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# BLUE RIBBON TEA

If you telephone merely for tea without specifying **BLUE RIBBON TEA** your grocer may think you are not very particular—This doesn't pay.

ed and he must have a separate fire, when in camp. Salutes were fired on his departure from and return to a fort. All this ceremony was considered necessary, as it had a good effect upon the Indians and added dignity in the eyes of those under his command. That beaver hat was the envy of the Indians and proud, indeed, was the Indian who was fortunate enough to be presented with the factor's cast off hat. It would be worn on all occasions. He might be devested of everything but the hat in warm weather. Riding beside the trader, there is frequently a priest or missionary. Next came the piper, for no Hudson Bay fur brigade was complete without the bag pipes and many a strathspey has echoed back from the rocks and hills by the old Hudson's Bay trail. Records state that on one occasion

a brigade was coming up a river in canoes and the Indians were gathered in a certain place planning to rob the traders of their goods. The white men saw their danger in time but instead of turning in flight, the piper struck up his pipes, the voyageurs dug in their paddles, chanting one of the river songs and they dashed through the astonished natives, without trouble.

These brigades were often annoyed by the Indians, who had a habit of running off with their horses at night and offering to find them in the morning, on payment of tobacco.

These various primitive methods of travel added a picturesque interest to the life of the settlers and the daring traders, under the most difficult conditions, started our Dominion on a career of progress and prosperity.

## The Quaint Old Fur-Traders

Written for The Western Home Monthly. By Charlotte Gordon

**M**ORE fascinating records cannot be found, than those of the old fur-traders, hardy voyageurs, trappers and sturdy pathfinders. Nearly all descendants of adventurous warriors and living amid the excitement of almost savage life, their lives were full of novel and exciting events, as has been the case in each stage of pioneering and colonization on this continent. These enterprising and daring traders lived through stormy times, when the reaching out in fur-trade always met with opposition from the Indians and warfare and its tragedies followed. Hostilities were carried on, as well, between the rival fur companies and the fierceness of the struggle for the fur-trade was great. This vast country was the fur-traders' paradise, which course has always been a Northern one and more than half the valuable furs of the world have been obtained in the wild regions of the Dominion of Canada. These pushing traders travelled the fertile prairies of bewildering distances, the vast water stretches being their chief means of communication and on and up, winding their way through mountains, lakes and streams, ever finding favorite resorts of the mighty hunter. The trading posts were hundreds of miles apart, scattered over vast areas and brigades of traders carried communications from post to post. Under wise government, order was restored after a time, trade was placed on a firm basis, the Indians were encouraged and under more peaceful conditions, the better life of the trader developed.

So rapidly have the old habits and customs of these lords of the forest and stream passed away, that the records of their mode of life and character, influenced by their strange environment will ever be romanceful reading.

The story of "Queer Old Peter Fidler" tells of one of the many unique characters and helps to picture the life of the period.

From the diary of the quaint old trader, it is gathered that he was born in 1769, in the county of Derby, England and arrived in Rupert Land about 1791, engaging in the fur trade. He was very energetic in the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company and represented them in various centres, throughout the fur regions, one of these being Cumberland House, the oldest post of the company in the interior.

From his documents, it is obvious that he was a man of education and literary tastes, as he left a collection of five hundred books, to be the nucleus of a library, for the use of the Selkirk colonists. These books were afterwards included in the Red River library and the volumes are to be seen in Winnipeg, to this day. In his will, he is called a "surveyor" as well as a trader and made certain valuable surveys for the Selkirk settlers in the parish of Kildonan. Later, Fidler was placed in charge of the Red River district and is described as arbitrary and head strong. He is especially interesting because of the records of his eccentric will.

The first request is to be buried in the colony of the Red River and directs that his journals, as well as his observations and map, be given to the committee of the Honorable Hudson's Bay Company. His cattle, swine and poultry

were to be left for the sole use of the colony and if any of his children were to ask for a pair of these aforesaid animals or fowls, their request was to be granted. To his Indian wife, Mary Fidler, he bequeathed fifteen pounds a year, for life, to be paid to her in goods from the Hudson's Bay Company store, to be charged against his interest account, in the hands of the company.

The will further requested that the interest on all the rest of the money, belonging to him, in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company or Bank of England, be divided among his children, according to their needs.

After the interest of Fidler's money had been divided among his children, till the youngest child, Peter, should come of age, the testator makes the following remarkable disposal of his residue—that all the money in funds and personal property, with interest, be placed in the public funds and continue so, until August, the sixteenth, 1969, this being the two hundredth anniversary of his birth. Then the whole amount of the principal and interest, so accumulated, was to be placed at the disposal of the next male heir, in direct descent from his son, Peter Fidler, or next of kin. This was dated, August, the sixteenth, 1821, and Fidler died the following year. Certain executors were named who afterwards renounced the probate and execution of the will and his son, Thomas Fidler, was appointed to administer it. A considerable interest in this will has been shown by the descendants of Peter Fidler, a number of whom still live in the Province of Manitoba, on the banks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Lawyers, from time to time, have been appointed to seek out the residue, which under the will, ought to be in process of accumulation till 1969, but no trace of it can be found in Hudson's Bay Company or Bank of England accounts, though diligent search has been made.

Descendants to the fourth generation of John Pritchard, fur trader, live in Manitoba to-day. The name was known on the Red River in the beginning of the nineteenth century, before the coming of the Selkirk Colony. Born in Shropshire, England in 1777, he received his education in the grammar school of Shrewsbury and early in the century, emigrated to Montreal. The ferment among the fur companies was great and the old North West Company, having split into sections, the new or N. Y. Company was formed and with it John Pritchard obtained employment. In 1805, he was in the company's employ, at the mouth of the Souris River and while there, had a most thrilling adventure. In going up the Assiniboine River to Fort Qu'Appelle, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, he became parted from his travelling companions, in looking for horses and following a different stream, the Pipestone, was lost for forty days. For ten days he lived on frogs, two hawks and a few other birds, but his strength was nearly gone and only a wonderful vitality made him struggle on. He was obliged to tear up his clothing to make covering for his feet. Wandering in the region of the wild prairie turnip, he subsisted on that. Finally he came to two vacant, wintering houses of the fur-traders and