

## WINNIPEG

### THE GATEWAY OF THE CANADIAN WEST

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Winnipeg has been the pioneer centre of Canada's Western Provinces, the pivot of early Western history and later Western development; it has become the greatest grain market on the continent, the chief distributing, industrial, and financial city of the Canadian West. Practically, this progress has been a matter of 40 years' evolution, in its greatest proportions, a matter of ten years' growth; technically, the founding of the City lies far back in the stormy days of the Selkirk Settlement. Even beyond that period of struggle between the fur-trading Masters of the North lay the time when La Verendrye in 1736 established a French post at this meeting-place of the waters and called it Fort Rouge; thereafter for many years it was known as "The Forks" until in 1803 Alexander Henry established Fort Gibraltar for the North-West Company.

It was in 1812, however, that the Earl of Selkirk, a vigorous, ambitious, and courageous Scotch nobleman, established in the Red River Valley his colony of 270 people. Founded at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers and at the portals of a vast, unknown wilderness, Fort Douglas was the first and natural name of the Settlement. In 1817 it was called Kildonan after the home parish of the settlers and in 1821 Fort Garry was built by the Hudson's Bay Company as a trading post and settlers' depot, and afterwards re-constructed in 1853. These names appear to have been variously used to describe the settlement through its many mutations of fortune until, in 1860, the first house on the prairie north of the Fort was erected and the hamlet growing around it was named Winnipeg—the word meaning, in the Cree dialect, "murky water," and having been applied primarily to the Lake a number of miles north of the village.

The geographical situation of the future city was from the first excellent. In early days the site commanded wide areas of land and water suited for the fur-hunting and trading of the period; it was about 40 miles south of Lake Winnipeg and only 66 miles north of the boundary line between the United States and British territories; it lay on the eastern edge of the rich agricultural and grazing country which ran from the line of the Red River west for a thousand miles to the Rocky Mountains; it had to the east the mining and timber districts of the Lake of the Woods and the immense hunting and fishing areas between the Great Lakes and the fringe of the Prairies; it had to the immediate north and north-west mineral deposits, timber areas and the fishery