

known, as Port Talbot, in Elgin county, in 1803. This eccentric son of an Irish nobleman, a youthful friend of the Duke of Wellington and an acquaintance of the sons of George III, came to Canada in 1790 to join the 24th Regiment at Quebec. He served on the staff of Governor Simcoe, and through his friends in high places he secured a large grant of land, in what was then known as the London district, on condition that he should place a certain number of settlers on it. His home farm was quite extensive, and as dairying was included among his industries, he was undoubtedly one of the very first dairymen in Western Ontario. The first settlers arrived in Oxford about 1795, but progress was slow for some years, and the writer has not been able to determine when the first live stock was brought in. In the more northerly counties of Wellington, Perth and Huron, there were few if any cows until after 1830.

First Cows in the Prairie Provinces.

Turning now to the Prairie provinces we look to find the first mention of domestic cattle in connection with Lord Selkirk's settlers on the Red river, the first company of whom were landed there in 1812. The writer is informed by Mr. E. H. G. G. Hay, that there is in the archives of the Hudson Bay Company at Lower Fort Garry a record to the effect that in 1813 Lord Selkirk shipped a bull and a cow, from Ballin Ghobhainn in Rosshire, to Stronoway and from thence with more colonists via Hudson Bay and York Factory. All communication with the colony, which was under the wing of the Hudson Bay Company, was by that route. There appears to be no record, however, of these animals ever having reached Red river, which is not very surprising considering the difficulties of the overland part of the voyage.

In 1823 a herd of 300 cattle were driven from the South and disposed of to the Red River colonists. Ross, the historian of the colony, says these were the first cattle in the settlement, 'with the exception of two English cows and a bull received from the Nor'-west Company,' but those who are familiar with the history of those times will hardly believe that the Nor'-West Company provided the Selkirk settlers with cows or anything else to their advantage.

In 1825, Ross, in his journey from Oregon to the Red river, found two cows and a bull at Fort Cumberland on the Saskatchewan and remarks that 'the introduction of domestic cattle from the colony of Red river gives a new feature of civilization to the place.' The same historian, speaking of the Red River settlement in 1831, refers to the decline in the price of dairy produce, as the result of over production. Butter had fallen from one shilling to seven pence per pound; cheese from six pence to four pence per pound. The quality of the butter and cheese was said to be very unsatisfactory.

In his evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons (England) on the Hudson Bay Company in 1856, Col. Lefroy said 'there are domestic cattle at most of the forts now, even low down on the Mackenzie river.'

First Cows in British Columbia.

Some cows were evidently taken across the mountains into the northern interior of British Columbia as early as 1837. There is a reference to a bull, a cow and a calf in Hudson's Bay correspondence at one of the northern posts that year. P. S. Odgen, Chief Factor, at Stewart Lake, expresses his displeasure in a letter written in 1840, to William Thew, at Fraser Lake, 'for not sending the bull.'*

In 1843 the Hudson's Bay Company, realizing that the boundary question was likely to be settled, and the joint occupation of the Oregon territory ended, established a fort on the site of what is now the city of Victoria on Vancouver island, in order to be on the right side of the line, when its location was definitely fixed. For some years previously the company maintained large dairy farms at Nisqually on Puget Sound,

* History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia, Morice.