

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMERCIAL FISHING
INDUSTRY AND THE DEMISE OF NATIVE FISHERIES
IN NORTHERN MANITOBA**

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ABSTRACT/RESUME

This article examines the initial development of a commercial fishery in Manitoba and outlines the impact of this industry on the Native economy. Fundamentally, the development of a commercial fishery resulted in the domination of the resource of a capital intensive commercial fishery, which in turn encroached upon the nearshore Native fisheries.

Cet article examine le développement initial de la pêche commerciale au Manitoba et définit l'impact de cette industrie sur l'économie Native. Fondamentalement, le développement de la pêche commerciale résulte dans la domination de la ressource par une pêche commerciale à capital intensif, lequel à son tour empiète sur la pêche Native côtière.

INTRODUCTION: THE ORIGIN OF A NEW STAPLE

One of the major changes to occur among the Indians of the Interlake area of Manitoba after signing of Treaties in the early 1870's was the establishment of a commercial fishing industry.¹ (See Map 1 for locations referred to in text.) For centuries Indian people exploited freshwater fish species as a common-property resource. The most important species for both the pre-commercial and commercial fisheries was the lake whitefish (*Coregonus clupeaformis*).² The dependence upon fish as a subsistence resource reoccurred with the establishment of fur trade posts and Metis communities, and the development of white settlement in the Red River colony. The significance of freshwater fish to Treaty Indians is demonstrated by their selection of reserves adjacent to fisheries.³ The exploitation pattern of this resource was essentially non-commercial and oriented towards local consumption to satisfy subsistence needs. In terms of political economy, the use of this pre-commercial common-property was production for use value.

Sustained development of a commercial fishing industry began in the 1880's. Evidence suggests that in the 1870's efforts were made to establish a commercial fishery.⁴ Various historical sources also indicate that a local market in Winnipeg provided adequate demand to "push" the subsistence fishery into a small-scale commercial fishery.⁵ Certainly by the mid-1880's, groups of individuals would be identified by census takers as fishermen.⁶ The rapid development of a commercial fishing industry in the 1880's was the result of production for the American market. By 1885, one of the major firms was exporting 83 percent of its yields to the United States.⁷ Independent fishermen sold to both the local market and to large dealers who exported to the United States. In this sense, traders and fishermen were drawn into exporting through the larger trading/fishing companies.⁸ A conventional history of the industry suggests that Icelandic migration provided the labour force for the fishery.⁹ In fact, the initial labour force of this resource industry was predominantly Native. In 1887, the major firms employed 80 white men, 40 "half breeds", and 185 Indians.¹⁰ Thus Native people accounted for 72 percent of the labour force. The commercial exploitation of the fisheries resulted in a fundamentally different economic activity and was based on production for exchange value and production for an external market.

This paper will outline the impact of the transition from use value to exchange value resource exploitation on Indian people. The fundamental issue during this period of change following the Treaties cannot be posed as a cultural question. Primarily, the issue concerns the economic control over a resource. The fact that Indians responded differently to the economic penetration of a resource industry supports the interpretation that the process of change in this period was largely an economic transformation. Additionally, Indians understood that traditional forms of common-property regulation were inadequate and pressured the Canadian government to restrict the commercial exploitation of the fisheries. While this research is based upon the methodological approach of historical geography to resource conflicts, there are specific insights which

relate to contemporary concerns about aboriginal rights and the management of renewable resources.

THE DECLINE OF INDIAN FISHING: PRODUCTION FOR EXCHANGE

A consequence of the development of commercial fishing in the 1880's was the decline of the Indian mode of fishing for immediate needs. The earliest record of Indian fishing for exchange value occurred in 1881, at the Lake St. Martin fishery, a main spawning ground for the whitefish. The destruction of whitefish was prompted by trade. Inspector of Indian Agencies E. McColl recorded in 1881:

The reckless and improvident destruction of fish by Indians during the spawning season, more especially for the manufacture of oil for traffic, is gradually exhausting the supply, and will eventually deprive them of their principal source of subsistence...¹¹

Previously, Indians at Lake St. Martin had made fish off for lighting homes and for mixing with dried fish. Some production for trade had commenced during the 1870's. However, by 1882 "one thousand gallons were manufactured; and sold to traders".¹² In the early 1880's numerous reports indicated that Indians were trading fish on Lakes Winnipeg, Manitoba and St. Martin. In 1886, Fisheries Inspector Alex McQueen described the trade: "There were upwards of one hundred Indians engaged in fishing, who traded their fish for flour, bacon, tea, tobacco, twine, clothing, &c., supplied from two stores doing a thriving trade in this locality."¹³ In a manner similar to the fur trade, Indians were drawn into the fish trade by the prospect of obtaining goods.

Despite these developments, when fishermen/traders first penetrated Native fisheries they were not entirely welcome by all Indians. McColl reported in 1882 that the Little Saskatchewan Band made "... loud complaints against David Clarke for wholesale traffic in fish."¹⁴ The Indian Agent at Berens River stated in 1884:

They resent that their fisheries are encroached upon by parties from Winnipeg, who, if allowed to continue the destruction of the whitefish and sturgeon at the present rate, will eventually exhaust the supply and deprive them of their principal source of subsistence.¹⁵

Two years later however, Indian Agent MacKay lamented that during the winter: "many of the Indians caught great numbers of whitefish, which they sold to traders, thus helping to destroy their fisheries and means of subsistence."¹⁶ The fact that Indians appeared to oppose commercial fishing by white men and then reverted to selling fish to these same traders appears contradictory.

It must be pointed out that exchange provided some return if the Indians themselves were fishing they might have some influence on the rate of harvest-

ing. Nevertheless, H. Martineau, the Indian Agent for the Lake St. Martin Area, reported in 1886:

Fear is entertained by some [Indians] that whitefish will become scarce in consequence of the increasing fishing operations carried on by white traders and others, and the Indians express a desire that some check be placed on them...¹⁷

Numerous requests were made by various Indian Bands for exclusive fishing reserves.¹⁸ Clearly, Native people recognized the importance of fish, and felt that the resource was theirs, or at least believed that they had special claim to this resource.

The acquisition of goods promoted participation in the trade and in 1886, it was reported at Sandy Bay on Lake Manitoba that: "in the winter time they get a ready sale at good prices for all whitefish and pike..."¹⁹ For Brokenhead, at the southern end of Lake Winnipeg (1884), trade was vigorous "as the fishing was good, men from Winnipeg came and bought the fish from them at their doors, giving fair prices, they were therefore comparatively comfortable throughout the year."²⁰ Thus the motivation for participating in the fish trade was similar to that of the fur trade. Additionally, cash was made available at times but at half the rate of trade goods. In 1888 the impact of trade on the Little Saskatchewan Band was characterized as follows:

Some of the members forming this band are always absent from their reserve at a distance of fifty miles where they make an excellent living by the sale of whitefish . . . Those who reside on the reserve do not live in such abundance but their means of livelihood are certainly more certain.²¹

Indians may not have had much choice about participating in the fish trade. Inspector McColl reported in 1884 that the Chief at Fairford:

. . . complained of the restrictions prohibiting the Indians from fishing on the Little Saskatchewan River, whereas speculators from Winnipeg had been scooping and dragging whitefish by thousands daily . . . before they ascend to the upper lakes and rivers to spawn.²²

When Indian agents attempted to prevent commercial fishermen from exploiting the spawning grounds, their jurisdiction was undermined by fishery officers in Winnipeg. Therefore, Indians may have engaged in the fish trade as one alternative to exclusive exploitation by white fishermen. It appears that Indian involvement in the fish trade may have been motivated by trade goods, extra income from winter fishing, and the fact that an element of participation may have meant some control. This participation by Indians may have been in conflict with their long-term interests. Quite possibly there was no alternative to partici-

paring, aside from sitting on the banks and watching white commercial fishermen scooping up fish.

Even before the close of the first decade of commercial fishing, concerns were raised about the future availability of the resource. In 1888 it was recorded by the Department of Indian Affairs that:

The Agent reports to the north of Beren's River the Indians were able to catch a good number of fish, but that south of that locality very few whitefish were captured, and that in fact the portion of Lake Winnipeg extending south of Rabbit Point has almost depleted of whitefish.²³

Again, in 1889, it was reported that: "Whitefish are numerous north of Beren's River but southward there are very few taken," and that "... Indians are becoming much alarmed at the depletion of whitefish in Lake Winnipeg."²⁴ It was also pointed out that Indians "obtain other smaller fish at all the reserves."²⁵ Commercial fishing at this time was species specific (whitefish), and the fact that other fish could still be obtained indicates that overfishing, and not some other intervening factor, was responsible for the declining returns of whitefish. In 1890 it was reported that fishing was poor at Lake St. Martin, Fairford and Little Saskatchewan River and south of Berens River.²⁶ In the same year, for the reserves at the south end of Lake Winnipeg, it was recorded that:

Last year, during the fall fisheries, although some of the Indians had as many as twenty nets of thirty fathoms each in length, they only caught from one hundred to eight hundred apiece of small whitefish; whereas, the previous year they caught with two nets of equal length from ten thousand to twenty thousand each for their winter's supply, and during my inspection of the reserves in the first week of October last scarcely any whitefish were caught in the southern part of the lake.²⁷

In short, with a ten fold increase in nets there was a decrease in catch by about 35 fold.

By the late 1880's Indians and Indian Agents were reporting serious declines in whitefish catches at a number of reserves. Declining productivity led to a breakdown in Native fisheries which reached crisis proportions in the late 1880's. In 1890 the Indians' views on this problem were presented to Samuel Wilmot of the Fisheries Branch during an Indian council meeting at the Little Saskatchewan River. The Indians made Wilmot aware of the social disruption caused by the collapse of Native subsistence fishing and the uneven return of income associated with commercial fishing. One Chief stated:

[We] can't catch enough whitefish for our families up river anymore; all caught in mouth of river and in bay by white men traders

for freezers. In old time plenty fish go up river and into St. Martin's; could then catch plenty fish for families all along banks of river with small scoop nets, easy, but now can't get fish that way anyhow - fish too scarce.... but white men must be stopped killing all fish with big nets at mouth of river and bay. Some young Indians want to work for freezer men to get money and spend it; don't know what way; but old Indians, squaws and children get no good, no work, no fish. Indians want big fish traders kept away from mouth river and bay with big steamboat fishing; let traders fish in big water out in lake, where Indian can't go with small canoe. Young men and boy Indian get some good but old men and families get nothing to make up for great loss of winter food, which came up river very plenty old time before. Not much white-fish caught any time before September; very plenty after that in old time, before white man kill so many ten thousands at mouth of river in September and October. Indians can't get fish plenty anymore through ice; got too scarce.²⁸

Those not involved in the wage labour, that is older Indians, women and children, could no longer obtain fish with the same effort.

The Department of Indian Affairs noted other ill effects created by the commercial fisheries. McColl reported in 1889:

Instead of the Indians being benefited by the fisheries, I find the very opposite to be invariably the case, for not only is the supply of fish, upon which they principally depend for subsistence becoming rapidly exhausted, but also the general condition of the Indians within this agency is getting apparently worse every year. Since the commencement of those fisheries their reserves are not properly cultivated, their gardens are frequently neglected and their houses often deserted. At the approach of winter, when the fishing season is over, they return to their homes empty-handed and heavy-hearted, to wander about in search of food to keep themselves and families from starving.²⁹

Ultimately, the penetration of commercial fishing into what had been previously a stable Native subsistence fishery represented relative instability and long-term insecurity for Indians. Additionally, it was reported that the traders realized fifty times more for the fish than they paid the Indians.³⁰ Clearly there was an element of unequal exchange, as indicated in the mark-up that occurred after the exchange between the trader and the Indian. Added to this was the distraction from the agricultural development of reserves. For this region, the underdevelopment of native communities was conditioned, in part, by the development of a commercial fishery.

OPPOSITION TO PRODUCTION FOR EXCHANGE AND DEPLETION

The prospect of depletion had been foreseen by Indians. Moreover, the social problems attendant with that depletion had also been foreseen. In fact, others were concerned about commercial fishing: Inspector of Fisheries McQueen stated in 1885:

A supply to foreign markets, from our by no means inexhaustible lakes, would in a few years, so deplete them that a great source of food supply for our present inhabitants and incoming settlers would be practically destroyed. The importance of the fisheries, as a source for food supply for the Indian population, can hardly be anticipated.³¹

In the same year, McColl, Inspector and Superintendent of Indian Agencies, reported that Indians were also aware of this problem:

The Indians complain that the exportation of fish to the United states is carried on so extensively, especially from Winnipeg and Manitoba Lakes, that unless restricted to Canadian consumption one of their principal sources of subsistence will ultimately become exhausted...³²

In this instance, both fisheries inspectors and Indians anticipated that a shortage would develop if production was orientated towards external markets. Thus a distinction was made between commercial production for local needs and commercial production for an external market.

By the end of the 1880's, fishing inspector McQueen had changed his position to support commercial fishing and was attempting to temper the impact of those who were concerned about the rate of exploitation by the companies. McQueen rejected the claim that the decline of fish populations in the south end of Lake Winnipeg was related to the commercial companies, arguing that the companies never really fished there. He argued that the lakes were large enough to support commercial fishing.³³ In 1889, McQueen also stated that: "Fully two thousand people directly and indirectly, have found this industry a means of assisting them to earn a livelihood."³⁴ This statement clearly reflects the degree to which commercial fishing established an employment dependency amongst people who had previously used fish for their own needs. Now they were dependent upon the income that commercial fishing provided by exporting production to a foreign market.

Nevertheless, opposition to commercial fishing, especially by Indians and their agents, mounted. Indian fishing was reported to be failing while commercial fishing was expanding.³⁵ In 1889 McColl emphasized that: "At every Indian council meeting I attended..., the question was prominently brought before me, eloquent and pathetic appeals for assistance to prevent the destruction of their fisheries before they would be irretrievably ruined."³⁶ The commercial catches

in the late 1880's were not the highest yields achieved by the fishery, but this does not mean that depletion or over-fishing was not occurring. Indian fisheries were failing, however, because the commercial fishing industry was better equipped with more gill nets and steam tugs.³⁷

As commercial fishing was concerned primarily with whitefish, the outcome was a waste of other species. McColl documented this practice in 1888:

In consequence of the enormous quantities of whitefish exported annually from Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba to the United States and the wanton destruction of other varieties of fish which are caught in large numbers along with the others in the nets and dumped into huge piles on the shores in the vicinities of the fisheries and left there to putrefy...³⁸

Map 2 displays the exploitation of a variety of fish species at the southern end of Lake Winnipeg and the importance of whitefish to the commercial fisheries north of Berens River. Further evidence of waste during this period was provided by J. Begin, of the Northwest Mounted Police at Grand Rapids. He reported that of 10,000 pounds of fish that were landed in one day only 4,000 were fit for the market (Judson, 1961:32). In 1887, in the area of the Little Saskatchewan River, the fishing overseer reported that coarse fish were not kept by the fishing companies.³⁹ Thus, part of the explanation for the decline of the fish stock relates to the waste and spoilage which were central to the commercial mode of fishing. Other evidence concerning resource misuse, apart from the rate of exploitation, was reported when Muckle observed that:

More whitefish were caught in the Winnipeg River, Fort Alexander Bay and at the mouth of the Red River last fall, than has been the case for some years past, . . . These whitefish were nothing like the old Lake Winnipeg whitefish, being small, thin, flabby and seldom weigh three pounds.⁴⁰

Observers were beginning to notice the trend towards a drop in the average weight of whitefish. As well, not only had the quantity declined but the quality was reduced in the process. McColl also pointed out that the continual northward movement of the operation of the fish companies was additional proof that over-fishing was occurring.⁴¹

Those associated with Indian administration and the Indians themselves desired that some control be placed over commercial fishing. Perhaps the most cogent argument for the need for some kind of an investigation was recorded in this statement:

. . . that the apprehension of our Indian population of the destruction of their valuable fisheries upon which they chiefly depend for subsistence is not unfounded and that unless something is done to avert the impending calamity these self-supporting Indians of this

superintendency will become as destitute and dependent upon the Government for support as their kindred in the North-West Territories have been since the disappearance of the buffalo.⁴²

In the late 1880's, some Indians in Manitoba were considered to be self-sufficient and fish were seen to be an important resource upon which this self-support was based.⁴³ Fishing was considered to be a substitute for government support or "welfare".⁴⁴ The arguments concerning depletion could not be ignored any longer, and in 1890 Samuel Wilmot from the Fisheries Branch in Ottawa was sent to Manitoba to investigate.

WILMOT'S INVESTIGATION: A PLURALISTIC SOLUTION TO SOCIAL CONFLICTS

In the summer of 1890 Samuel Wilmot investigated the fishing conditions on Lake Winnipeg. The decision to hold the investigation was a result of pressure from both Indians and their agents. As well: "Prominent officials and leading citizens of Manitoba also resent that Lake Winnipeg is undergoing a falling off in many localities..." and their position was that

means should be instituted to stay this too rapid destruction of fish by jurisdictional regulations, which whilst protecting the fish, will not too seriously interfere with the fishing industries of the country.⁴⁵

The arguments of the fishing companies rested largely on a comparison between the fishing potential of Lake Winnipeg and the rate of exploitation in the Great Lakes.⁴⁶ There was a similarity of interests and positions between the fishing companies, the Winnipeg Board of Trade and the local fisheries branch (Judson, 1961:61). Wilmot largely viewed the problem of over exploitation as being limited to areas where whitefish congregated prior to spawning, and basically agreed with the Indians that: "There is a gradual but steady depletion of the whitefish product of Lake Winnipeg going on, from the effects of the present system of fishing in certain parts of the Lake."⁴⁷ Apparently, the fish companies generally began the season fishing the north end of the lake, and then, at the end of August, moved their nets to the entrance of the Little Saskatchewan River. This, of course, prevented the passage of whitefish to the spawning grounds of Lake St. Martin.⁴⁸ Hence, Wilmot recommended closing off Sturgeon Bay (at the mouth of the Little Saskatchewan River) and other parts of the lake to commercial fishing. Wilmot stated in no uncertain terms that "commercial fishing of any description should be wholly excluded from this bay [Sturgeon Bay]."⁴⁹

One aspect of the state's effort to resolve the conflict among Indians, settlers and the fishing companies was a pluralistic harmonizing approach. Wilmot outlined this strategy whereby:

. . . that the Government should meet this subject in the spirit of reciprocity; as between the requirements of the Indian, the settler and the fish trader each have their rights and are entitled to full consideration as inhabitants of the country.⁵⁰

Wilmot was agreeable to providing the Indians with exclusive fishing grounds. On the other hand, when asked to report on the advisability of providing the Indian Bands with more capital for fishing he commented:

It would be undesirable that Indians should be supplied with large boats and longer nets in order to fish in open or deeper parts of the lake. If the Indians desire to fish in waters outside their reserves; or other waters set apart for them, they place themselves in competition with other fishermen, and should therefore make their own provision for such outside fishing.⁵¹

Such a recommendation provided the basis of polarization between Indian fishermen and the American-financed commercial companies. The control over capital would eventually determine who would control the fish resources.

The extent to which commercial companies were responsible for depletion is not easily quantified. However, Wilmot concluded that:

. . . if the improvident system of commercial fishing practised by fishing and trading corporations be allowed to prevail, as at present, the whitefish wealth of the lakes of the North-West will soon become exhausted.⁵²

Depletion, in the absolute sense that whitefish would become extinct, was probably not the immediate problem. The more capital intensive fishing companies were not faced with this prospect. In contrast, Indians had limited access to and ownership of technology (capital) and as such could not move to new fishing grounds. The companies, equipped with steam powered tugs, could move to new fishing grounds further out on Lake Winnipeg and to the north end of the lake. Map 2 indicates the importance of whitefish production at the north end of the lake as a consequence of the spatial expansion of the industry. Thus, declining production had more of an economic and social affect since the Indian's available technology failed to yield fish in the same quantities as previous subsistence-based fisheries. The prospect of depletion in the late 1880's can be contrasted with the situation in the early 1870's. W. Urquhart, a resident of Red River and a fisheries' overseer, emphasized the importance of fish to the local economy and argued that:

Yet nowhere, not even in those waters where the whitefish are most largely taken, is there any sensible diminution in the supply. In some places in Lake Winnipeg, indeed, which have been fished year after year it has been found that the white fish [sic] shifted

their spawning grounds; but in no lake or river of the North West do I hear that they are becoming scarce, or that they are more difficult to obtain than they were years ago.⁵³

The government's attempt to accommodate all of the various interests in this period, which marked the dominance of commercial use of fish over subsistence use, provided only a limited protection to Indians. Some of Wilmot's suggestions became regulations, such as a commercial and domestic licensing system and restrictions on where commercial companies could operate. Although Wilmot attempted to regulate the fishing industry, and this might have aided Indians and settlers somewhat, he could not stop the process of commercialization of this resource.

CONCLUSION

The growth of a commercial fishing industry in Manitoba was conditioned by the demand of a metropolitan market. Prior to the establishment of a commercial fishing industry, various fish had been exploited by the Metis, Treaty Indians and settlers. The penetration of a commercial fishery began with small firms who obtained fish from Indians and settlers through trade. On Lake Winnipeg and Lake St. Martin, Indians were rapidly drawn into a process where their efforts were directed towards production for commercial firms and an external market, rather than production for direct utility. Assessments by Indian Agents during the 1880's suggest that Indian involvement in commercial fishing provided little security aside from trade goods and wages. In fact it promoted an uneven development by distracting Indians from reserve gardening and related agricultural development. Moreover, the commercial fishing of common-property fisheries challenged the access of Native people to fish resources. Concern over the failure of Native fisheries resulted in the first investigation of the industry. This dispute over fish resources is an instance when Indians did not use "aboriginal rights" to oppose conservation measures. In fact, they demanded regulations to ensure a supply of fish. Many observers felt that the demand for fish by the external market was so great as to undermine the local consumption of fish. As well, the Department of Indian Affairs missed an opportunity to provide Indians with capital to exploit a resource which had a commercial potential. Wilmot's recommendations, while aspiring to maintain some fish resources for settlers and Indians, really attempted to harmonize the conflicts between commercial fishing and production for direct utility. The outcome did not restrict the development of this new staple.

The outcome of the first decade of commercial fishing was not the collapse of the Lake Winnipeg fishery; consequently the concern about depletion was a response to the appropriation of the Native near-shore fishery by the more capital intensive commercial companies. Nonetheless, Wilmot's investigation was only the first of a series of government inquiries which attempted to create harmony in a development process characterized by the consolidation of capital, foreign ownership, spatial expansion, depletion, the demise of the local market,

low incomes to fishermen, loss of an economic surplus and a subservience to an external market.⁵⁴ Four royal commissions (1910, 1933, 1954, 1966) concerning Manitoba's commercial fishing documented problems regarding the structure of the industry; a structure which was established in the 1880% when production for exchange value became dominant.

While the legacy of commercial fishing has its origin in the demise of Native fisheries, historical research can provide critical reflection on strategies for the development of subarctic Native communities. Frequently, it has been argued that more emphasis is needed on the development of the renewable resource sector and the modernization of the Native economy.⁵⁵ However advantageous this strategy might be over industrial development, its proponents have overlooked the difference between the commercial and subsistence spheres of the economy, employed misleading categories such as "traditional economy" and have ignored the exploitative and disruptive aspects of the marketing of renewable resources. This research has demonstrated that "fishing" is not simply a component of the traditional economy, but that in the transition from use value to exchange value, Native people lost control over the resource. Finally, present day discussions concerning the management and development of a Native renewable resource economy can benefit from an understanding of the importance of capital in directing the nature of resource development, the inability of the government to provide adequate protection to the producers of renewable resources and the ambiguity of Natives about participation in the simultaneous production of commercial and subsistence resources.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Lucille Porter for typing this manuscript and Barry McArthur for redrafting the maps.
2. Other species which had commercial or subsistence importance are lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*), lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), tullibee (*Coregonus artedii*), goldeye (*Hiodon alosoides*), northern pike (*Esox lucius*), yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*), sauger (*Stizostedion canadense*), pickerel (*Stizostedion vitreum*) as well as various members of the sucker (*Catostomidae*) and catfish (*Ictaluridae*) families.
3. The location of many reserves reflected the importance of fisheries. See Canada, Sessional Papers, 1878, Annual Report for the Department of Indian Affairs, No. 10, p. 41-43 (hereafter C.S.P., Indian Affairs).
4. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1876, Annual Report for the Department of Fisheries, No. 5, Appendix 21, p. 225 (hereafter C.S.P., Fisheries).
5. C.S.P., 1873, Fisheries, No. 8, Appendix T, p. 194.

6. Canada, *Census of Manitoba*, 1885-1886 (Ottawa: 1887), pp. 152-157.
7. C.S.P., 1886, Fisheries, No. 11, pp. 331-332.
8. C.S.P., 1887, Fisheries, No. 16, Appendix No. 9, p. 312.
9. Barbour has stated that: "the Icelandic settlers had come to Lake Winnipeg in the years 1873 to 1880 and these together with the eastern fishermen insured an ample supply of experience" (1957:42).
10. C.S.P., 1888, Fisheries, No. 6, Appendix No. 9, p. 307.
11. C.S.P., 1882, Indian Affairs, No. 6, p. 88.
12. C.S.P., 1883, Indian Affairs, No. 5, p. 150.
13. C.S.P., 1887, Fisheries, No. 16, Appendix No. 9, p. 318.
14. C.S.P., 1884, Indian Affairs, No. 4, p. 144. Additionally it was reported in 1885 that: "Large fisheries are carried on at Dog Head, and the Indians everywhere protest strongly against this wholesale slaughtering of the principal source of their living." C.S.P., 1886, Indian Affairs, No. 4, p. 132.
15. C.S.P. 1885, Indian Affairs, No. 3, p. 129.
16. C.S.P. 1887, Indian Affairs, No. 6, p. 79.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
18. C.S.P. 1888, Indian Affairs, No. 15, p. 54.
19. C.S.P. 1886, Indian Affairs, No. 4, p. 50.
20. C.S.P. 1885, Indian Affairs, No. 5, p. 54.
21. C.S.P., 1889, Indian Affairs, No. 16, p. 51.
22. C.S.P. 1884, Indian Affairs, No. 4, p. 144.
23. C.S.P. 1889. Indian Affairs. No. 16. p. liii.
24. C.S.P., 1890, Indian Affairs, No. 12, p. 310.
25. *Ibid.* An indication of changes to fish populations is a decline in the size of fish. Indian Agent Muckle reported that "I observe that all fish in the southern part of Lake Winnipeg, with the exception of sturgeon, are smaller

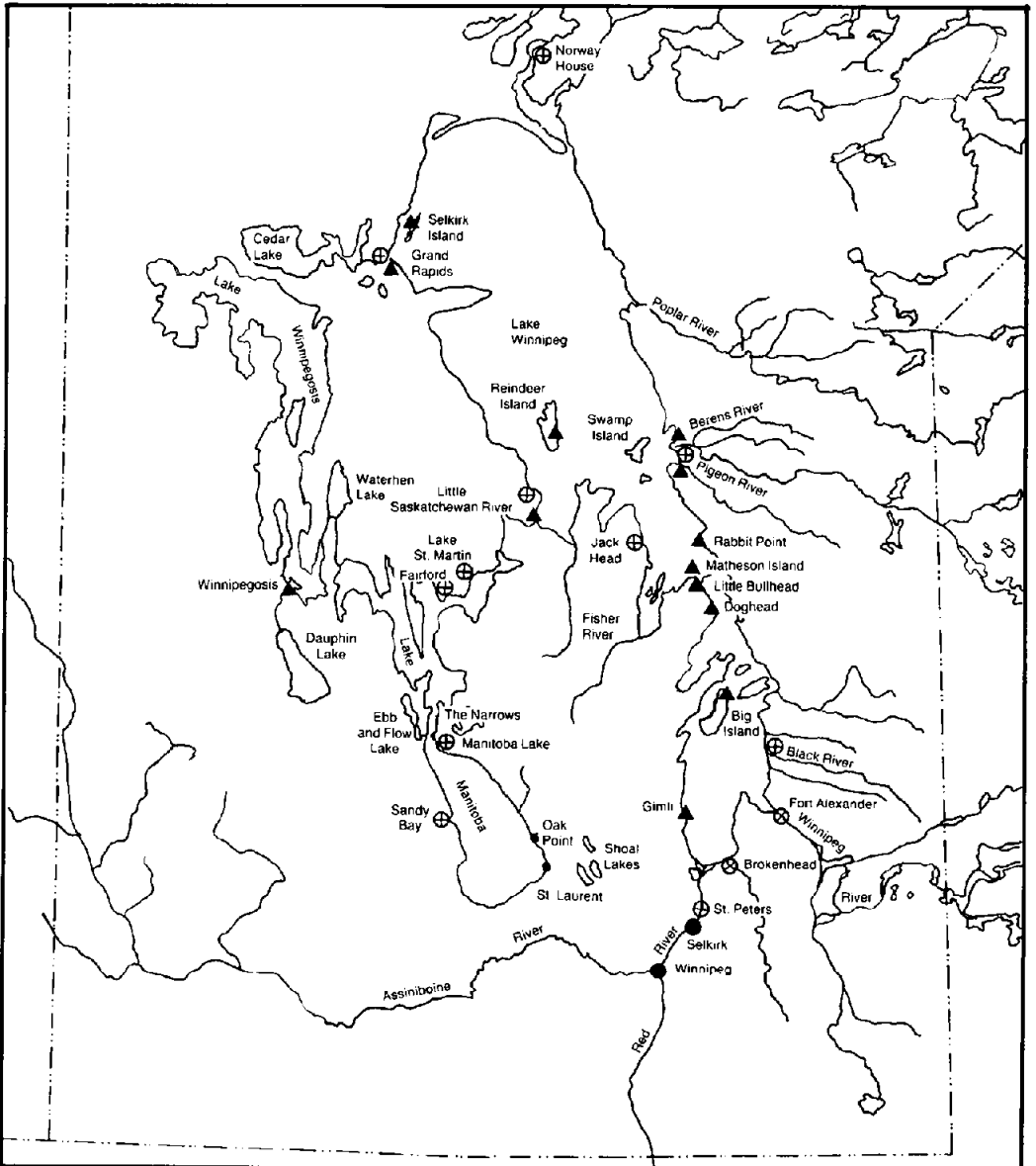
than they used to be, and the Indians at the mouth of the Red River had, in consequence, to make the mesh of their nets smaller." C.S.P., 1887, Indian Affairs, No. 6, p. 49. Also the substitution of one fish for another indicates depletion. In 1886 it was reported for Fort Alexander that only 20,000 whitefish were caught, but "they made up the catch, however, in tulippies [sic], a fish somewhat like a whitefish, but smaller, of which they caught over 90,000." *Ibid*, p. 50.

26. C.S.P., 1891, Indian Affairs, No. 18, p. 33.
27. *Ibid*, p. 199.
28. Samuel Wilmot, Special Report on the Preservation of Whitefish Fisheries of Lake Winnipeg, C.S.P., 1891, Fisheries, No. 8, Appendix No. 3, p. 58.
29. C.S.P., 1891, Indian Affairs, No. 12, 177-178.
30. *Ibid*, p. 177.
31. C.S.P., 1885, Fisheries, No. 9, p. 298.
32. C.S.P., 1886, Indian Affairs, No. 4, p. 128.
33. C.S.P., 1890, Fisheries, No. 17, Appendix No. 8, p. 233.
34. *Ibid*, p. 234.
35. C.S.P., 1890, Indian Affairs, No. 12, p. 176.
36. *Ibid*.
37. *Ibid*.
38. C.S.P., 1889, Indian Affairs, No. 16, p. 160.
39. C.S.P., 1888, Fisheries, No. 6, Appendix No. 9, p. 302. Additional evidence of waste by fishing companies came during a Royal Commission of 1910 in which Captain Robinson admitted: "Oh yes, the first fifteen years fishing was a tremendous slaughter . . ." Public Archives of Canada, RG-23, Vol. 366, 3216 (3).
40. C.S.P., 1890, Indian Affairs, No. 12, p. 49.
41. C.S.P., 1891, Indian Affairs, No. 18, p. 202.
42. C.S.P., 1889, Indian Affairs, No. 16, p. 160.

45. See also, C.S.P., 1885, Indian Affairs, No. 3, p. xxxix.
44. See also, C.S.P., 1890, Indian Affairs, No. 12, p. xxvi.
45. Wilmot, *op. cir*, p. 56.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Wilmot, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
52. *Ibid.*
53. C.S.P., 1873, Fisheries, No. 8, Appendix T, p. 194.
54. Details concerning the history of Manitoba's commercial fishing industry can be found in Tough, 1980.
55. For example see Mr. Justice Thomas R. Berger, 1977:191.

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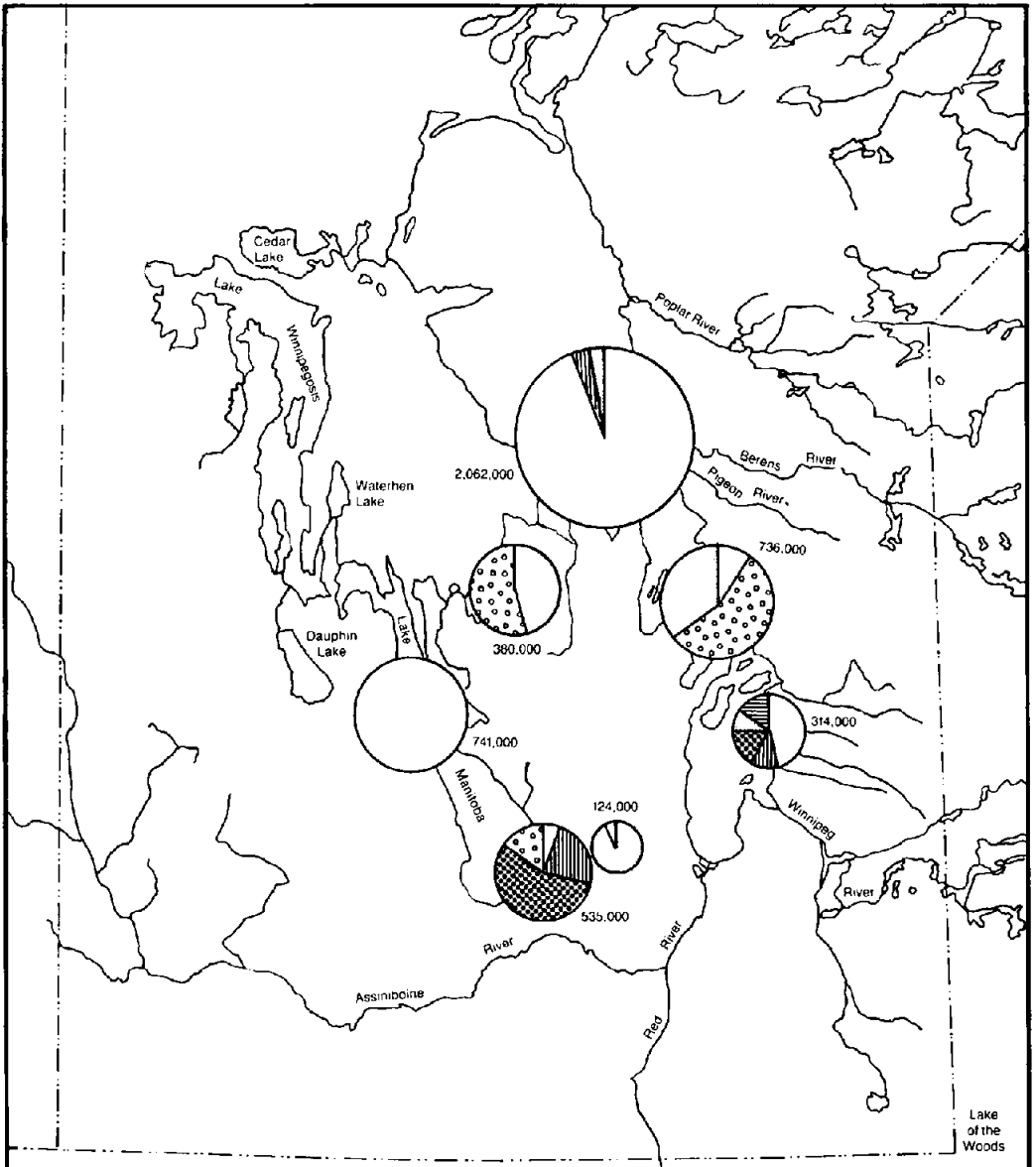
Map 1 Locations Associated With Commercial Fishing: 1880-1890

- Terminals and companies' headquarters
- ⊕ Indian communities
- ▲ Fish stations and
- * Fishing communities

Scale
1:4,000,000



Note that not all fish stations operated continually throughout the time period.



Map 2
Production 1887

Scales 1:3,500,000

Production proportional to area

SOURCE: Canada, Sessional Papers, Fisheries.

