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The York Factory "Depot" Warehouse - Style and Construction

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York Factory served as the distributional and administrative hub of the Hudson's Bay Company's fur trading operations in northwestern British North America from the late 18th century until the 1860's. The storage of goods presented little problem at the post until the merger with the Montreal based North-West Company (with whom the Company was engaged in a bitter rivalry for the dominance of the fur trade) in 1821, as the 18th century "Octagon" building,¹ Red River warehouse, and the "fur store" provided ample space (Figure 1). This is not to say that changes did not occur during this period, but rather that they were on a substantially smaller scale than was the case during the 20 years that followed the amalgamation.

After the turn of the century York increasingly acted as a forwarding point (as opposed to a bayside trading centre) to an expanding network of inland trading posts. Thus, a constantly increasing quantity of trade goods had to be kept over the winter months due to the impossibility of forwarding large amounts of supplies in the short fall season after the arrival of the annual supply ship in late August or early September. Prior to 1821 two factors mitigated against the construction of new buildings to house these additional goods. In the first place, few Indians visited the post as a result of the establishment of this inland trading network, thereby eliminating the defensive considerations which had been paramount in the adoption of the traditional flanker-style configuration during the 1788-1793 construction phase.² In addition, the Company's London Committee was increasingly concerned by the fire hazard occasioned by the close proximity of residential and storage functions in the "Octagon" building. Therefore, it is not surprising that a detached men's residence was constructed, with their former quarters in the northeast flanker



being converted to warehouse space, when more storage area was required in 1815 or 1816.³ The Company's wishes in this regard, however, were never fully carried out, as the officer class continued to reside in the southeast, and the accountant in the "western", bastions until the merger.⁴

In 1821, after the decision had been made to abandon the North West Company's Canadian supply route and, hence, their former depot at Fort William, the immediate problem was the provision of sufficient space for the large increase in fur returns passing through York. A new, 22 by 80 foot, fur warehouse was built on the upstream side of the "Octagon" in 1821-1822 (Figure 2).⁵ This one and one-half story structure was very similar to the "Pack Store" at Fort William, an understandable coincidence given the fact that the new Chief Factor at York, John George McTavish, was a former North West Company wintering partner.⁶ The only major difference was the employment of a steeply pitched hipped roof, rather than the French Canadian, gable style that was typical at Fort William.⁷ An interesting feature of this building, as well as a second fur warehouse (1825),⁸ the inland cargo warehouse (1825),⁹ and the saleshop building (1826-1827),¹⁰ was the use of gabled dormers (as at Fort William) for lighting the second floor garrets (Figure 2).

The initial phase of reconstruction and expansion of the storage facilities at York Factory was complete by 1827, as all of the pre-1821 buildings and sheds, with the exception of the "Octagon" and the launch house (Figure 1), had been demolished by that date.¹¹ The "Octagon", now used almost exclusively for the general storage of merchandise,¹² was also beginning to show its age. The foundations were repaired in 1826,¹³ but more repairs were necessary by 1830.¹⁴ While these repairs were authorized by the Company's overseas governor, George Simpson, they were only temporary in nature, as the old warehouse was no longer large enough for the volume of trade goods stored at the site.¹⁵ Simpson, therefore, concurrently authorized the construction of a new main warehouse.¹⁶ Apparently this building was originally planned during Chief Factor McTavish's tenure,¹⁷ but was actually started under the supervision of his successor (appointed in 1830), Alexander H. Christie. James Hargrave, who at this time held a clerk's position at York, has left an excellent summation of the reasons for the construction of the "Depot", as well as the location and construction sequence:

the crowded state of our Stores. — Every garret in the new Building is groaning under its own burden & the Old Factory has at length become Crazy & leaky & unfit to be filled with property

Since that it has been found necessary to commence rebuilding part of it. — The Middle front through which the gateway passed has been taken down & part of an excellent store of 2½ Stories - 40 feet long & 20 broad - has been raised in its place - ... To each end of this store is proposed to be added wings each 30 feet long on the foundations of the old Buildings & 2 stories high forming a continued front of 100 feet -...18

The actual construction process was delayed by the limitations of timber supply and also by outbreaks of influenza. The two storied upstream wing was definitely completed by the summer of 1834,¹⁹ while the downstream side was not commenced until the fall of 1835, when the "North East side of the Old Factory" was taken down.²⁰ The final, rear section, was not completed until 1837.²¹

The style chosen by Governor Simpson and Chief Factor Christie was well suited to the buildings' intended role. As could be expected, they opted for the familiar and the utilitarian; a dry goods warehouse located on the remote shores of Hudson's Bay was an unlikely candidate for decorative exterior ornamentation, especially when skilled tradesmen were also at a premium. The difficulty, and cost, involved in obtaining and preparing suitable wood for construction²² also weighed heavily in favour of the simple, well-proportioned lines of the Georgian mode that had been so popular in Britain and colonial America during the 18th century. The typical hipped roof style, with minor variations, was a common feature of the Company's North American warehouses that were built between 1821 and 1870. The buildings erected at Fort Vancouver during the 1820's were the only apparent exceptions with their gable style roofs.²³ In all likelihood this anomaly was the result of the influence of the individual in charge of the Columbia Department, Dr. John McLoughlin, who had been stationed at Fort William (where a similar style was used) prior to the 1821 merger.²⁴

Ground floor access was always limited in the Company's warehouses, with entrances usually placed near the highest traffic areas. The "Depot" is typical in this regard, as the double doors located at the front, or river side, and the rear of the building, near the artisan workshops, were the only original entrances.²⁵ Windows are also characteristically numerous in the "Depot", as Company policy prohibited the use of candles and lanterns as a precaution against fire. There were, of course, exceptions, as window glass was an expensive commodity. Warehouses where the

selection, sorting, and packaging of goods and furs for trans-shipment was not a priority, such as the "Archway" warehouse at Norway House (Figure 4), contained a minimal number of windows.²⁶

Snow conditions made skylights an impractical means of illuminating attic space, so gabled dormers were commonly used when the "garret" or "loft" was to be used for storage. In warehouses of this type at York, Norway House, Lower Fort Garry, and Upper Fort Garry, the walls were typically extended two to three feet above the main or second floor ceilings in order to provide more usable space (Figures 2, 4, and 5). The roofs were also more steeply pitched than was the case with the wings and rear portion of the "Depot" which are a full two stories high. Since all of the Company's warehouses in the Northern Department were not intended for winter use, except for sheltering the merchandise, double windows were also unnecessary. In addition, the majority of the windows could not be opened unless, as in the case of the "Depot", they were in small interior offices.²⁷

The one feature that separates the York Factory "Depot" from its counterparts in the Northern Department is its imposing size. With a floor area totalling nearly 18,000 square feet, it is by far the largest single warehouse constructed in North America by the Hudson's Bay Company prior to 1870. In contrast, the next largest building, the "Receiving Store" at Fort Vancouver, contained approximately 8,000 square feet of storage space on two levels.²⁸ At Moose Factory, the entrepôt of the Southern Department, the old flanker style building remained in use until the 1870's.²⁹ It has, therefore, not been considered for the purposes of this comparative report.

The "Depot's" dimensions clearly reflected the primary importance of the Northern Department to the Company. In addition, it probably also represented Chief Factor McTavish's and Governor Simpson's desire to consolidate all of the trade goods destined for trans-shipment in one structure. This was deemed necessary because of the overcrowded state of the old "Octagon" warehouse which, by the late 1820's, had led to the often haphazard storage of merchandise in various outbuildings during the rush of ship-time.³⁰ This naturally increased labour costs during the assemblage and packaging of the inland "packs" and at inventory time.

Buildings on the scale of the "Depot" were not necessary at other distributional points, nor at the various district headquarters. At Norway House, which from 1822 was increasingly used as a sub-depot of York for the Athabasca and McKenzie River districts,³¹ the already packaged goods were usually housed in separate structures according to their destination.³²

Since this inland forwarding and storage role evolved slowly at this post, culminating in the 1830's, additional structures were only added as they were needed. Naturally, these factors precluded against the construction of one large building. The situation was similar at the Red River Settlement, particularly at Upper Fort Garry, which rose from district headquarters status to become a major distributional centre (supplanting York) in its own right by the 1860's. Here, structures from the initial phase were supplemented with new buildings as the Company's supply and transportation system was modified.³³ Fort Vancouver and, after 1845, Fort Victoria, served the Columbia Department in the same manner that York served the Northern.³⁴ As was previously mentioned, however, the Columbia Department's smaller size meant that storage facilities on the scale of York Factory were unnecessary.

At first glance it seems unclear as to why the "Depot" was built on a square pattern (105 by 100 feet) when all of the Company's other, post-1821, dry goods warehouses utilized a rectangular plan. Although the documentary record provides no direct explanation, a number of factors probably led to this decision. In the first place, space was limited within the palisaded compound at York Factory, with most of the area being occupied and given over to specific functions. A logical desire to locate the new building on a site which was readily accessible to the wharf and other related structures such as the saleshop, the Indian trading shop, the inland cargo warehouse, and the fur stores was probably another limiting factor. What remains unclear, however, is why Chief Factor Christie and Governor Simpson did not simply decide to locate the "Depot" in the open area fronting the old warehouse. The only plausible explanation is that they were constrained by aesthetic considerations imposed by the construction that had occurred during the previous decade along the lines laid down in the 1822 site plan.³⁵ Thus, the site occupied by the flanker complex was probably deemed the only acceptable choice and, if former Chief Factor J. G. McTavish's words can be taken at face value, this location was probably decided upon in the late 1820's when the need for a new structure first became evident.³⁶

The "Octagon" site also provided additional advantages, allowing, for instance, the temporary integration of the completed sections of the new building and the remainder of the old structure as construction progressed, section by section, over the six year period (a length of time dictated by manpower constraints which limited the amount of construction material that could reasonably be obtained, prepared, and assembled each year). This construction pattern also helps to explain the adoption of the square layout, with a

central courtyard, rather than the typical two story style with dimensions of, say, 70 by 130 feet, which would have given the same storage area. A building of this latter type, located on the same site, would have necessitated the demolition of a much larger portion of the "Octagon" than was practical given the already limited storage space at the Factory. As well, the overall symmetry of the fort would have been destroyed by placing the new building closer to one of the two adjacent structures - the summer mess house and the inland officers' residence - than the other. Finally, since the warehouse was to be almost square, the central courtyard was necessary as a means of providing natural interior light. It also provided an additional advantage by allowing access to the front and rear sections of the building without passing through interior rooms.

Regarding other stylistic details, it has been previously mentioned that the two wings and the rear section of the "Depot" are a full two stories in height. This explains the absence of gabled dormers and the relatively low pitch of the roof. These sections were probably constructed in this manner in order to provide increased storage space and to accommodate the numerous wall shelves and ceiling racks which occupied a good deal of the second floor.³⁷

Figure 3 depicts the main floor plan as it existed in 1900 prior to the interior renovations which were made in the 20th century. In all probability this was the same layout that existed upon the building's completion in 1837.³⁸ Each room was intended for related goods and, according to the York Factory inventories, usage remained fairly constant until the 1870's when transport changes caused the building's capacity to be underutilized.³⁹ Other dry goods warehouses, such as those located at Moose Factory, Fort Vancouver, Fort Victoria and, by the 1860's, Upper Fort Garry, undoubtedly contained similar interior divisions. General buildings, such as the "Archway" warehouse at Norway House or the inland cargo store at York were minimally partitioned.

Construction

It remains unclear whether a knowledge of construction techniques was a prerequisite for promotion to the position of Chief Factor in the Hudson's Bay Company. It is evident, however, that these skills were held by many of the individuals who occupied this position. Some, such as J. G. McTavish and A. H. Christie, had considerable prior knowledge of wooden construction methods.⁴¹ James Hargrave,

however, was initially inexperienced in these matters and was unsure of himself upon his appointment as a Chief Trader in charge of York Factory in 1834.⁴² During the final phase of the construction of the "Depot" he was forced to rely to a considerable degree on the skills of John Rendal,⁴³ his "Postmaster & Carptr."⁴⁴ Hargrave gained experience during his long tenure as the chief officer at the Factory and, as is shown by 1857 plans for two intended warehouses at York, became a skilled designer in his own right.⁴⁵

Other writers have noted the many tasks that the Company's skilled employees were routinely called upon to perform in addition to their specific trades.⁴⁶ This state of affairs was naturally more pronounced at the smaller inland trading posts and district headquarters, but it was also characteristic at the coastal depots and at Norway House. Carpenters, or "Joiners", and boatbuilders in particular were used interchangeably during the construction of the many dwellings, workshops, and warehouses at these latter locations. This is significant because, as far as can be ascertained from the available evidence, the use of wooden "knees" to tie and reinforce the joints where roof trusses, and sometimes beams supporting the second floor, meet the wall plates and supporting posts was limited to these sites. At York, the substitution of this method for the more common run brace (check jointed into the post and beam) can probably be attributed to the influence of John Rendal and the six other boat carpenters who worked on the "Depot" at various times,⁴⁷ as "knees" were commonly used in shipbuilding. Significantly, the technique was also used at Moose Factory⁴⁸ and Norway House⁴⁹ where boat carpenters were also employed in significant numbers. Traditional methods seem to have prevailed further inland, although this cannot be definitely proven due to the destruction of all of the buildings (except at Lower Fort Garry) dating from this period.

In addition to the boatbuilders, the post carpenters were also employed on the "Depot" project. William Drever, an Orcadian from Shapinsay parish, was the senior carpenter at York,⁵⁰ and he was assisted by two countrymen, James Sinclair (1828-1837)⁵¹ and David Allan (1836).⁵² These three individuals were undoubtedly influential as, apart from the use of wooden "knees", the structural techniques closely follow the standard methods for heavily framed buildings outlined in contemporary British and American construction manuals.⁵³ The roof of the three story section, for example, is a typical hipped roof rafter plan,⁵⁴ while the 26 foot wide wings and 30 foot wide rear section are a

slightly modified truss and purlin design, with the common rafters being eliminated in favour of roof planking attached directly to the purlins and running perpendicular to the ridge of the roof.⁵⁵

French Canadian carpenters were also employed at York Factory (as elsewhere), as the Company considered it judicious to keep an ethnic mix at its posts as a precaution against "combinations." Medarde Poitras (drowned August 1834), from the parish of L'Assomption in Lower Canada,⁵⁶ Jean M. Boucher (1828-1836) from Berthier parish,⁵⁷ and André Benoit (1827-1836), a "Baker & Carpenter" from Longueuil,⁵⁸ were probably all involved in the initial phase of construction. J. B. Daunais, the only other carpenter of French Canadian ancestry employed at York between 1836 and 1850, probably also worked on the final portion of the building in 1836-1837.⁵⁹ The "Depot", both in style and structural detail, shows little of this French Canadian influence, in contrast to the *pièces sur pièces en coulisse* construction, gabled dormers, and raised lofts of most of the Company's other storage buildings.

The most important consideration regarding the Georgian style and the Company's warehouses was the utility of the mode regardless of the materials used. This fact demonstrates the resourcefulness of the senior officers and tradesmen involved and their ability to adapt to local conditions. Thus, in timber-short regions such as York and Upper Fort Garry, storage buildings were of frame and weatherboard construction and lined with plank. Near the coast, at Moose and York Factories, imported sheet lead, and later tin, was used as roofing material for similar reasons. Of course, this bulky commodity could not be shipped inland, so many of the buildings in the interior were covered with spruce bark,⁶⁰ or wooden shingles depending on local resources.

Pièces sur pièces en coulisse construction, which was by far the most common means of building walls, was favoured wherever timber was reasonably plentiful. This technique required less labour during preparation and assembly than did standard methods. Stone was used at Lower Fort Garry because limestone was readily available and wood, as at the Upper Fort, was in short supply due to the demands of the settlement on the limited local resources.

Quality of workmanship also differed from location to location and according to the changing fortunes of a post. The location and, hence, the importance of a site usually determined the number of construction tradesmen stationed at a particular site and, therefore, the time and effort that could be spent on each project. Thus, when Norway House was simply a transfer point where goods and furs were stored for brief periods of time each summer, the permanent complement of men was small and construction carried out

by semi-skilled individuals who were sometimes aided by the boatbuilder. This lack of manpower meant that buildings were built as simply as possible. Small, barked spruce trees, or "roofing sticks" as they were known, took the place of sawn rafters⁶¹ and, as has been previously noted, pine bark was used instead of shingles. The interior walls of the warehouses at Norway House were also lined with this bark.⁶²

This situation began to change after the mid-1830's when Governor Simpson, fearing the disastrous consequences to the trade if a major fire occurred at York, decided that a portion of the annual "Outfits" should be stored at Norway House every winter.⁶³ It was not until 1840,⁶⁴ however, that the first of Simpson's "few additional good warehouses" was started.⁶⁵ Although never actually identified by name, this structure was, in all probability, what is today known as the "Archway" warehouse. As befitted the increased stature of the post, the "Archway" building was built with a conscious emphasis on durability. In addition to the two boat carpenters stationed at the post, at least three professional carpenters spent varying amounts of time on the project.⁶⁶ As a result, sawn rafters replaced the traditional "roofing sticks" and wooden shingles from the Red River Settlement were installed over a plank roof.⁶⁷ The exterior of the structure was whitewashed,⁶⁸ but the weatherboards depicted in Figure 4 were a later addition. This building's continued existence to the present day, when associated structures have long since disappeared, is an ample demonstration of the superior workmanship that went into this warehouse.

The above discussion proves a point that has been made by other historians; namely, that style and construction techniques had been standardized to such an extent that by the 1830's the Company's storage buildings could no longer be distinguished by the nationality of the tradesmen involved.⁶⁹ In other words, various techniques were applied according to a building's size, the skills of the workers involved, the nature of the most readily available building materials, and the structure's intended use. Therefore, while a "British" influence might characterize the "Depot", other "stores" were usually of *pièces sur pièces en coulisse* construction, sometimes with a gabled roof, but more often than not using a Georgian hipped roof style. Dormers, as was common in Lower Canadian house construction, were used to light the slightly raised second and third floor lofts of the many smaller warehouses at York and in the interior. Once established, these techniques persisted well into the latter part of the 19th century, especially in regions far from the advance of European settlement. Isolation, and the

long service of the "Half Breed" employees first hired as youthful apprentices and labourers in the 1840's, ensured the continuance of many of the building traditions long after they had been made obsolete by machine cut lumber and "balloon" frame construction elsewhere in North America.

Endnotes

- 1 G. P. De T. Glazebrook, ed., The Hargrave Correspondence 1821-1843 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1938), p. 99, Donald Ross to James Hargrave, 30 December 1832, "I long much to have another peep at YF but I am afraid my ancient friend the Old Octagon will entirely vanish before I have that opportunity." The name referred to the shape of the interior courtyard of the building.
- 2 Bruce F. Donaldson, "York Factory: A Land Use History, 1787-1981." Manuscript on file, Prairie Regional Office, Parks Canada, Winnipeg, 1981, pp. 17-20. This report will be printed in the Manuscript Report Series in the near future.
- 3 Hudson's Bay Company Archives, hereafter cited as HBCA, B.239/a/123, York Factory Journal, 29 September 1815, fo. 2, and 27 October 1815, fo. 4d. A plan drawn by Nicholas Garry, a Company director, in 1821 shows this former residential flanker as a warehouse. See Bruce F. Donaldson, op. cit., Figure 6.
- 4 HBCA, E.10/1, Colin Robertson's Diary, Vol. 4, 9 September 1816, fo. 261, and John Franklin, Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea, in the Years 1819-20-21-22, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1824), Vol. 1, p. 38.
- 5 HBCA, D.3/3, George Simpson's Journal, 11 October 1821.
- 6 W. Stewart Wallace, ed., Documents Relating to the North West Company (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), pp. 270 and 485, and E. E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960), Vol. 2, pp. 348 and 354.
- 7 For a reproduction of an 1812 water colour of Fort William by Robert Irvine see H. D. Smiley, "The Dalliance of David Thompson," The Beaver (Winter 1972), p. 43. The hipped roof style was probably adopted so that the building would conform to the existing fur warehouse which, according to an 1821 sketch by Peter Rindesbacher, employed this style. See Bruce F. Donaldson, op. cit., Figure 5, for a reproduction of this painting.

- 8 HBCA, B.239/a/133, York Factory Journal, 25 April to 18 June 1825, fos. 17-22. The original fur warehouse was apparently demolished in 1822, B.239/a/134, York Factory Journal, 2 May 1826, fo. 17.
- 9 HBCA, B.239/a/133, York Factory Journal, 2 August 1825, fo. 27, and B.239/a/134, York Factory Journal, 5 June 1826, fo. 19d.
- 10 HBCA, B.239/a/134, York Factory Journal, 24 April 1826, fo. 16.
- 11 HBCA, B.239/a/135, York Factory Journal, 25 May 1827, fo. 15d.
- 12 HBCA, B.239/a/133, op. cit., 25 October 1824, fo. 6. McTavish, along with "Messrs Todd, Miles, & Ross," took up residence in the new officers' dwelling. Four men remained in the officers' flanker, Public Archives of Canada, hereafter cited as PAC, MG19, A21, C73, George Barnston to James Hargrave, 14 November 1824, p. 42. By 1827, when Hargrave was himself stationed at York, this area was apparently no longer used for residential purposes, Ibid., C80, James Hargrave to Mrs. Hargrave (his mother), 1 November 1827.
- 13 HBCA, B.239/a/134, op. cit., 15 August 1826, fo. 25d.
- 14 HBCA, A.12/1, G. Simpson to the Governor and Committee, 31 July 1830, fo. 357.
- 15 PAC, op. cit., C80, J. Hargrave to J. G. McTavish, 8 November 1830.
- 16 HBCA, A.12/1, G. Simpson to the Governor and Committee, 18 July 1831, fo. 406d.
- 17 PAC, op. cit., C73, J. G. McTavish to J. Hargrave, 25 January 1833, p. 496, "I am proud to learn that our old plans with regards to the Store System is still continued, and without wishing to take unto myself any unnecessary share of the merit of that system I must observe that it shews no little discrimination on the part of your present Bourgeois.____" (A. H. Christie).
- 18 Ibid., C80, J. Hargrave to J. G. McTavish, 1 December 1831.
- 19 HBCA, B.239/aa/67, York Factory Inventory, 1 June 1834. Four new rooms are listed in this inventory: a "New Nail Room", a "Slop Room", a "Woolens Room", and a "Shot Room". These developments matched the layout and intended construction sequence that Hargrave had described three years previously, PAC, op. cit., C80, J. Hargrave to J. G. McTavish, 1 December 1831.

September 1834. John Rendal was a boatbuilder from

- 20 PAC, op. cit., C80, J. Hargrave to A. H. Christie, 10 December 1835.
- 21 HBCA, B.239/aa/71, York Factory Inventory, 1 June 1838. The "New Store Upper Floor" and "New Store Lower Floor" are listed in this inventory book.
- 22 The vast majority of the wood used in the construction of the "Depot" was obtained from along the banks of the "Shamattawa" (Gods) River below the first major rapids which are located approximately 50 kilometres upstream from the confluence of the Gods and Hayes Rivers. The Company's wooders were forced to travel this distance due to the exhaustion of timber resources closer to the Factory along the banks of the Hayes.
- 23 John A. Hussey, historic structures report, Historical Documents, Vol. 1, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Washington, U.S.A., Department of the Interior, Denver (1972), p. 186.
- 24 Joan Halloran, "Wooden Forts of the Early Northwest: Fort William," Bulletin of the Association for Preservation Technology, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1974), p. 68.
- 25 George S. McTavish, Behind the Palisades (Victoria: Gray's publishing, 1963), p. 25.
- 26 The grainery building at Fort Vancouver is another example of this type, John A. Hussey, op. cit., Plate XXIII.
- 27 The windows in one small room in the downstream front corner and on the third floor are hinged.
- 28 John A. Hussey, op. cit., pp. 251-252.
- 29 Herbert Stovel, "The Buildings of Moose Factory," Canadian Collector, Vol. 16, No. 4 (July/August 1981), p. 25.
- 30 PAC, op. cit., C80, James Hargrave to J. G. McTavish, 8 November 1830, J. Hargrave to D. McKenzie, 10 February 1831, and J. Hargrave to J. G. McTavish, 1 December 1831.
- 31 HBCA, D.4/85, G. Simpson to the Governor and Committee, 31 July 1822, fo. 8d, and D.4/6, G. Simpson to J. MacLeod, 7 July 1826, fos. 23 and 23d.
- 32 For example, a separate building was provided for the Athabasca District, HBCA, B.154/a/17, Norway House Journal, 25 September 1830, fo. 3d.
- 33 Rodger Guinn, The Red-Assiniboine Junction: A Land Use and Settlement History 1770-1980, Manuscript Report Series No. 355 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1981), pp. 88 and 92.

- 34 American settlement near the mouth of the Columbia River prompted Governor Simpson to order the construction of a new depot (Fort Victoria) on Vancouver Island in 1842. By 1845 Fort Vancouver's depot role was in eclipse, John A. Hussey, op. cit., pp. 240-241.
- 35 The central open square was a common feature of all of the Company's major posts at this time.
- 36 PAC, op. cit., C73, J. G. McTavish to J. Hargrave, 25 January 1833, p. 496.
- 37 Many of these shelves were removed in the 20th century, but ample evidence of their existence remains to support this statement.
- 38 The five rooms shown at the front of the building, for instance, match the intended plan described by Hargrave in 1831. See PAC, op. cit., C80, J. Hargrave to J. G. McTavish, 1 December 1831.
- 39 This is not to say that functions never overlapped. During the rush of ship-time goods were often placed where there was available room, especially if the quantity imported was too voluminous for the appointed space. In 1848, for example, the "Salt Room" contained clay pipes, shoes, soap, salt, molasses, and sugar. The "Sugar Room" also held soap, molasses, and salt. See HBCA, B.239/aa/81, York Factory Inventory, 1 June 1848.
- 40 J. C. Fyfe, "Archway Warehouse." Structural drawings prepared 16-17 July 1970 for the National and Historic Parks Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Copies of these drawings are on file at the Historic Resources Branch of the Manitoba government in Winnipeg.
- 41 James Hargrave (Christie's successor at York) believed that McTavish was better qualified in such matters than was Christie, PAC, op. cit., C80, J. Hargrave to Pierre Leblanc, 15 February 1832. McTavish, however, had first hand knowledge of Christie's past work at his new posting at Moose Factory, and did not share Hargrave's opinion. "Mr Christies plan of building is well calculated for Solidity, ...", Ibid., C73, J. G. McTavish to J. Hargrave, 25 January 1833, p. 496.
- 42 Hargrave was first employed as a North West Company clerk in 1820, and he was permanently stationed at York in 1827. He became senior officer there in 1834, a position that he held until 1852. In 1856 Hargrave was reappointed to York, where he served until his retirement in 1858.
- 43 PAC, op. cit., C80, J. Hargrave to A. H. Christie, 11 September 1834. John Rendal was a boatbuilder from

Stromness, Orkney Islands, and was employed at York Factory from 1828 until 1839 when he returned to Europe. From 1832 until 1835 he was listed in the Company's engagement register as a "Postmaster & Carptr." His final four years in the Company's service were spent as a "Postmaster," HBCA, B.239/u/1, "Engagement Register Northern Department", fos. 291d-292. By the time of his retirement he was responsible for the fur stores, the trading room, the provision warehouse, and "the labors generally at the Factory," B.239/a/151, York Factory Journal, 1 July 1839, fo. 47d. Rendal spent the winter of 1831-1832 at Norway House where he worked on the two Lake Winnipeg schooners built that season.

44 HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 291d-292.

45 HBCA, A.67/1, fos. 403-406.

46 See, for example, Philip Goldring, Papers on the Labour System of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1900, Vol. 2, Manuscript Report Series No. 412 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1980), pp. 186-187.

47 John Anderson, a boatbuilder from Harray parish, Orkney Islands, was stationed at York from 1835 until 1840. William Halcrow was from Orphir parish, Orkney Islands, and was also at York from 1835 until 1840. He spent most of the 1836-1837 season at Norway House overhauling the lake vessels. John Spence was an Orcadian from Birsay parish. He spent the winter of 1836-1837 at York and was transferred to Ungava District in 1837. Robert Wilson was a boatbuilder from Stromness, Orkney, and was first engaged in 1828. By 1835 he had risen to the level of Postmaster. Wilson spent the winter of 1833-1834 at Norway House constructing "york" boats. Edward Rosie was from South Ronaldsay, Orkney, and was originally engaged as a labourer in 1834. By 1836 he was classified as a boat carpenter. He retired in 1845. HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 5d-6, 157d-158, 295d-296, 322d-323, 368d-369; B.154/a/24, Norway House Journal, 3 October 1833, p. 32; B.154/a/27, Norway House Journal, 27 August 1836, p. 23, and 8 October 1836, p. 33; B.239/z/26, "Men at York Factory 1836/37", fo. 64.

48 St. Thomas church at Moose Factory contains "knees". This information was gleaned from Chapter 4 of Carol Judd's "Moose Factory Staff House Report" which has not yet been published.

49 "Gunn making knees for binding one of the new Stores," HBCA, B.154/a/24, op. cit., 2 September 1833, p. 25. Gunn was a boat carpenter.

- 50 HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 85d-86, and B.239/a/149 York Factory Journal, 20 October 1835, fo. 10.
- 51 HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 316d-317.
- 52 HBCA, B.239/f/16, "Arrangements regarding Servants Outfit 1837 and Memoranda 1836," fo. 6d.
- 53 See, for example, P. Nicholson, The Carpenter and Joiners Assistant (London: 1805), and John Maass, ed., Two Pattern Books by A. J. Bicknell and William T. Comstock (Watkins Glen, New York: The American Life Foundation and Study Institute, 1977).
- 54 Frank D. Graham and Thomas J. Emery, Audels Carpenters and Builders Guide, Vol. 3 (New York: Theo. Audel & Co., 1947), p. 940. Collar beams tie the rafters together and are attached with lap joints. The same technique is used in the "Archway" warehouse and in the "stone" warehouse at Lower Fort Garry.
- 55 The trusses are standard for a roof with a 30 foot span. See John Maass, op. cit., plate 72.
- 56 HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 316d-317, and B.239/a/148, York Factory Journal, 25 August 1834, fo. 9Bd. Hargrave described Poitras as "a steady, trust-worthy servant and his loss will be felt here where his services were of much value as a stirring active leader of the Sawing Tents," Ibid., fo. 10d.
- 57 HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 13d-14.
- 58 Ibid., fos. 11d-12.
- 59 Ibid. fos. 87d-88. Although permanently stationed at York for most of the 1840's (until 1849 when he retired to the Red River Settlement), Daunais spent most of the 1833-1838 period at Norway House, HBCA, B.154/a/24, Norway House Journal, 1 June 1833, p. 1, and B.154/a/29, Norway House Journal, 4 October 1837, p. 33.
- 60 See, for instance, HBCA, B.154/a/22, Norway House Journal, 31 May 1833, fo. 42d.
- 61 HBCA, B.154/a/17, Norway House Journal, 22 April 1831, fo. 27, and B.154/a/20, Norway House Journal, 2 April 1832, fo. 34.
- 62 HBCA, B.154/a/19, Norway House Journal, 9 June 1831, fo. 41d, B.154/a/21, Norway House Journal, 11 June 1832, fo. 24, and B.154/a/24, Norway House Journal, 28 June 1833, p. 10.
- 63 HBCA, D.4/102, "Copy of Governor Simpson's Report on the Northern Department 1835," fo. 42. Additional storage space was also required for Colony products, mainly

- tallow and robes, which were often carried over on inventory during the 1840's. See HBCA, D.5/12, Donald Ross to G. Simpson, 14 August 1844, fo. 169d.
- 64 HBCA, B.154/a/34, Norway House Journal, 28 July 1840, fo. 10.
- 65 HBCA, D.4/102, op. cit.
- 66 These included John Ritch and George Flett, boatbuilders, and John Wishart, John Moar, and Francis Frammond, carpenters. See HBCA, B.154/a/33, Norway House Journal, 26 November 1839, fo. 19; B.154/a/34, Norway House Journal, 10 September 1840, fo. 14d, 11 February 1841, fo. 31, and 17 May 1841, fo. 41. None of these men worked on the "Depot" at York.
- The situation regarding tradesmen was slightly different at Lower Fort Garry, as Willaim Drever (who was the principal carpenter at York during the 1830's) was transferred there in 1839, HBCA, B.239/f/20, "Arrangements regarding Servants Outfit 1839," fo. 7. Drever's transfer, along with the increased employment of masons in the district at this time (HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 175d-176, 198d-199, 214d-215, 245d-246, 321d-322), suggests that the "stone" warehouse was the contemplated project. (Major construction occurred at the Upper Fort in the 1830's and 1850's, Rodger Guinn, op. cit., pp. 67-68, 87-88, and 93). J. B. Derosier, the other Red River District carpenter, left the Company in 1842, HBCA, B.239/u/1, op. cit., fos. 86d-87. He was followed by Drever in 1844, B.239/f/28, "Northern Department Servants Outfit 1845," fo. 4. Since no permanent replacements were hired at this time, it seems safe to assume that the building was completed in either 1843 or 1844 (Also see Gregory Thomas, Lower Fort Garry Warehouse Building Structural and Use History, Manuscript Report Series No. 204 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977), pp. 6-7.
- 67 HBCA, B.154/a/34, Norway House Journal, 19 February 1841, fo. 32, 26 April 1841, fo. 39, and 10 May 1841, fo. 40d. Also, B.154/a/45, Norway House Journal, 14 July 1845, fo. 7, "Anderson preparing to paint the roof of the Shingled Store with Tar and red Ochre-"
- 68 HBCA, B.154/a/39, Norway House Journal, 6 June 1842, fo. 3.
- 69 Gregory Thomas, op. cit., p. 12, and George C. Ingram, "Building the Stone Fort, a Study in Fur Trade Architecture." Unpublished paper presented to the North American Fur Trade Conference (1970), p. 17.

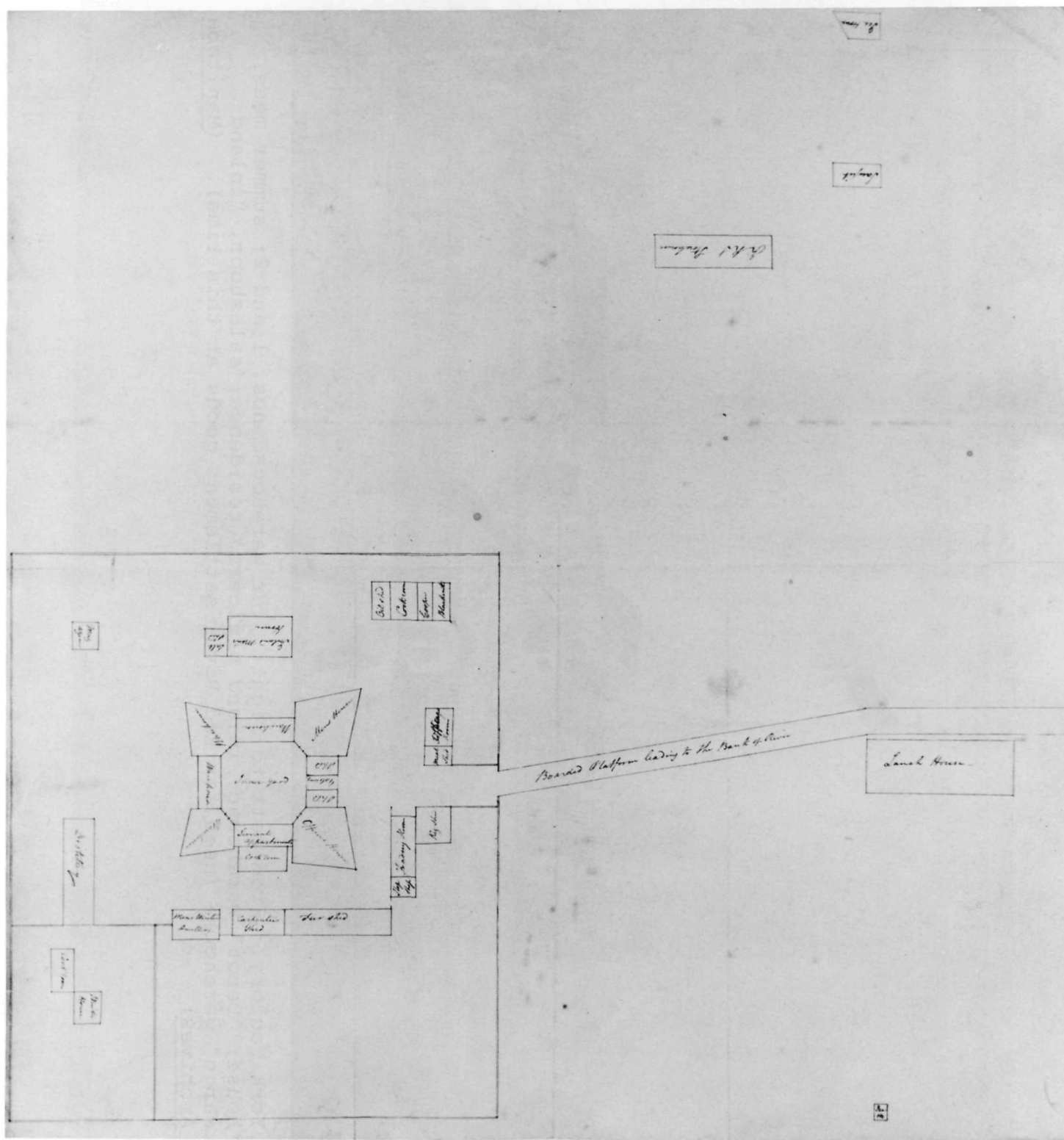


Figure 1. Ground Plan of York Factory (1815) (Hudson Bay Company Archives)



Figure 2. York Factory. From left to right: fur warehouse nos. 1 and 2; summer mess house; "Depot" warehouse; inland officers' residence; saleshops, "inland cargo" warehouse (used for Red River settlement goods at this time). (Manitoba Archives)

Kut Coes \$ 1046 08 8800 11

Furs traded after duty was taken - 1234 M.B. say 30 370 20

1416 28

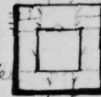
Less Goods on Inventory at Shamattawa 66 skins
 " returned from South Lakes 133

199 - say 200 @ 15 = 30.00

Repairs watch chgd O.L. 99 - paid by M.B. 3.00

Sundries from Winnipeg not on July 30 say 10.00 43 00 1373 28 7426 83

Buildings



- 1 Warehouse - 4 building enclosing a quadrangle 100' x 105' outside, 86' x 53' inside
 - 2 Store with 1/2 story more in middle front - frame, clapboarded & lined - lead roof except in middle front which is thin shingled - Roofs leaky & foundation decayed.
 - 2 Sale Shop 81' x 24 1/2' - 1 1/2 story log clap & lined - foundation beams rotten at ends.
 - 3 Dwelling House 60' x 33' log clap & lined - 3 Rooms including kitchen which is new (1900) inside - 2 Kitchens attached - (a) frame 20x15 not used (b) log & clapboarded 20 x 30 - used in hottest weather - in need of repair.
 - 4 Office 19' x 13' - log, lined, part clapboarded, occupied since Sept 1899.
 - 5 Office 30' x 20' - 1 1/2 story, log clap & lined - not in use - available as a dwelling house for a small family.
 - 6 Dwelling House 70' x 25' log clap & lined, 2 stories - in 2 parts - one of which is let at a nominal charge to the Rev. R. Faries - the other part occasionally occupied by visitors.
 - 7 Bure 30 x 24 log built with left
 - 8 Powder Magazine 40 x 25 stone & lined (600 yards outside fence)
 - 9 Boat Shed 50' x 25' frame - too open for use except in warm weather
 - 10 Smithy 18' x 18' log & clapboarded
 - 11 Shed 50 x 25 - 2 stories, frame, clap & lined - with cellar - for mine
 - 12 Skies 160 x 24 & 63 x 30, 1 1/2 story frame, clap & lined, roofs leaky and both roofs & foundations rotten - not in use
 - 13 Mine Shop 50' x 25' log & clap old - not in use
 - 14 Mens House 26' x 18 1 1/2 story log & clap & lined
- 10 other old & dilapidated buildings inside fort fence
- 5 Shanties occupied by employees outside the fort.

Outstanding Liabilities

1898 3062

John Oman Temp Servt - 1593 14 69

John Frieve 9 94 22

C.M.S. in Or 1900 for furs shipped Apr 1899 55 50 164 41

Figure 3. Plan of main floor of "Depot" warehouse. (Hudson Bay Company Archives)



Figure 4. Pier and "Archway" warehouse at Norway House. (Hudson Bay Company Archives)

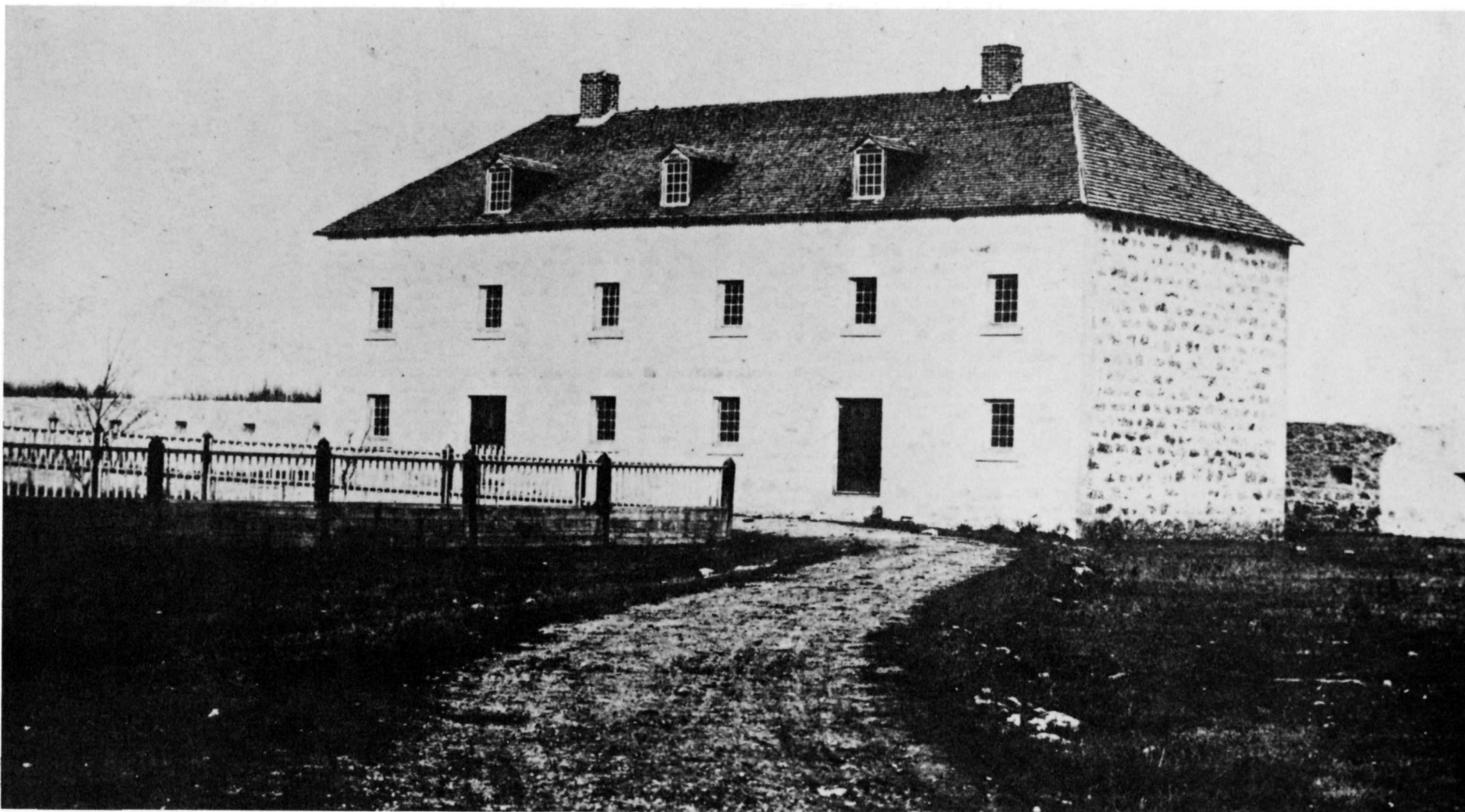


Figure 5. Fur House at Lower Fort Garry, 1858. (Manitoba Archives)

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