

FINAN McDONALD—EXPLORER, FUR TRADER AND
LEGISLATOR*

Ross Cox appears to be the only one to preserve an account of Finan McDonald's nativity and early life; in his *Adventures on the Columbia River*, page 348, Vol. I, he says: "While we were here (Spokane House) a curious incident occurred between Mr. McDonald and an Indian, which I shall preface by a short account of the former. He belonged to a highly respectable family which emigrated from Inverness-shire to Canada while he was a lad. His first accents were lisped in Gaelic; but in the capital of the Highlands, so celebrated for its pure English, he made considerable progress in our language. On arriving in Canada he was obliged to learn French, in which he had made some proficiency, when he joined the North-west Company as apprentice-clerk. At the period I speak of (1814) he had been ten years absent from Canada, and had traveled over an immense extent of country. His appearance was very striking: in height he was six feet four inches, with broad shoulders, large bushy whiskers, and red hair, which for some years had not felt the scissors, and which sometimes falling over his face and shoulders, gave a wild and uncouth appearance. He had taken a Spokane wife, by whom he had two children. * * *

"M'Donald was a most extraordinary and original character, To the gentleness of a lamb he united the courage of a lion. He was particularly affectionate to men of small size, whether equals or inferiors, and would stand their banterings with the utmost good-humour; but if any man approaching his own altitude presumed to encroach too far on his good-nature, a lowering look and distended nostrils warned the intruder of an approaching eruption. [Cox gives an example.] * * *

"M'Donald frequently, for the mere love of fighting, accompanied the Flatheads in their war excursions against the Blackfeet. His eminent bravery endeared him to the whole tribe, and in all matters relating to warfare his word was a law. The following anecdote, which was related to me by several Indians, will at once show his steady courage and recklessness of danger. In the summer of 1812, at the buffalo plains they well in with a strong party

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of the Black-feet, and a severe contest ensued. M'Donald was to be seen in every direction in the hottest of the fire cheering and animating his friends; and they at length succeeded in driving the Black-feet to take shelter in a thick cluster of trees, from whence they kept up a constant and galling fire on the Flat-heads, by which a few were killed, and several wounded. In vain he exerted all his influence to induce his friends to storm the trees, and drive the enemy from their cover.

"M'Donald, vexed at this puerile method of fighting, offered to take the lead himself to dislodge the enemy; but, with the exception of the war-chief, they all refused to join him. He therefore resolved to try the effect of example, and putting his horse on to a smart trot, rode opposite to the place from whence the chief fire of the Black-feet proceeded: he then dismounted, took deliberate aim at the head of a fellow which had just popped from behind a tree, and let fly. The bullet entered the Black-foot's mouth, and he fell. A shower of balls instantly whizzed about M'Donald and his horse; but he, undismayed, reloaded, while his friends cried out and besought him to retire. He covered another in the same manner, and galloped to his party uninjured. [These were the only two killed in this clump of trees.] War was his glory, and 'piping peace' his aversion. Up to the period I quitted the Columbia he had escaped harmless; but I regret to state that a few years afterwards, one of the enemy's balls brought him to the ground: half-a-dozen savages instantly rushed on him, and commenced hacking his scull with their tomahawks: the scalping knife was in the act of beginning its dreadful operation, and in a moment all would have been over, had not the war-chief, accompanied by a few friends, dashed to his assistance, killed three of the Black-feet, and rescued their benefactor from impending death. He subsequently recovered; but I understand the wounds he then received have left evident traces of their violence on his bold and manly front."

According to Ross Cox, McDonald joined the North-west Company in 1804. He is not listed among the North-west Company's men of that year in *Masson's Bourgeois*; but it is known that list is not complete, but he appears at the Rocky Mountain House, on the Saskatchewan River, in 1806; apparently an experienced clerk, ranking above many other commissioned clerks of prior employment in the company.

He comes into notice as second in command, and with David

Thompson's party crossing the Rockies by the Howse's Pass to the headwaters of the Columbia River, in the early summer of 1807; and assisted in building the "Kootenay House" that season. This house was below Lake Windermere, at Toby Creek, and was not called a fort, but named for the Kootenay Indians who inhabited that section. (See: Thompson's *Narrative*, pages 378 and on.)

McDonald was sent by Thompson in the fall of 1807 to establish a house at a "considerable Lake in McGillivray's (Kootenay) River": this is "Lake Indian House" below Bonners Ferry, and is the first exploration of the Kootenai River from the Columbia Lakes to below Bonners Ferry; and the house the first built in Idaho. That season, 1807-8, two of McDonald's men crossed to the Kullyspell (Pen d' Orille) Lake, 45 miles.

McDonald returned up the Kooteney River early in the Spring and was at Kooteney House in time to enable Thompson to start, Apr. 20th, 1808, on his trip down the Kooteney River to Kooteney Lake.

Thompson on his return, notes in his *Narrative* page 395: "We were acquainted with the Kootenai [Upper Columbia] Country before us, and on the 8th of June, 1808, came to Mr. Finan McDonald and four men in charge of the Furs traded in the winter; they have had also hard times, and have been obliged to eat all the dogs."

On the 10th of November of 1808 McDonald starts from the "Kootenay House" for the "Lake Indian House" of the year before; but the weather becoming extremely cold, froze the Kooteney River up and he had to send to the Kootenay house and procure horses for the journey, but only got to a point some place above the Kootenay Falls. Rainy Creek near Libby, Montana, was the only place where horses could be wintered and in all probability the place McDonald built his storehouse, noted afterwards by Thompson in his *Geographical Notes*, 1810.

On the 17th of April, 1809, the Traders leave the "Kootenay House" and descend the Columbia to the Howse Pass across the Rockies. They left the Columbia River on June 9th and reached the head waters of the Saskatchewan River on the 18th June. Thompson says; July 14th, 1809, "Under the charge of Mr. Finan McDonald sent a canoe off for the defiles of the Mountains". The party arrived at the Columbia River the 13th of August, and at McGillivray's (Kootenay) River on the 20th; descending that river

to the road to the Saleesh (Clarks Fork) River, (Bonners Ferry) arriving on the evening of the 29th. "On my arrival here, I sent off Mr. Finan McDonald and a man to follow the road to the Saleesh River and find the camp of those Indians, to bring horses and help us through to the River". The party reached Kullyspell (Pen d'Orille) Lake, September 8th, where part of the goods was taken in canoes and arrived at the Saleesh River (Clarks Fork), 2:00 p. m. the 9th. The site of the "Kullyspell House" was selected on the 10th, and they commenced to build the 11th; the second house in Idaho.

Thompson's *Geographical Notes* shows, McDonald was left in charge while Thompson made an exploring trip down the Saleesh River to near Metaline by land and returned October 6th, 1809; when he says: "Mr. McDonald had traded about 2 packs of good furs in my absence, mostly from the 'Pointed Hearts'." No intimation of sharp trading here, just the opposite, the name is, probably, just a translation of the tribal name "Skeetshoo". Also in charge, when Thompson went up the Saleesh River and located the Saleesh House four miles above Thompson Falls, Mont., and continued in charge of the Kullyspell House until Thompson's return April 21st, 1810. He is sent by Thompson to the Saleesh House April 23rd. The 7th of May, Thompson gives Jocko (Jacques Raphael) Finlay his orders to build "Spokan House"; the same day sends a letter to McDonald that connects him and his men with the Saleesh Indian Camp, and in a battle that followed the Pie-gans were defeated, with the help of the white men and the newly acquired guns of the Saleesh. Thompson says: "Mr. Finan McDonald fired forty-five shots, killed two men and wounded one". (See, *Narrative*, Page 425.) This defeat is what determined the Piegan Indians to stop the Traders crossing the mountains by the Howse Pass to the Kooteney and Saleesh country, and that Fall forced Thompson to open the Athabasca Pass.

On Thompson's return from the East, through the Athabasca Pass; under date of 27th May, 1811. "We went to the Saleesh House in hopes of seeing Mr. Finan McDonald, but saw neither him or a letter". McDonald had wintered at Kullyspell House, and in the Spring had moved to "Spokan House"; where he was when Thompson sent there for horses to meet him, at, now Cusick, on Pen d' Orille River, which he did June 12th, 1811; the party then

moving to Spokane House where Jacko Finlay was in charge; arriving June 14th. Franchere mentions an intercepted letter written about this time by McDonald, dated from Spokane.

Thompson started north for Ilth-koy-ape (Kettle) Falls the 17th of June, 1811, arriving the 19th, late in the afternoon. McDonald either accompanied Thompson or soon followed him, for the record shows he started up the Columbia River, from Kettle Falls early in August; going some miles above Ravelstoke, B. C. and returned August 27th;—missing Thompson who arrived the 28th;—by using the "Long Portage" over the mountains to Cusick instead of Spokane House. The "Long Portage" was the old trail opened up by John Work in August, 1825, and always used by the Hudson's Bay Company afterwards as the route to the Pen d' Orille or Saleesh country.

Thus McDonald was the first explorer of the Columbia River from Kettle Falls to the Upper Dalles. Thompson followed starting September 2nd, 1811. Meantime Thompson sent an order to McDonald by the Saleesh Chief for all the ammunition he could spare, so the Chief could arm his men to fight the Piegans. (The Piegans are one of the four tribes now designated as Blackfeet.) While Thompson was at "Boat Encampment" he sends on September 23rd, a canoe load of goods that had come across the Rockies by the Athabasca Pass, to the Ilth-koy-ape (Kettle) Falls to the care of Mr. Finan McDonald for the supply of the lower posts on McGillivray's, (Lake Indian House) the Saleesh (Kullyspell) and Spokane Rivers, the goods coming by the Howse Pass would supply the upper posts.

On the return to Spokane House, November 3rd, Thompson sent a letter to McDonald to keep a watch for canoes expected to come down the Kootenay River; the letter was addressed to Kullyspell House. Thompson reached the Saleesh House November 19th, and found it vacant, and Finan McDonald trading with the Indians some twenty-five miles above on the river; on the 24th he notes "Mr. Finan McDonald having fortunately traded a large canoe load of dried provisions, which enabled Mr. John G. McTavish and the men * * * to proceed to the lower settlement on this River, (Kullyspell) there to winter and trade with the Natives". "The season though late, continued mild and open; Mr. Finan McDonald with an assortment of goods went up the River to trade provisions, and he returned with all they could spare".

Thompson's *Narrative* shows he left Saleesh House for Montreal, Canada, on March 13th, 1812, leaving Mr. McDonald in charge of that place. This is as far as Thompson's *Geographical Notes*, and his *Narrative*, which is copied largely verbatim from his Journals,—not the Notes—; gives an account of McDonald, and Ross Cox is the best and most reliable authority we have for some years after.

Cox on page 189, Vol. I, (date December 1812) "Mr. Finan M'Donald of the North-west Company had charge of the post among the Flat-heads," (Saleesh). Farnham and Cox were in opposition with a house at now Bull River, between Noxon and Heron, Montana. Farnham represented the Astor Company that winter. Cox returned to Spokane.

The next mention of McDonald by Cox is on page 212; where he is named as one of the party of North-westers, Cox having joined that company, leaving Astoria on the 29th of October, 1813 for the interior. The party was attacked at the Cascades by the Indians while making the second portage. McDonald was in charge of the lower end, while the rest of the officers were stationed at intervals to the upper, (page 213.) They captured some of the Indians' families and held them as hostages until the goods, boats and people had crossed the portage. The goods stolen by the Indians were mostly returned, (page 217). McDonald was in charge of the watch on that night that it was fired on by the Indians. The fire was returned and the moans indicated some Indians were wounded.

McDonald was in charge of Fort Kamloops that winter, 1813-4, (page 262). On page 284, Cox says: "We left Spokane House on the 25th of May, (1814) and reached Oakinagan on the 29th * * * The different parties having now assembled, we all started for the sea on the 30th of May, and on the 11th of June arrived at Fort George" (Astoria). On page 337, "on the 5th of August 1814 we left Fort George". The party consisted of sixty men in nine canoes. At the Cascades they were attacked again, and one man killed. On page 344, he says: "The various parties separated for their various destinations. Mine was Spokane House in company with Messrs. Stewart, M'Millan and M'Donald. We left Oakinagan on the 27th, and reached Spokane on the 31st of August". On page 348, Cox gives a sketch of Finan McDonald as before referred to at the commencement of this sketch.

On page 1, Vol. 2, Cox says: "On the 24th of October, (1814) we proceeded overland with the produce of the summer trade to Oakinagan, where, being joined by the people of that district, we embarked for Fort George; at which place we arrived on the 8th of November. We remained only a few days at Fort George, from which we took our departure for the interior on the 18th November * * * We had fifty-four canoe men, including six Sandwich Islanders". The eight canoes, having passed the considered dangerous part of the route, they had stowed away all arms except those of the traders. Having arrived at a point between Walla-Walla and Lewis (Snake) Rivers. "A number of canoes filled with natives paddled down on our brigade, apparently without any hostile design * * * Mr. Keith was in the first canoe, Mr. Stewart in the second, Messrs. LaRoque and M'Millan in the third, Messrs. M'Donald and M'Kay in the fourth, M'Tavish and I in the fifth, Montour in the sixth, M'Kinzie in the seventh, and Pierre Michel, the interpreter, in the eighth. The Indians at first asked a little tobacco from Mr. Keith, which he gave them: they then proceeded to Mr. Stewart who also gave them a small quantity; after which they dropped down on Messrs. LaRocque and M'Millan, from whose canoe they attempted to take some goods by force, but were repulsed by the men, who struck their hands with the paddles. They next came to M'Donald, and seized a bale of tobacco which was in the forepart of his canoe, which they attempted to take out. At the same time my canoe was stopped, as well as those in the rear and a determined resolution was evinced to plunder us by force * * * Still we refrained from the 'dernier resort' and Mr. Keith gave orders not to fire while there was a possibility of preserving the property. The fellow who had seized the bale in M'Donald's canoe was a tall athletic man; he resisted all their entreaties to let it go, and had taken it partly out of the canoe, when McKay gave him a severe blow with the butt end of his gun, which obliged him to drop the prize. He instantly placed an arrow in his bow, which he presented to M'Donald; but the latter coolly stretched forth his brawny arm, seized the arrow, which he broke, and threw into the fellow's face. The savage enraged at being thus foiled, ordered his canoe to push off, and was just in the act of letting fly another arrow, when McKay fired, and hit him in the forehead; he instantly fell; upon which two of his companions bent their bows; but be-

fore their arrows had time to wing their flight M'Donald's double-barreled gun stopped them. He shot one between the eyes, and the ball from the second barrel lodged in the shoulder of the survivor."

After several days the traders forced a parley with the Indians, and on December 1st, (1814) met them in force; the Indians first demand was that two white men should be delivered up to them (one of whom should be the big red-headed chief). Every eye turned on M'Donald, who, on hearing the demand, 'grinned a horrid ghastly smile' and who, but for our interposition, would on the spot have chastised the insolence of the speaker." The head-chief, "Morning Star", of the Walla Wallas arrived and quelled the hostile Indians; who were from various tribes, and on his territory.

On page 79, Vol. 2. (Date of 30th April, 1816). Cox records: "I was selected as commandant of the former place (Oakinagan); Messrs. M'Millan and Montour were sent to Spokane, and my friend M'Donald proceeded to Kamloops, his old quarters." Cox this summer builds "Fort Okanogan" on the site of the Ross' "Okanogan House". On page 112, Vol. 2 mentions the incident of Farnham of the Pacific Fur Co. and M'Donald of the North-west Co. being at Sina-ac-a-teen, and both out of tobacco for the Indian trade and Cox making a race to supply Farnham with that very necessary article some two hours before the opposition arrived.

On page 119 he says: "It was arranged I would pass the winter at Oakinagan. Mr. Mackenzie went to Spokane with Messrs. M'Donald and Montour for the outposts, (Kullyspell and Lake Indian House) Mr. Ross proceeded to Kamloops, and Mr. M'Millan to his old post at the Flat-heads. (Saleesh). He quotes a letter from Donald Mackenzie, dated Feb. 12th, 1817, in which occurs:- "On arriving here I found I had ninety souls to provide with the necessaries of life, and therefore determined on an excursion to Lewis (Snake) River. Your friend Mr. M'Donald accompanied me, and besides the Canadians, I took ten Sandwich Islanders. I passed an agreeable time with our friend Finan. He is certainly a most worthy mortal and desires to be remembered to you. Yours truly; Donald Mackenzie." On page 122, Vol. 2. He observes; "Mr. MacKenzie undertook the winter trip to Lewis River, not so much for the purpose of purchasing horses; (for that Mr. M'Donald

could have done;) as to form a judgment from personal observation of their disposition”.

On page 173, Vol. 2, under date of May 14th, 1817, at Kettle Falls,—“Encamped at the end of the falls; shortly after an Indian arrived from Spokane House with letters from Mr. M'Donald, which contained no intelligence of interest,” Cox and party were ascending the Columbia River on his voyage to Montreal, and leaving the service of the North-west Company.

In the lists of employes of the Hudson's Bay Company made the year of the amalgamation with the North-west Fur Company, 1821-22; Finan McDonald is listed No. 1132, and among the North-west employees. This list contains 1984 names. His name is also listed for 1822-23, and 1823-24.

The next mention we find of McDonald is in the *Fur Hunters of the Far West* by Alexander Ross: Vol. 2, page 2. “In the meantime, (1822-23) however, as several of the trappers and hunters had, on Mr. McKinzie's retiring, been left without employment, a party was fitted out for the Snake Country, and placed under the direction of a Mr. Finan McDonald, (A first mention of McDonald by Ross) a veteran of the North-west school, now in the Hudson's Bay Company's service.”

Ross had fully determined to leave the Columbia country, but on arriving at Boat Encampment he met Mr. P. S. Ogden, and a letter offering him charge of the Snake Expeditions with good salary, being persuaded by Ogden, he accepted the offer, but for one year only. “On arriving at Kettle Falls, I was astonished to learn that on McDonald's return from his Snake trip, he and his men, instead of being, as expected, at Fort Nez Perces, were all at Spokane House. * * * This disarranged my plans, and was a departure from the Company's views.”

On page 5, he says: “Before leaving this part of our subject, we might make a remark or two on McDonald's late trip to the Snakes. Everything considered, the trip was as successful as could have been expected in furs, for McDonald was a zealous and faithful servant; but in other respects it was rather an unfortunate trip. In a conference with a war-party of Piegans, one of his men, named Anderson, was treacherously shot. In a pitched battle which took place between his party and the Blackfeet, he lost seven more of his men; and in a squabble with the Iroquois of his own party; he was badly wounded from an accidental discharge of a gun.”

On page 50 is noted: "Crossing in succession five small branches of the head waters of the Missouri. On one of these it was that M'Donald lost his man Anderson, last year by the Piegans." On page 54 to 59, Ross records the particulars of the battle in which McDonald lost the seven men; while killing sixty-eight out of seventy-five of the Piegans, McDonald having but forty-five men with him from the camp.

John Work's Journals kept during the years 1824 to 1834, furnish almost the only source of the history of the Northwest between those years. He is quoted by all writers of the Northwest history; though many errors have crept in the copies; mostly from the ignorance of the transcribers, and confusion of the men of the same surname.

McDonald may have wintered at Spokane House, but more probably at Fort Kooteney at mouth of Rainy Creek, and came in early to Spokane House the winter of 1823-24; for Work says: "April 15th (1824), Thursday, clear fine weather. Left Spokane House early on horseback, accompanied by Mr. Ogden and Mr. McDonald in company with the men and horses loaded with the furs for Spokane Forks, there to embark for Fort George." Again under date of October 21st 1824: "The property and all the Spokane men, but two, were sent off to Spokane House in charge of Mr. McDonald. Mr. Ogden remained with me and the remainder of the extra men, to wait for the express". Mr. Ogden immediately moves to Flathead Post, and took charge of the Snake Expedition for 1824-25. This post was at this time near Weeksville, Mont., or about thirty miles above Saleesh House.

The next connection we have of McDonald's journey is in David Douglas's *Journal*, page 140, (Date August 19th, 1825.) "Toward afternoon left (Fort Vancouver) in a small canoe with one Canadian and two Indians, in company with a party of men going on a hunting excursion to southwards, on a visit to the Multnomah (Willamett) River, one of the southern branches of the Columbia." It should appear that the other party was not in boats but used horses. This was connected up by Douglas on page 197, date July 5th, 1826, at Fort Nez-Perces (Walla Walla) on which he remarks: "On my return in the evening, I found Messrs. McDonald and McKay on their way to the sea (Vancouver) (the same persons I accompanied last year in August) a few days march on the

Multnomah River". In a letter to Mr. Joseph Sabine of England he says: page 198: "As I have accidentally met with a Mr. McDonald on his return from a hunting excursion in the south, (Ogden's Snake Expedition Eastern Oregon), the same person I accompanied a few days march last August on the Multnomah River, he has kindly offered to take the result of my labors for the last month, which I willingly accepted". Douglas not willing to wait at Nez-Perces for his correspondence, accompanies McDonald and party down the Columbia and at the Great Dalles, six miles below the Great Falls he meets his "old friends John Work and Archy McDonald"; and his *Journal* connects with John Work's *Journal*. He says: "Sunday 10th July, (1826) In the evening Messrs. F. McDonald T(homas) McKy(Kay), T(homas) Dears; arrived at the other end of the Portage with two boats and 18 men, and part of the Snake Expedition from Walla Walla, on the way to Ft. Vancouver. Mr. Ogden and part of the men are gone by the Willamut mountains with horses. Mr. D. Douglas also came with the party to meet us". Monday July 11th—"The Snake party also proceeded on to Fort Vancouver. Messrs. Douglas and F. McDonald returned with us."

On July 17th, 1826, a party starts from Fort Nez Perces to buy horses of the Nez-Perces; consisting of Archy McDonald, James Douglas, F. Annance, John Work, an interpreter, and twenty-eight men. "Mr. D. Douglas accompanies us to make collections of plants". This party has a squabble with the Indians on the 30th day of July, at the junction of Clearwater and Snake Rivers, which was amicably settled; on the 31st he notes: "Having everything in readiness,—After an early breakfast Messrs. F. McDonald, J. Douglas and myself accompanied by six men set out overland with the horses, 79 in number, including 2 brought a few days ago from W. Walla by Mr. F. McDonald"—"Mr. D. Douglas accompanies us on his botanical pursuits"—"Mr. A. McDonald took his departure for W. Walla, with the two boats and the rest of the men."

D. Douglas, on page 202, says of that: "Parted with Mr. McDonald who descended the river; and Mr. Work, and two men and myself, (omits the six men) took our departure overland." They arrived at Fort Colville, 7:00 P. M. 4th of August, 1826. Finan McDonald was with them, and his family is noted on 7th of Aug-

ust. "Mr. Kittson arrived at the lower end of the Portage with their (three) boats and the outfit for Colville and their passengers and their baggage. he has been ten days from Walla Walla to Okanagan and ten from Okanagan to this place." Sept. 2nd is a note at the east end of the "Long Portage" [Cusick]: "The horses sent from the Fort (Colville) are two short of the number mentioned by Mr. McDonald."

Sunday September 10th, 1826, he records: "The express boat started in the evening, deeply loaded with passengers, baggage, and provisions. There are in all 20 passengers, and 23 pieces of provisions, corn, grease, and dry meat. * * * Mr. McDonald and family, (wife and four children), Mr. Daase and family" and others. This is the account where Finan McDonald leaves the Columbia for good.

David Douglas' *Journal* picks up McDonald on the east side of the Rockies at Edmonton the next summer; page 264, it says: "Mr. (Finan) McDonald, the person who had in charge my box of seeds addressed to be left at Fort Edmonton, on the Saskatchewan River, had endured much misery descending the Athabasca, the ice being taken before he had made good half his journey." Douglas arrives overland at Fort Edmonton in company of an old Nipissing Indian. On page 268: "I found Mr. F. McDonald here, who took charge of my box last year. * * * Rose at daybreak, and had my box opened, found the seeds in much better order than could be expected from the trouble the person had before he reached this place." Continuing on page 270, date June 1st, 1827, he gives an account of Mr. F. McDonald's encounter with a buffalo bull: "Mr. Herriot and Ermatinger and three hunters went off, to the opposite side (of the Saskatchewan) to a herd and killed two very large and fine animals. A party from our boat was sent off to help them. Accompanied by Mr. F. McDonald they were readily guided to their companions by calls, and found H. and E. pursuing a bull they had wounded, in which he joined. The animal, which had suffered less injury than was expected, turned and gave chase to Mr. McDonald and overtook him." The party had run out of ammunition. After some hours delay, the bull got up and walked away. McDonald had thrown the bull and held him down, but had become insensible. McDonald was fearfully injured and senseless, but received first aid, and was rushed by boat to Carlton House, to meet Dr. (Sir John) Richardson, where they arrived 2:00 P. M. the

3rd; but found Dr. Richardson was below at Cumberland House, where they arrived at 5 P. M. the 9th of June, 1827.

The next mention, and that by reference, is on page 278, date Sunday 8th of July: "Arrived at the establishment on the River Winnipeg (Fort Alexander or Basch) the Riviera of the Voyagers. We were welcomed there by Mr. John McDonald, a brother of the person who crossed the Rocky Mountains last autumn; he was also on his way to Canada". There is an obscurity here, as to who is, on his way to Canada, Finan or John, though both of them went there about that time. This brother John McDonald was a Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at, or after, the amalgamation of 1821. Lists of that year show him as No. 3, but he is not mentioned in the records of 1834 or subsequently. He had the sobriquet among the French voyageurs of "McDonald Grand", to distinguish him from four other Chief Traders or Factors by the name of John McDonald. Its to be inferred that he was built on the same lines as Finan.

Our next information of Finan McDonald is contained in a letter from Archy McDonald to Francis Ermatinger dated 1844; in which is mentioned the report that "our friend Captain McDonald had, in the Provincial Parliament of Canada West, interrogated the Premier of the province regarding the Rideau River and Canal;" with the suggestion: "That he probably did it with the same elate that he did the Blackfeet and Buffalo bull". This remark connected this Captain McDonald with Finan McDonald of the West.

In the history of Glengarry County it is stated that F. McDonald was commissioned Captain in the First Regiment of the Glengarry Militia on the 4th of January, 1838, and elected member of the Provincial Parliament for Canada West, (now Ontario) from Williamstown for 1843-44.

These are some of the items that have come to our notice regarding Finan McDonald, Fur Trader, Explorer and Legislator.

He was not of the mental temperament to be elected to the higher positions in the fur companies; that required the highest qualifications.

J. A. MEYERS