

WOMANHOOD IN THE NORTH

Pioneer life is eagerly undertaken by Ontario women who are leaving their mark on an erstwhile lonelyland.

SESEKINIKA, July 14.—The deeds of the Fathers of Confederation have been recorded in history. What of the Mothers of Confederation? To whom does the present generation owe the greatest debt, and deepest sense of gratitude for having carried older Canada through the pioneering period?

The pre-Confederation days—the pioneering period—is being lived over again in Greater Ontario. Pioneer life is eagerly and willingly undertaken by women, who, in the main, have already sampled the joys of city or near-city life. There is still a certain amount of hardship and loneliness about life on the forest clearing, although the many comforts of modern life taken into the bush have tended to minimize the discomforts, but the pioneer spirit still lives. It is being exemplified by the women of the north.

Away in the primeval woods, outside the wide stretch of developed territory belting the T. & N. O. Railway and its branch lines, and in more sparsely populated districts along the Transcontinental Railway from Cochrane to Hearst, and beyond, patient, persevering womanhood is making its mark. Womanhood, indeed, is playing a leading role in the rugged story of northern development. Those who simply look on seem to mistake or overlook the stellar part.

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In a log hut, several miles from the beaten track, about half-way between New Liskeard and Porquis Junction, lives a woman who has reared eight children. These were brought into the world away from the expert care of nurse and doctor. Most of them have passed into vigorous boy and girlhood, while two little ones still toddle about her feet on the newly-boarded floor.

Her husband is a hardy, rugged woodsman, who is now establishing himself as a successful farmer, but the credit belongs to the wife. He has toiled hard, and labored long, but his wife has faced more hardships than he has, lived through more dangers, yet always her husband's boon companion, and the guardian angel of his children. For many years she lived the lonesome life—lonesome to her city sisters, but not to her—miles from the womanly fellowship of her sister pioneers. Her husband could walk the distance that would give him the companionship of his fellow-settlers, but she stayed at home with her bairns.