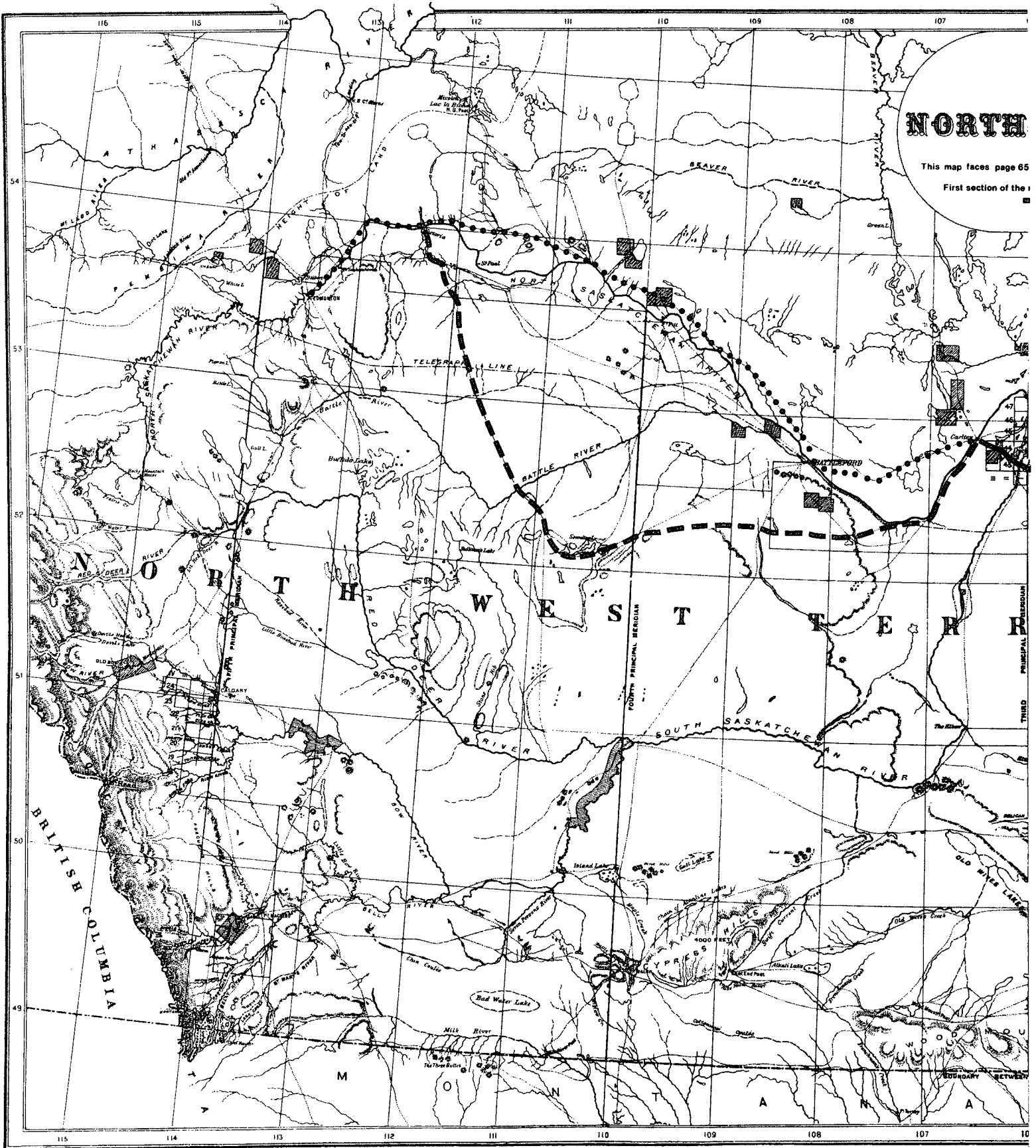
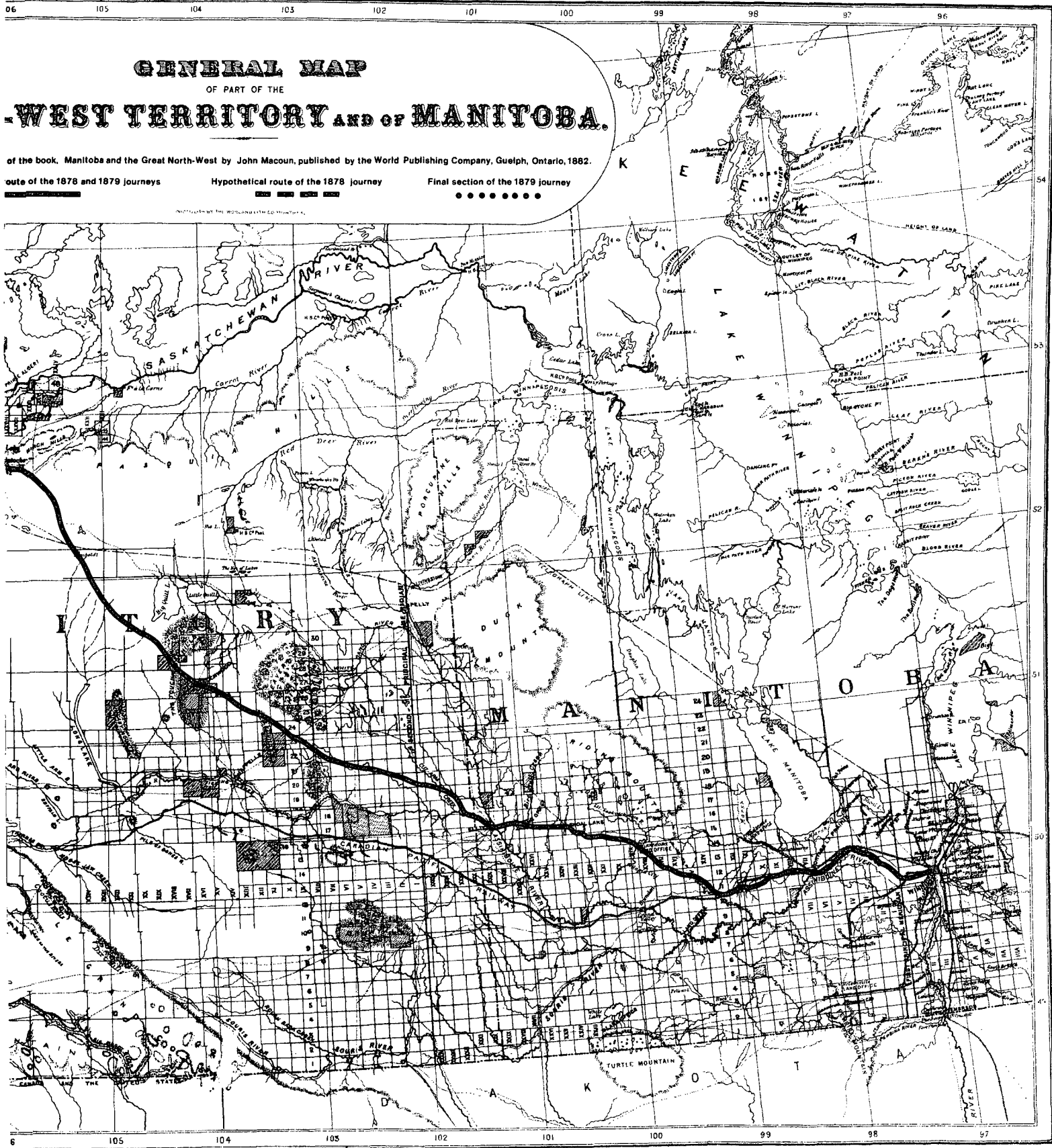


Plate 6: Map showing the route taken, 1878



PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA
OCCASIONAL PAPERS

1. Letters of Lovisa McDougall, 1878—1887. Edited by Elizabeth M. McCrum. pp. 91, 1978.