

More than half of this Island is surrounded with marshes; the deposits in these would do well for composts and will have to be resorted to in not a great number of years hence.

The timber on the Island is good, being poplar, spruce, tamarac, birch and willows some of which are very large.

LEAVE FOR BIRCH RIVER RESERVE.

This morning, 16th October, we overhauled our canoes, intending to go and survey Seven Islands, about 25 miles from Cumberland House, but the guide on whom we depended was no where to be found. We applied to the Hudson Bay Company for one and people were so scarce then that not a man could be had to go who knew the place, nearly all the Indians being away on their autumn fishing.

I resolved to lose no more time waiting. We, therefore, at once crossed the lake and made for Tearing River, camping some miles down it, on our way to Birch River (Was-qua-sibi).

About noon on the following day, 17th, we reached the main Saskatchewan and the north end of the Birch River Portage.

At 1 p. m. on the 18th, we had everything across the Portage, and began scaling Birch River the same day.

I informed the Indians that I wished to meet their head men in council. They told me that the Councillor was absent and that he would return in a few days.

The Councillor and three others of the Band came to my camp on the 20th, and told me what they wanted. I informed them that their wishes were reasonable and would be gratified.

I continued the survey and finished it on the 2nd November.

DESCRIPTION OF BIRCH RIVER RESERVE.

The Birch River Reserve lies to the south of the main Saskatchewan River and immediately opposite the mouth of the Tearing River (an outlet of Cumberland Lake).

The Birch River is about 3 miles south of the Saskatchewan, and runs from west to east, through the Reserve. Having very little current it is used as a highway by the Indians for canoes in summer and on the ice in winter. Along this stream their houses are situated. There are 13 houses on the Reserve and 4 new ones going up, and a school, the walls of which were up when I left. It is central and beautifully situated on a point between the Birch River and a small stream called Petabec Sebis or Channel Stream. I here laid out 10 acres for a school lot on the point, having two sides water frontage.

The land on this Reserve is very good, being class No. 1. In places, as shown on plan, where it is wet, are marked No. 2. These are the finest gardens that I have seen cultivated by Indians. The councillor raised 150 bushels of potatoes, 7 bushels of onions, with carrots, turnips, &c.

Another Indian had 187 bushels of potatoes, with some carrots.

There is not a particle of stone on the Reserve. The Councillor had found a lime stone fossil, very similar to *Bellorophon Sulcatifus* of the Trenton Group.

There are 90 persons in this Band, making 2,880 acres to be given them. I here also laid out 2,493.65 acres for the Pas Band, included in this Reserve at the request of the Chief and Councillors of the Pas Band, making a total in this Reserve of 5,373.65 acres.

There is an abundance of hay here. The south-west corner has some very fair spruce and tamarac, with here and there a few balsam, the spruce and tamarac over 1 foot in diameter. On the Saskatchewan front there is some fine poplar, elm, ash and birch, with willows.

Both sides of the Birch River are skirted with small poplar, birch, willows and brush.

The spring freshets overflow a large portion of this Reserve, and in places are depositing soil annually upon it.