

## The Roots of Agriculture: A Historiographical Review of First Nations Agriculture and Government Indian Policy

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**ABSTRACT:** The writers of western Canadian history have been remiss in telling the story of First Nations agricultural pursuits. Despite a farming legacy that predates European arrival by several hundred years, and the establishment of modern farming operations in the 1870s, historians have, at best, ignored and, at worst, dismissed First Nations farming endeavours. It was not until the 1970s when authors such as Noel Dyck and John Taylor, and later J.R. Miller, Helen Buckley and Sarah Carter, began to re-examine post-treaty government policies that First Nations farming experiences were accorded an appraisal which suggested that reserve farmers were dedicated and interested in an agrarian lifestyle. While some specific government agricultural initiatives, such as the File Hills Colony and the Greater Production Campaign, have been the subject of specific studies, generally the agricultural component of this new scholarship has been limited by geographical, chronological or cultural constraints. As a result, the historical appraisal of First Nations agriculture has only just broken ground.

**SOMMAIRE.** Ceux qui ont écrit l'histoire de l'ouest du Canada ont omis de mentionner les entreprises agricoles autochtones. Malgré un héritage fermier qui précède l'arrivée des Européens de plusieurs centaines d'années et l'établissement d'entreprises agricoles modernes dans les années 1870, les historiens ont au mieux ignoré, et au pire méprisé, ces efforts. Ce n'est qu'à partir des années 1970, alors que des auteurs comme Noel Dyck et John Taylor, et plus tard J.R. Miller, Helen Buckley et Sarah Carter, commençaient à réexaminer les politiques gouvernementales qui suivirent les traités, que les expériences agricoles autochtones ont révélé que les fermiers des réserves étaient fortement intéressés par le style de vie agraire. Des initiatives agricoles gouvernementales spécifiques telles que la Colonie des File Hills et la Campagne pour l'augmentation de la production, ont fait l'objet d'études spécifiques; mais la composante agricole de cette nouvelle recherche a généralement souffert de contraintes géographiques, chronologiques ou culturelles. L'évaluation historique de l'agriculture autochtone ne fait donc que commencer.

Historians have largely ignored the agricultural pursuits of the First Nations peoples of the Canadian prairies.<sup>1</sup> Despite the many explorer accounts, ethnographic recordings and archaeological suggestions of an agricultural tradition amongst a number of Aboriginal groups on the northern plains, historians have rarely mentioned First Nations farmers in their annals. More often, the historical record has dismissed the concept of Aboriginal agriculture. Occasionally these dismissals have been subtle, such as the opening lines to eminent Prairie historian W.L. Morton's article "A Century of Plain and Parkland":

One hundred years ago the prairies, the lands rolling upward from the Red River to the foothills of the Rockies, were primitive, with little trace of human habitation. No rut scored the sod, no furrow scarred the long

roll of the prairie... The plains were as thousands of years of geological and climatic change had made them. Men had hardly touched them, for man himself was primitive, in that he had adapted himself to nature, and nature to himself.<sup>2</sup>

The flowing, poetic description of an empty land inhabited by peoples who could not conceive of utilizing it in an agricultural sense that Morton put forth in 1969 is matched by the blunter dismissal issued by early Saskatchewan historian John Hawkes, who stated: "The Indian was not a natural farmer. He was a born hunter and warrior. Century upon century had ingrained in him the nomadic instinct; steady labour, so many hours a day, week in and week out, was as foreign to his nature as a dog kennel to a fox."<sup>3</sup> The concept these authors suggested, that the First Nations peoples had no tradition, interest or aptitude for agriculture, is incorrect.

Agriculture is defined as the cultivation of soil and the rearing of animals. Archaeologists suggest that people first began to domesticate plants and animals approximately 12,000 years ago. During the succeeding 8,000 years, most peoples around the world adopted agriculture as their primary livelihood. By 7,000 years ago, the first cultivated plants, gourds, were being grown in midwestern parts of North America.<sup>4</sup> The crop most often associated with the Aboriginal peoples of North America, maize or corn, was first grown approximately 2,500 years ago in what is now the southwestern United States. During the succeeding 2,000 years, the growing of maize spread throughout the eastern and midwestern parts of the continent. Early European explorers noted the extensive agricultural pursuits of eastern Aboriginal peoples, such as the Huron living in the Great Lakes region and the Mandan who resided along the Missouri River in what is now North Dakota.

Agriculture was not prevalent on the Canadian prairies, but it did exist. Archaeological research indicated that corn was being grown in southern Manitoba by 1,400 AD.<sup>5</sup> Near the town of Lockport the remains of corn, large storage pits and hoes made from bison shoulder blades were found during the 1980s. While the evidence does not indicate who these farmers were, patterns found on pottery remains associated with the Lockport site were similar to those associated with agricultural groups that lived in northern and central Minnesota.<sup>6</sup> The agricultural pursuits along the Red River appear to have been abandoned during the fifteenth century at the height of a global climate change called the "Little Ice Age." This phenomenon, which affected temperatures around the world for over 400 years, resulted in short, cool summers which made farming in Manitoba impossible.<sup>7</sup> By the time Europeans arrived on the Canadian plains, agriculture was not part of the daily lives of the aboriginal residents. However, as Flynn and Simms noted, "local Aboriginal peoples were both familiar with the cultivation of numerous plants by their neighbours and trading partners along the Missouri River, its tributaries, and other rivers in the vicinity and [...] they cultivated fields of their own at various times and in various locations over a 400-year period prior to contact with Europeans."<sup>8</sup>

The written record supports the assertion made by Flynn and Simms that the Aboriginal groups on the Canadian plains were familiar with plant cultivation. In 1733 Pierre de La Vérendrye and his sons travelled overland from New France to initiate a French fur trade on the western plains. In reporting the establishment of a fort along the Red River, La Vérendrye noted that "the Cree chief intended to



remain with the elders of his people near the French fort all the summer, and that he was even going to raise wheat, seed of which had been supplied him by the *Sieur de la Vérendrye*.<sup>9</sup> In 1734, La Vérendrye travelled south with a group of Cree on their annual excursion to purchase corn from the "Ouchipouennes."<sup>10</sup> Of the Ouchipouennes, La Vérendrye noted that fields of corn, beans, peas, oats and other grains were raised by men of the community for sale to neighbouring groups.<sup>11</sup> The agricultural tradition of the Dakota is extensive. Anthropologist Bryce Little writes that the practice of agriculture greatly predates the arrival of Europeans and was such an integral part of the society that the Dakota name for the month of June translates as "the moon when the seedpods of the Indian turnip mature."<sup>12</sup> Little later asserts that the shift by the Dakota peoples in the late nineteenth century from a fur-trade economy to agriculture "was more a case of re-employment of a known practice rather than any result of white-acculturation."<sup>13</sup> This tradition followed the Dakota onto the Canadian plains, and as late as 1951, a distant variety of "Indian Corn" was noted in the possession of Dakota peoples residing in Canada.<sup>14</sup> Even among the Blackfoot, the group who at contact seemed most distant from farming activities, evidence of an agricultural tradition can be found. In 1879, the significant chiefs of the Peigan, Blood and Blackfoot signed a statement that asserts that their ancestors were tillers of the soil.<sup>15</sup>

With this agricultural tradition amongst the Aboriginal peoples of the plains, one may ask why the only full-time practitioners at the time of European contact were the peoples of the Missouri River valley? Two possibly linked suggestions have been put forth. The most significant suggestion is the influence of the climatic phenomenon known as the Little Ice Age. A worldwide event, the Little Ice Age was a period of slightly reduced global mean temperature that lasted from approximately 1350 to 1850. According to geographer Jean Grove, the impact of this climatic episode upon agricultural pursuits in the Northern Hemisphere was dramatic. Throughout the Scandinavian countries, it is estimated that almost half of the medieval farms were abandoned during the period because the upper limit of the altitude above sea level at which cultivation could be practiced was lowered by over 150 metres.<sup>16</sup> The Canadian plains are believed to have been affected in a similar manner.

Historian James MacGregor suggested an alternative theory regarding the discontinuation of agricultural pursuits. He asserted that bison populations rose dramatically due to some environmental occurrence. "When this happened, they (the First Nations peoples of the northern plains) became nomadic buffalo hunters and abandoned their agricultural way of life."<sup>17</sup> The suggestion by MacGregor would seem to support the scientific data of the Little Ice Age impact upon arable land of western Canada. Bison are well adapted to living in cooler environments and would have definitely been an "easier" food source when compared to the numerous agricultural failures which would have occurred with the Little Ice Age climatic impact.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the Little Ice Age influence was diminishing, and the pursuit of an agriculturally based economy, though difficult, became again a possibility. Concurrently, bison populations began to decline due to increased hunting and other human activities in the plains region. The thoughts of the Aboriginal residents again turned to agriculture.

In the Qu'Appelle valley in 1857, Charles Pratt, a missionary of Cree-Assiniboine descent, commented to James Hector, a geologist on the Palliser

Expedition, that the Cree in the area were growing concerned about the scarcity of buffalo: they were "anxious to try agriculture... (and) would make a start on it if they only had spades, hoes and ploughs."<sup>18</sup> Two years later, Hector was told of a similar request by the Stoney people living near Howse Pass in what is now Alberta.<sup>19</sup> Also in 1859, a scientist exploring the prairies on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company, Henry Youle Hind, noted a letter written from Chief Peguis to the governor of the Company. The greater part of the letter discussed concerns regarding the fulfilment of the promises outlined in the 1817 treaty between Peguis and Lord Selkirk. Peguis's main areas of concern were the size of the growing settlement and his own desire to be furnished with "mechanics and implements to help our families in forming settlements."<sup>20</sup>

Just over a decade later, as the bison populations continued to decline, the plains peoples expressed a heightened interest in establishing a modern agricultural lifestyle. The 1871 statements to Governor Archibald made by Chief Sweetgrass and other Cree leaders all emphasised the desperate desire to pursue subsistence farming.<sup>21</sup> Another Cree Chief who had an interest in agriculture at that time was Ahtahkakoop. Living along the shores of Fir Lake, Ahtahkakoop and his band made their first attempts at cultivating the soil in 1872.<sup>22</sup> In 1874, realizing that his people needed training in agricultural practices, Ahtahkakoop sought the assistance of John Hines, a missionary who had come to the west seeking to teach farming to Indian peoples. The band, along with Hines and his assistants, relocated to Sandy Lake in 1875 and that year cleared enough land to produce 180 bushels of wheat and barley.<sup>23</sup> The interest these leaders and other plains residents showed in agriculture significantly influenced the approach and desire of the First Nations people to negotiate the treaties with the government.

The early 1870s were an extremely difficult time for the First Nations peoples of the plains: bison populations were in freefall, causing hunger amongst all groups. An outbreak of smallpox in 1870 struck the prairies, causing a great number of deaths amongst the resident groups, particularly the Blackfoot. The year 1870 also witnessed what would be the last large-scale battle between First Nations groups on the Canadian plains when a group of Cree and Saulteaux attacked the Blood and Peigan camped near what is now Lethbridge, Alberta. Ever increasing numbers of Europeans were arriving in the West, starting farms and businesses. In 1870 the government of Canada acquired the North-West Territories from the Hudson's Bay Company and established the province of Manitoba with no consultation with the First Nations residents. Stories of the bitter encounters between the Aboriginal residents and the military were arriving regularly from the United States. It was in this atmosphere that treaties One through Seven were conceived and negotiated.

For several decades, the standard historical reference on this period as well as the treaty negotiations was George F. Stanley's *The Birth of Western Canada*, published in 1936. In this work, Stanley devoted significant attention to what he describes as "The Indian Problem." The problem, according to Stanley, was the inability of the First Nations peoples to understand or adapt to the changes the superior white society was bringing to western Canada.<sup>24</sup> He suggested that during the fur trade period, the plains peoples had come to view white society, personified by the Hudson's Bay Company, as "representative of a superior civilization and the embodiment of fair dealing."<sup>25</sup> The growing incursion of less scrupulous traders



and of white settlers during the 19th century left the "hapless" First Nations peoples confused about how to deal with the evolving situation.<sup>26</sup> When these situations were combined with the previously noted concerns of the 1870s, Stanley claimed that it became the task of the government to calm the "excited spirits" by determining "a policy which would ensure a continuance of these peaceful relations, convince the Indians of the government's good faith and assist them over the difficult transition from savagery to civilization."<sup>27</sup> The government, according to Stanley, chose a benevolent approach that would extinguish First Nations title to the land while establishing the peoples upon reserves. On these reserves they could be taught agriculture and religion in relative safety from the vices of European society.

Stanley's interpretation of the treaty process was to remain virtually unchallenged until the 1970s. When the reappraisals came, they focussed on two themes: What role or influence did the First Nations peoples have in the drafting of the treaties, and Did they have a clear understanding of treaty process and the documents they were signing? Noel Dyck was one of the first to grapple with these questions. In his 1970 MA thesis, "The Administration of Federal Indian Aid in the North-West Territories, 1879-1885," he concluded that the downfall of the initial reserve agricultural program was primarily a result of the government's drive for economy. Dyck also posed the question of First Nations involvement in the treaty process,<sup>28</sup> suggesting that the First Nations population was interested in pursuing the treaty process, though their concept of the purpose of the treaty was different than that of the government.<sup>29</sup> While he is not sure whether the Aboriginal peoples were clear about the full ramifications of the treaties, his posing of the question paved the way for others to explore the issue.<sup>30</sup> John Taylor deliberated the question of the First Nations role in his 1975 paper "Canada's Northwest Indian Policy in the 1870s: Traditional Premises and Necessary Innovations," in which he challenged the concept promoted by Stanley that the government was completely responsible for the "wise" and "benevolent" treaties. Rather, he found that for Treaties 1, 2 and 3, many of the important treaty terms, such as agricultural aid, were not in the original government treaty drafts, but were added as "outside promises" after negotiation with the First Nations representatives.<sup>31</sup> The involvement of First Nations peoples in the treaty process described by Taylor, later referred to as "active ... agents" by J.R. Miller, has been supported by several authors.<sup>32</sup>

The debate regarding the understanding the Aboriginal treaty signatories had of the meaning and intent of the treaties has been more pronounced. An important aspect of this discussion has been to move past Stanley's notion of non-comprehension by the Native peoples and focus on the impact of cultural differences upon the interpretation of treaty terms and the corresponding process. John Taylor, in a 1981 article, noted a number of statements made by treaty signatories that seemed to indicate differing interpretations of the concept of "surrender" and the signing over of subsurface mineral rights. He felt, however, that the First Nations interpretive evidence is generally inadequate and composed of too many conflicting views to provide an effective challenge to the treaty text.<sup>33</sup> Alternatively, John Tobias believed that the Plains Cree leaders had a clear understanding of what they wished to gain from the treaty process and followed a strategy of negotiation based upon the tactics they had successfully used for two centuries in the fur trade.<sup>34</sup> These efforts were for naught, found Tobias, as the government used political, legal

and physical forces to eliminate the Cree interpretations of the treaties, with the goal of obtaining complete control over the Cree peoples. In a similar vein, J.R. Miller found the entire process doomed to difficulty, as the First Nations peoples believed they were establishing a treaty of friendship, assistance and mutual land usage while the government viewed the treaties as surrender of all Aboriginal title to the prairies.<sup>35</sup> It was under this cloud of misunderstanding that the First Nations peoples began their full-scale pursuit of an agrarian lifestyle.

The historical literature on the immediate post-treaty agricultural endeavors of the plains reserve residents follows a similar pattern to that on the treaty process. Again, George Stanley provided the benchmark analysis in his *The Birth of Western Canada*, which was to stand for several decades. His interpretation was not positive. Stanley asserted that the childlike and nomadic nature of the First Nations people was not conducive to an agricultural lifestyle. Their desire for the good old days of savage self-reliance, suggested Stanley, caused most of the reserve residents to be despondent and resentful towards the government's policy.<sup>36</sup> As he poignantly stated, "as long as the herds of bison tramped the prairies and the antelope sped across the plains, they were loath to abandon the thrilling life of the chase for the tedious existence of agriculture."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, according to Stanley, in spite of the tenacious efforts of the church and the government officials, the inability of the reserve residents to adapt to the new lifestyle caused the early failure of agricultural programs.

The 1970s witnessed the beginnings of a significant re-evaluation of Stanley's view that First Nations peoples were unsuited for farming. One of the first to present a revised view of Aboriginal farmers was Noel Dyck. In his aforementioned 1970 thesis, Dyck concluded that "the greatest obstacle in the way of the reserve agricultural program was the government's willingness to place considerations of economy above all else."<sup>38</sup> Sadly, Dyck went on, "Indians who were fed so little that they remained in a constant state of hunger could not become self-sufficient farmers."<sup>39</sup> He further explored this idea in "An Opportunity Lost: The Initiative of the Reserve Agricultural Programme in the Prairie West," where he examined why the Canadian government between 1880 and 1885 pursued policies which undermined the reserve resident's attempts to establish an agrarian economy. He began by outlining how many of the problems could be traced back to the differing impetuses for both groups to enter into the treaty negotiations. According to Dyck, the government was merely interested in gaining control of the West as frugally and expediently as possible<sup>40</sup>; alternatively, First Nations people viewed the treaties as the beginning of a long-term alliance.<sup>41</sup> As a result, Dyck asserted, the government reluctantly began to fulfil the treaty requirements to assist in establishing reserve agriculture only after being forced to pay for massive amounts of relief supplies to feed the prairie Indians in 1879.<sup>42</sup> The remainder of the article summarized the various means by which, in Dyck's view, the government mismanaged the administration of the agricultural program and thwarted the real interest the reserve residents had in pursuing an agricultural lifestyle. To Dyck, displaying power and control over the Aboriginal peoples was the ostensible goal of the government policies: the government missed the fact that the Cree were agitating for agricultural assistance—not because of the change in lifestyle prompted by reserve life. If these agricultural needs had been met, the "agitating" would not have occurred.<sup>43</sup> The result of the government's focus on control was that "the farming conducted on prairie reserves after 1885 was no longer the achievement of Indians who were seeking to become



self-sufficient members of a new society; instead, it comprised the carefully supervised activities of a people who had become the involuntary wards of the government."<sup>44</sup>

One author who became synonymous with this re-interpretation was Sarah Carter. Her 1983 article titled "Agriculture and Agitation on the Oak River Dakota Reserve, 1875-1895" was her first contribution to the new approach of historical writing in this area. In this work, Carter repeatedly challenged Stanley's conclusions with examples of hard work, farming experimentation, and crop successes by the residents of the Oak River reserve. But in spite of the interest and aptitude First Nations people displayed during the first decade of agricultural experimentation, by the mid 1890s the reserve was no longer producing wheat crops. The reason for the downfall of the agricultural program, Carter found, was a combination of poor environmental conditions and repressive government policies.<sup>45</sup>

Carter further explored one of these repressive government policies in her 1989 article "Two Acres and a Cow: 'Peasant' Farming for the Indians of the Northwest, 1889-97," where she examined the implementation and impact of the "peasant" farming policy introduced by Commissioner Hayter Reed in 1889. Under this policy, reserve agriculturalists were forced to abandon the use of mechanical equipment and revert to the use of simple hand tools to plant and harvest their crops. The implementation of the policy, Carter discovered, "had a stupefying effect on Indian farming, nipping reserve agricultural development in the bud."<sup>46</sup> Throughout the article, Carter suggested that the policy was implemented to break down tribal unity and promote individualism as well as to reduce the amount of land the band could effectively put to crop and, in doing so, create "surplus" lands which could be surrendered and sold.<sup>47</sup> As well, the policy prevented the reserve farmers from competing with white farmers for the limited markets. Reed defended his policy by suggesting that in order to become "civilized" the reserve residents needed to start with the basic tools of agriculture and "progress" to the use of machinery. He suggested that the use of machinery would interrupt the steps necessary to advance a civilization and would cause the First Nations peoples to become lazy. Despite numerous reports from reserve agents and farm instructors about the detrimental effects the policy was having upon the agricultural program, Reed persisted in pursuing the policy because of political pressures from white settlers, widespread naivety regarding western Canadian agriculture, and his driving belief that "Indians were incapable of understanding these concepts, and could not operate farms as business enterprises."<sup>48</sup>

In 1990, Sarah Carter released *Lost Harvests*, which remains the most significant work published in the area of First Nations agriculture. The book examined the agricultural development on prairie reserves from 1874 until World War I, with particular emphasis upon the reserves within the boundaries of Treaty 4. Thematically, the book concentrates upon an in-depth exploration of the hypothesis she explored in her earlier articles, namely that repressive government policies and actions were responsible for undermining the earnest efforts of reserve residents to establish commercial farming operations. The initial reserve agricultural policy, which Carter labels the Home Farm Experiment, was implemented in 1879. The program involved establishing 'home farms' on numerous reserves, within which government farm instructors could teach the reserve residents farming methods via example. Problems with weather, slow-maturing seed and lack of markets that affected all

western farmers, according to Carter, were compounded by the agent positions being staffed by ill-trained patronage appointees from Eastern Canada, who knew nothing about prairie farming nor the First Nations peoples whom they were to instruct.<sup>49</sup> Overshadowing the aforementioned problems, says Carter, was the "work for rations" policy through which the reserve residents were expected to meet levels of both work and food production before government rations would be issued. The unrealistic expectations of this policy led to starvation and discontent on the reserves, as well as doubts and feelings of mistrust by both the government officials and the reserve residents about the dedication to fulfilling the treaty promises.

The "Home Farm Experiment" was phased out in the mid-1880s and replaced by the 'Peasant' farming policy discussed earlier. Also at this time, the government implemented a permit system by which the agents assumed control for selling First Nations crops and a pass system that restricted reserve residents' movement off the reserves—repressive actions which according to Carter "placed restraints above and beyond those shared with other farmers in the West."<sup>50</sup> The government introduced also a policy of severalty onto the reserves. This policy of subdividing the reserve into individual farms, according to Carter, was implemented by Commissioner Hayter Reed because of his belief that the best way to undermine the tribal system was via individual farmers building self-reliance on their own land plots.<sup>51</sup> More importantly, "severalty would confine the Indians within circumscribed boundaries and their 'surplus' land could be defined and sold."<sup>52</sup>

Carter also explored a secondary theme of First Nations protest against the restrictive policies as they were implemented during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. She found that the reserve residents quickly came to believe they had been misled by treaty commissioners about the potential of developing an agrarian economy. Numerous examples of letters and comments of protest to government officials and missionaries are noted, protests which were largely ignored or dismissed as being spawned by laziness, incompetence and the inclination of Aboriginal peoples to complain. Despite these rebuffs, Carter wrote, "At no time, however, did Indians adopt a policy of passive submission, disinterest, or apathy. The tradition of protest continued."<sup>53</sup>

Not surprisingly, the results of her study are similar to the conclusions she drew in her earlier articles. As she notes in her conclusion, "histories written until very recently, obscure or overlook the Indians' positive response to agriculture in earlier years. Equally obscured and forgotten has been the role of Canadian government policy in restricting and undermining reserve agriculture."<sup>54</sup>

While Sarah Carter has been the dominant author in the field of First Nations agriculture, others have been active. J.R. Miller's *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens* (1989) looked at agriculture as part of his survey of relations between the Native and non-Native populations in Canada from 1600 to present. Unfortunately, the broad scope of the work permitted only a few pages within a chapter entitled "The Policy of the Bible and the Plough," devoted to agriculture. The chapter title refers to Miller's idea that the federal government, through the use of coercive powers, forced the reserve residents to take up agriculture as part of their assimilation mandate.<sup>55</sup> Force was necessary because not all prairie Indians were enthused about adopting the whiteman's ways.<sup>56</sup> Contrary to Dyck, who saw the government acting out of the need to control people, Miller followed Carter's idea that most policies were driven by one political expediency: keeping the white voters happy.<sup>57</sup>



While extremely restricted in his look at the subject, a number of positives emerge from Miller's work. Notably, he accounts for variability. As mentioned earlier, Miller noted that not all First Nations peoples wanted to become farmers and indicated that poor climate was a contributing factor to the failure of the agricultural policy.<sup>58</sup> Like Dyck, Miller mentioned one reserve where success was gained, but he did not explore why this success was garnered in that location. Miller also provided no specific dates, only references such as "late 1880s"; having dates would be helpful in comparing the farming experiences with concurrent events so as to evaluate why success came or not. In this case a broad, thin look at agricultural policies paints the entire prairies with one brush.

The approach taken by Miller is almost duplicated in Helen Buckley's *From Wooden Ploughs to Welfare*. Like Miller's, Buckley's book is a survey of government policy; however, she focussed only upon policies and interactions in the Prairie Provinces. This more limited scope allows a somewhat more in-depth look at some specifics of western reserve agriculture.

Unlike Miller, and more similar to Dyck, Buckley found that the government's desire for control was at the root of failure<sup>59</sup>; specifically, she suggested that the real holder of power within the government structure was the local agent. Referring to successful agriculturalists, Buckley asserts that "their success was, in essence, another aspect of control, for the grants or loans needed to make money out of farming were available to a select few, handpicked by the agent."<sup>60</sup> This last comment provided a possible answer to the hanging questions of both Dyck and Miller regarding the cases of sporadic agrarian success. Similarly, Buckley, like Miller, suggested climate as a possible cause of limited success down to the late 1890's. Illness and unrefined technologies are also suggested as limiting factors that affected not only Aboriginal farmers, but also the previously unmentioned early white agriculturalists in the region.<sup>61</sup>

Buckley provided interesting insight into the reserve agriculture. Most important was the dedication to bringing out individualism: faceless, unified-in-action government officials were not pitted against equally faceless, unified-in-action Aboriginal peoples. Buckley noted that some agents acted as individuals; she also explored the mindset of Superintendent Reed so as to explain why the peasant agriculture policy was implemented.<sup>62</sup> As well, she acknowledged that some First Nations gave up agriculture in the 1890s.<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, the work is still a survey piece and, like Miller's, glosses over many dates and subtle changes in policy.

Another author who has contributed to the scholarship regarding Aboriginal agriculture is Peter Elias. In his book *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest*, Elias chronicled the challenging experiences of various bands of Dakota during their efforts to establish a land and economic base on the Canadian prairies. Elias, like most of the other authors, found that the early successes of the Dakota agricultural initiatives were hampered by a harsh environment and repressive government interference. Unlike Miller and Carter, and similar to Dyck, Elias suggested that the government interference was based upon a desire to control all Indian matters on the prairies via physical presence, repressive policies, and the "coercive power of the law."<sup>64</sup> Though these governmental intrusions, Elias found, did serve to limit the agricultural potential of the farming Dakota bands, farmers continued to experience success and were able to develop moderately sized, small-profit agricultural operations that were perpetuated until the time of writing.<sup>65</sup> Any cultural or

economic success, he concluded, came "when the Dakota were independent to act within the general framework of Canadian law."<sup>66</sup>

A comparison of the pieces by Dyck, Miller, Elias and Buckley to the works by Carter highlight a number of subtle, yet important, differences in approach and findings. Unlike the other authors, Carter seldom referred to First Nations agriculture with terms like "successful," preferring to describe the reserve agricultural pursuits with terms like "accomplished" or "improved." To utilize the term "success" would undermine her primary theory that "government policies made it virtually impossible for reserve agriculture to succeed."<sup>67</sup> In addressing why the government pursued these policies, Carter did not present a clear statement. She did note that some policies regarding the use of reserve land were influenced by white settlers, similar to the political expediency argument expounded by Miller<sup>68</sup>; she also discussed the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) negotiations with the militia and the NWMP to help enforce Indian policy<sup>69</sup>; as well, Carter examined the deal struck between the DIA and Battleford merchants that prohibited the reserve residents from selling grain in the local market.<sup>70</sup>

These latter two points suggest a conspiracy against the First Nations peoples, but Carter did not tie these ideas together in any stated conclusion. This lack of a stated conclusion is seen in other situations in the book: a lot of information, with specific details, is presented, but readers are often left to their own devices to make connections other than to farmer persistence and government repression. Beyond these differences in focus and approach, the works of these five authors provided a viable alternative to the Stanley interpretation of early reserve agriculture; most notable is the repudiation of Stanley's notion that reserve residents were not interested in farming, thus accounting for their lack of success. Miller discussed the idea of the First Nations as being "active agents," aggressive and interested in securing the benefits of the whiteman's world.<sup>71</sup> Elias described the long history of successful agricultural pursuits the Dakota had previous to coming to Canada, which they were anxious to perpetuate if the government had assisted with adequate land and equipment.<sup>72</sup> Dyck, more directly, stated that "there is evidence not only of the willingness of prairie Indians to embark upon an agricultural way of live, but also of their continuing concern from the time of negotiation of the treaties in the mid 1870s to prepare for this eventuality."<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Buckley explained, "setbacks were due not to want of character or training, as many believe to this day, but to the economic and climatic conditions that made it a high risk enterprise for Indians and settlers alike."<sup>74</sup> Sarah Carter dedicated much of her introduction to renouncing the concept of Aboriginal lack of interest and exploring ideas similar to those mentioned by the other authors. Consensus also exists amongst the revisionist authors that the frugality of the federal government in the area of Aboriginal affairs contributed to the limited growth of reserve agriculture. Buckley asserted, in reference to treaty negotiations, that "the terms were set with a view to minimizing obligations in the light of commitments already made to the construction of the railway and other costly enterprises."<sup>75</sup> Noel Dyck was even more forthright, stating that "the drive for economy in Indian administration systematically retarded agricultural development."<sup>76</sup> This frugality in fulfilling the treaty requirements, according to the authors, facilitated the failure of reserve agriculture.<sup>77</sup>

It is interesting to note that the experiences of the First Nations residents of the Canadian prairies were mirrored by those living on the American plains. In



"Talking with the Plow: Agricultural Policy and Indian Farming in the Canadian and U.S. Prairies," Rebecca Bateman compared the experiences of the Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples of Oklahoma with those of reserve residents of western Canada. In both areas Bateman found that the respective governments enacted policies and procedures, such as the non-use of labour-saving equipment and severalty, with the joint goals of creating excess lands to sell to white settlers and to create "the eventual cultural disappearance of Native people at any rate, rendering any permanent administration of their affairs ultimately unnecessary."<sup>78</sup>

A similar cross-border comparison was authored by Hana Samek in *The Blackfoot Confederacy 1880-1920*. In this work, Samek looked at the similarities and differences of the Blackfoot peoples who reside on both sides of the forty-ninth parallel, suggesting that the Canadian system of reserve administration, when compared to its counterpart in the United States during the same period, had a number of advantages.<sup>79</sup> However, none of these advantages made much of a difference when both administrations launched badly conceived and badly managed agricultural programs on reserves which were unsuitable to grain farming. As a result, "many Blackfeet simply gave up on farming" and the subsequent reserve allotments and surrenders "further impeded the development of a reservation economy."<sup>80</sup>

Thomas Wessel made similar findings. In "Agriculture on the Reservation: The Case of the Blackfeet, 1885-1935," Wessel noted that the Blackfoot people of Montana were victims of repressive rations policies and enforced agricultural projects which were inappropriate to their environmental circumstances. As a result, "instead of independent agricultural communities, the government created pockets of rural poverty physically fractionalized and politically factionalized."<sup>81</sup>

In 1987, R. Douglas Hurt published *Indian Agriculture in America*. In many ways his work, a survey of the agricultural experiences of American reserve residents from treaty into the twentieth century, is similar to Carter's *Lost Harvests*; the examples of repressive government policies implemented by naive and often indifferent officials are also similar. The biggest difference between Hurt's work and that of Carter and the other recent authors is his Stanleyesque assertion that "the difficulty of cultural change ... was most significant in the failure of the old nomadic and hunting tribes to adopt a whiteman's agricultural way of life."<sup>82</sup> Beyond this difference, Hurt concluded "severalty, cultural resistance, and the western environment, together with federal leasing and heirship policies and inadequate agricultural support, placed the Indians, not on the white man's road to self-sufficiency and civilization, but on the road to peonage."<sup>83</sup> Hurt's findings are similar to those suggested by Wessel and Bateman, and would indicate that the immediate post-treaty agricultural experiences for most of the First Nations peoples in North America were, unfortunately, similar.

Historians have been rather remiss in appraising the aboriginal farming activities that occurred on the plains after the turn of the century. The plethora of books and articles that examine the experiences of immigrant agriculturalists during the early part of the twentieth century rarely mention Native people's endeavours and, if they do, only as a cursory note. Even amongst the earlier-mentioned works of Buckley, Miller and Carter, the evaluation of post-1900 agriculture is limited.

Within this scant history, two themes dominate the discussion. All the authors find that the government's primary focus during the period was to encourage the reserve residents to surrender land from their reserves so that the growing number

of white settlers could make use of these properties.<sup>84</sup> Both Miller and Carter follow their earlier explorations of repressive government policies by noting the lengths to which the government went to encourage land surrenders. These actions included changing the Indian Act in 1906 and 1911 to make the process easier.<sup>85</sup> Under these amendments, the government was able to: release to the reserve residents up to 50 percent of the land sale monies in cash, a tempting situation for a cash-poor society; see reserve land expropriated for the use of land development companies and municipalities; and remove reserve residents from reserves near communities with over 8,000 residents.

The second theme to emerge involves the First Nations' resistance to the increasing government incursion. James Dempsey stated that during the period after the turn of the century, "government domination had reached its peak and resistance was at a low ebb."<sup>86</sup> Miller's comments would support this assertion as he suggested that cases of successful resistance were few as the government would use "tools of compulsion,"<sup>87</sup> specifically, changes to the Indian Act which would impede or eliminate the reserve residents' ability to challenge the Department's desires. Carter's views on this issue are similar: "Indian resistance to surrender was generally pronounced and adamant to begin with but was generally broken down through a variety of tactics."<sup>88</sup>

The period also featured the establishment of the File Hills Colony in Saskatchewan. Created in 1901, the colony was the brainchild of W.M. Graham, then an Indian agent at the Qu'Appelle agency; it was a farming settlement composed of select graduates of the local residential schools. These young men and women were brought together, expected to marry, set up modern and successful farms on pre-selected plots within the colony, and live according to the Euro-Canadian ideals they had been taught in school. Based upon these objectives, E. Brian Titley in his article "W.M. Graham: Indian Agent Extraordinaire" found that the colony was "undoubtedly a success."<sup>89</sup> In "Demonstrating Success: The File Hills Farm Colony," Sarah Carter agreed that, from an agricultural perspective, the colony was successful; however, in perpetuating her earlier-mentioned themes of repressive government policies and Aboriginal resistance, she noted numerous activities that were forbidden in the colony.<sup>90</sup> She also provided examples of resistance amongst the colonists to these suppressive rules, specifically those involving the continuance of traditional ceremonies.<sup>91</sup> However, government reaction to opposition was the same here as on the other reserves, and Carter found that objections and grievances were ignored or else met with changed policies so as to secure government success.<sup>92</sup> An alternate point of view regarding the File Hills Colony is expressed by Eleanor Brass in *I Walk in Two Worlds*. As one of the first children born on the File Hills Colony, Brass's 1987 autobiography offers a rare glimpse at a First Nations perspective of the impact of these policies. Generally, Brass reflects positively upon the File Hills Colony, providing numerous examples of the agricultural and economic successes her family and neighbours enjoyed. Her view of the repressive and paternal administration by Graham and other government officials is very matter-of-fact and denotes no sense of grievance; for example, in referring to the earliest days of the colony, she comments that "Mr. Graham made his own plans which were felt to be quite strict at times. A few beginners could not stand up to these rules and soon left for other parts."<sup>93</sup>

Another early twentieth-century reserve agricultural program that has been



accorded some investigation is the Greater Production Campaign (GPC), a federal government agricultural program launched in the early 1918, ostensibly to increase food production across the nation for the good of the war effort. However, several authors have suggested that the program implemented on the western Canadian reserves was problematic.

In *Lost Harvests*, Sarah Carter devoted two pages to the GPC, with particular attention to the repressive aspects of the policy. She found that the project "was plagued by problems of mismanagement and the financial returns were not impressive. The experiment was soon phased out."<sup>94</sup> Miller, holding a similar view to Carter's, briefly described the "ill-starred" 'Greater Production' scheme through which Ottawa could "help themselves" to reserve lands for the good of the war effort.<sup>95</sup> James Dempsey is of similar mind, stating that the GPC "was an indication of how easily the government could override Native rights by simply amending the Indian Act."<sup>96</sup>

Three authors have a slightly different interpretation of the GPC. E. Brian Titley devoted a number of pages to the campaign in his book *A Narrow Vision*, which examined the public career of Duncan Campbell Scott, long-time head of the Department of Indian Affairs. Although a good portion of the discussion is dedicated to the strained relationship between Scott and William Graham, the individual appointed commissioner for the campaign in 1918, Titley also provided a good summary of the program: while expressing concern over the "gradual erosion of Indian control of their reserve lands,"<sup>97</sup> he concluded that these extraordinary intrusions were understandable in a time of war and justified by the economic success of the campaign.

In *Canadian Indian Policy During the Inter-War Years 1918-1939*, J.L. Taylor considered the contemporary arguments both for and against the campaign. In his appraisal, Taylor dismissed the arguments made by detractors of the program as narrowly focussed and politically motivated, believing that "it is difficult to establish criteria for success in connection with a project like Greater Production."<sup>98</sup> He also states that the GPC did not result in permanent loss of land by the reserve residents.<sup>99</sup>

The first scholarly review of any of the primary documents associated with the GPC program was authored by anthropologist A.D. Fisher. In the article, published in volume 4, number 1 of the 1974 *Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology*, Fisher examined the views and concerns expressed by R.N. Wilson, in his 1921 memorandum "Our Betrayed Wards." R.N. Wilson had been hired by the residents of the Blood Reserve in Alberta in 1920 to assist them in challenging the federal government to cancel the program. In his critique, Fisher stated that Wilson was correct in asserting that the implementation of the GPC on the Blood Reserve resulted in the destruction of the reserve's agricultural base. While much of the blame can be attached to the new government policies, Fisher cautioned, there were several circumstances that aggravated the situation. He suggested that minister of the Interior, Arthur Meighen, while a capable man, was too busy and too far removed from Alberta to know the impact of the Act. As well, overzealous agents at the local level and poor weather conditions also contributed to the industry's collapse.

Following the discussion of these earlier works, which merely summarized the program, the present author attempted a more detailed analysis of the Greater Production Campaign in "Better than a Few Squirrels": The Greater Production

Campaign on the First Nations Reserves of the Canadian Prairies." In this study I examined the political situation that allowed the program to come into place and the methods by which W.M. Graham was able to gain, and use, significant coercive power over the lives of the reserve residents in the implementation of the GPC. However, although Graham produced numerous accounts of the tremendous benefits the First Nations farmers were reaping from the program, I found that the GPC "served largely to advance the career of W.M. Graham and to pay for departmental expenses" and provided few benefits beyond what the government was already supposed to be doing to promote reserve agriculture.<sup>100</sup> In spite of the power Graham came to wield, I suggest that the reserve residents did offer significant resistance to the program, the most important being the struggle launched by the Blood Reserve: not only did the Blood people take the significant step of hiring a legal advisor—they were also able to bring their concerns to national attention, force a meeting with the minister of Indian Affairs, and "prompt the Department to take the unusual step of changing the department's policies for the benefit of the reserve residents."<sup>101</sup>

The sum of scholarship on the GPC, excepting to some degree the work by this author, is a short list of publications that essentially survey the subject, leaving many details of the campaign unexplored. Such is the case for most aspects of First Nations agricultural history: most studies of agricultural pursuits are considered within the framework of a larger study of government policies. While agriculture is often a central feature of the policy analysis related to western reserves, as is the case in the works of Dyck, Buckley and Miller, the level of exploration of the subject is somewhat minimal as the agricultural policies are studied in conjunction with other socioeconomic initiatives of the government. Only Sarah Carter explored the topic in any depth. However, her focus upon the dual themes of government repression and First Nations resistance, while important avenues of approach, do somewhat limit the scope of her studies. Aside from agents, senior bureaucrats and other government officials, what other individuals could have induced success or failure? Did any reserve residents influence failure?<sup>102</sup> These questions need to be explored in greater detail. As well, why do discussions of agriculture within the published literature essentially all end in 1920? In their defence, the authors might offer that the government was no longer interested in promoting agriculture—hence the selling and leasing of reserve land after 1896.<sup>103</sup> However, new reserve agriculture policies continued to be introduced, and agriculture is still a significant resource base on most of the prairie reserves.

The modern period needs research. The field of historical study of First Nations agriculture has grown greatly during the past 20 years. From the general acceptance of Stanley's concept of the First Nations as an uninterested group who could neither comprehend nor adapt to agriculture, the field has blossomed to include a number of works which identify the long association and interest the Aboriginal peoples of the prairies have had with agriculture, and the numerous obstacles they have had to battle in an attempt to practice an agrarian lifestyle. However, in spite of this new literature, the history of the reserve agriculture traditions and the importance of agriculture within the economic and social spheres of the reserve residents are still not truly appreciated, particularly by the government. Consider the recently completed Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. After several years of research, in November of 1996 the commission released a final report



containing over 4,000 pages of background information and recommendations on the various aspects of the past relationships between Aboriginal peoples, non-Aboriginal peoples and the levels of government as well as recommendations on how to redefine these relationships. A significant portion of the report deals with land issues, yet agriculture is accorded little more than passing comment within the historical background of the paper. Obviously more work is still needed to enhance our understanding of the significance of agriculture to the lives of First Nations peoples. A new field of historical study has been broken.

## Notes

1. The First Nations groups to be studied are the ancestors and descendants of those groups which signed Treaties 1, 2, 4, 6 & 7 with the Canadian government between 1871 and 1877.
2. W.L. Morton, "A Century of Plain and Parkland," *Alberta Historical Review* 17 (Spring 1969): 1.
3. John Hawkes, *Story of Saskatchewan*, Vol. 1. (Regina: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co 1924), 80.
4. Brian Fagan, *People of the Earth* (Boston: Scott, Foresman and Company 1989), 347.
5. *First Farmers in the Red River Valley* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, n.d.), 2.
6. Catherine Flynn and Leigh Syms, "Manitoba's First Farmers," *Manitoba History* 31 (1996): 7.
7. *First Farmers*, 11.
8. Flynn and Simms, "Manitoba's First Farmers," 10.
9. Lawrence Burpee, *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes De La Verendrye and His Sons* (Toronto: The Champlain Society 1927), 106.
10. Burpee, *Journals*, 119. The Ouchipouennes are likely the Mandan, a well-established community of Aboriginal agriculturalists who resided along the Missouri River in what is now North Dakota. It is also possible that the Ouchipouennes is a reference to the Hidatsa or Arikara who were also sedentary agricultural groups living along the Missouri River.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Bryce Penneyer Little, "People of the Red Path: An Ethnohistory of the Dakota Fur Trade, 1760-1851" (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1984), 46.
13. *Ibid.*, 95.
14. James Howard, *The Canadian Sioux* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1984), 5.
15. United States, Department of the Interior, *Annual Report*, 1879, pt 3, page 80 as in Oscar Lewis, *Effects of White Contact Upon Blackfoot Culture* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute 1942), 8.
16. Jean Grove, *The Little Ice Age* (New York: Routledge 1990), 414.
17. James MacGregor, *Behold the Shining Mountains* (Edmonton: Applied Arts Products, 1954), 159.
18. Irene M. Spry, *The Palliser Expedition* (Toronto: The Macmillan Company 1963), 60.
19. *Ibid.*, 240.
20. Henry Youle Hind, *Narrative of The Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expeditions of 1858*, Part 2 (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig Ltd 1971), 175.
21. Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM), MG 12, File 272: Chief Sweetgrass to Canadian government (with attachments from other Cree Chiefs), 14 April 1871.
22. Deanna Christensen, *Ahtahkakoop* (Shell Lake Saskatchewan: Ahtahkakoop Publishing 2000), 153.
23. *Ibid.*, 204.
24. George F. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (1936; Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1973), 194.
25. *Ibid.*, 197.
26. *Ibid.*, 198.
27. *Ibid.*, 204, 215.
28. Noel Dyck, "The Administration of Federal Indian Aid in the North-West Territories, 1879-1885" (MA thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1970), 81.
29. *Ibid.*, 12.
30. *Ibid.*, 13.
31. John Leonard Taylor, "Canada's Northwest Indian Policy in the 1870s: Traditional Premises and Necessary Innovations," in Richard Price (ed.), *The Spirit of the Alberta Indian Treaties* (Montreal: The Institute for Research on Public Policy 1980), 5.
32. J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1989), 163. In addition to Miller, others who have written on the active involvement include J.E. Foster, "The Saulteaux and the Numbered Treaties: An Aboriginal Rights Position?," in *The Spirit of the Alberta Indian Treaties*,

- Hugh Dempsey, *Treaty Research Report: Treaty Seven* (Ottawa, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1987); Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1989); John Taylor, *Treaty Research Reports for Treaties 4 and 6* (Ottawa, Government of Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs 1985); and Arthur J. Ray, Jim Miller, and Frank Tough, *Bounty and Benevolence: A History of Saskatchewan Treaties* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).
33. John Taylor, "Two Views on the Meaning of Treaties Six and Seven," in Richard Price (ed.), *The Spirit of the Alberta Indian Treaties* (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy 1981), 44–45.
  34. John Tobias, "Canada's Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885," *Canadian Historical Review* 64, no. 4 (1983), 521–22.
  35. Miller, *Skyscrapers*: 168–69.
  36. Stanley, *Birth of Western Canada*, 217.
  37. *Ibid.*, 218.
  38. Dyck, "Administration," 81.
  39. *Ibid.*, 81.
  40. Noel Dyck, "An Opportunity Lost: The Initiative of the Reserve Agriculture Programme in the Prairie West," in F. Laurie Barron and James B. Waldram (eds.), *1885 and After: Native Society in Transition* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1986), 122.
  41. *Ibid.*, 123.
  42. *Ibid.*, 124.
  43. *Ibid.*, 130–33.
  44. *Ibid.*, 133.
  45. Sarah Carter, "Agriculture and Agitation on the Oak River Dakota Reserve, 1875–1895," *Manitoba History* 6 (Fall 1983): 8.
  46. Sarah Carter, "Two Acres and a Cow: 'Peasant' Farming for the Indians of the Northwest, 1889–97," *Canadian Historical Review* 70, 1 (1989): 28.
  47. *Ibid.*, 30, 31.
  48. *Ibid.*, 40.
  49. Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 84–86, 98–99.
  50. *Ibid.*, 158.
  51. *Ibid.*, 193.
  52. *Ibid.*, 236.
  53. *Ibid.*, 255.
  54. *Ibid.*, 258.
  55. Miller, *Skyscrapers*, 189.
  56. *Ibid.*, 164.
  57. *Ibid.*, 201.
  58. *Ibid.*, 199.
  59. Helen Buckley, *From Wooden Ploughs to Welfare* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 1992), 43, 56.
  60. *Ibid.*, 54.
  61. *Ibid.*, 51.
  62. *Ibid.*, 53.
  63. *Ibid.*, 54.
  64. Peter Douglas Elias, *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988), 83.
  65. *Ibid.*, 82, 108, 128, 164.
  66. *Ibid.*, 224.
  67. Carter, *Lost Harvests*, ix.
  68. *Ibid.*, 185–86.
  69. *Ibid.*, 150–51.
  70. *Ibid.*, 188.
  71. Miller, *Skyscrapers*, ix.
  72. Elias, *Dakota*, xvi.
  73. Dyck, "Opportunity," 121.
  74. Buckley, *Wooden*, 52.
  75. *Ibid.*, 35.
  76. Dyck, "Opportunity," 127.
  77. Buckley, *Wooden*, 52; Miller, *Skyscrapers*, 162, 200; Dyck, "Opportunity," 122, 133; Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 51. Carter does not actually state that the limited government spending inhibited farming, but does



provide numerous cause and effect statements which imply this assertion. For example, on page 63 she comments on the government's non-desire to spend money on animals and farming implements. On page 65, she notes that the inability of the band to take in the crop was due to lack of equipment and draught animals.

78. Rebecca Bateman, "Talking with the Plow: Agricultural Policy and Indian Farming in the Canadian and U.S. Prairies," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 16, no. 2 (1996): 219–25.
79. Hana Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy, 1880–1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press 1987), 180.
80. Ibid.
81. Thomas Wessel, "Agriculture on the Reservations: The Case of the Blackfeet, 1885–1935," *Journal of the West* 23, no 4 (1979): 17.
82. R. Douglas Hurt, *Indian Agriculture in America* (University of Kansas Press 1987), 152.
83. Ibid., 153.
84. Buckley, *Wooden*, 56; Miller, *Skyscrapers*, 202; Carter, *Lost Harvest*, 237; E. Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision* (Vancouver, UBC Press 1986), 22; James Dempsey, *Warriors of the King: Prairie Indians in World War I* (Regina, Canadian Plains Research Center, 1999), 15.
85. Miller, *Skyscrapers*, 202; Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 244–45.
86. Dempsey, *Warriors*, 15.
87. Miller, *Skyscrapers*, 202.
88. Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 247.
89. E. Brian Titley, "W.M. Graham: Indian Agent Extraordinaire," *Prairie Forum* 8, no 1 (Spring 1983): 28.
90. Sarah Carter, "Demonstrating Success: The File Hills Farm Colony," *Prairie Forum* 16, no 2 (Fall 1991): 165.
91. Ibid., 169–71.
92. Ibid., 171.
93. Eleanor Brass, *I Walk in Two Worlds* (Calgary: Glenbow Museum 1987), 11.
94. Carter, *Lost Harvests*, 251.
95. Miller, *Skyscrapers*, 203.
96. Dempsey, *Warriors*, 74.
97. Titley, *Narrow Vision*, 41.
98. John Leonard Taylor, *Canadian Indian Policy During the Inter-War Years 1918–1939* (Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1984), 20.
99. Ibid., 25.
100. Bruce Dawson, "'Better than A Few Squirrels': The Greater Production Campaign on the First Nations Reserves of the Canadian Prairies," in Patrick Douaud and Bruce Dawson (eds.), *Plain Speaking: Essays on Aboriginal Peoples and the Prairie* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center 2002), 21.
101. Ibid.
102. In this assertion I am not promoting the "untrainable" argument asserted by Stanley. Rather, did any First Nations individual, through mistake or malice, damage agricultural aspirations at the local or regional level?
103. The three authors (Dyck is excused, for his study period ends in 1885) allude to this idea within their respective works.