Historical Manitoba

The first recorded visit of the country that might be now a portion of the Province, is that of Captain Thomas Button who in 1612 sailed into Hudson's Bay and wintered at the mouth of the Nelson River. Subsequently many visits were paid to the Hudson Bay by the English early in 1670, obtained from the fur trade, King Charles I issued a charter to a Company which afterwards became known as the Hudson's Bay Company, for the fur trade of Churchill River. In 1689 Henry Kelsey started westerly from the fort, the first man known to explore the western interior. In 1734 Jean La Verendrye (son of Pierre La Verendrye) explorating westerly from the Great Lakes and Lake of the Woods, travelled as far as Portage la Prairie. In 1738 Pierre La Verendrye, Sieur de Varennes, reached the Assiniboine River and Lake Manitoba, and built the Fort Maurepas on the Red River. For the next three quarters of a century the fur traders built forts which followed the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Rivers as far as Winnipeg, explored the Red and Assiniboine Rivers as far as the Souris, and trading posts were established throughout the whole western country. In 1811 Lord Selkirk purchased 116,000 square miles of land and established a colony at Kildonan, near Winnipeg, which was the first agricultural settlement in Western Canada. In 1812 Lord Selkirk purchased 15,000 square miles of land from the Hudson's Bay Company for the sum of £84, and trading posts were established throughout the present Province, particularly at Fort Alexander, Fort Dauphin, Fort Pelican, Fort Pine, Fort Oxford House, Fort Nelson, Fort Churchill, Fort Severn, Fort Albany, Fort Moose, Fort Abitibi, Fort Frances, Fort Alexander, Fort Pembina, Fort Ellice, Fort Qu'Appelle, Fort Pelly, Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, Fort Vermilion, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Simpson, Fort Resolution, Fort Yukon, Fort Liard, Fort Nelson, Fort Halkett, Fort Dease, Fort Simpson, Fort Wrigley, Fort Norman, Fort Rae, Fort Resolution, Fort Chipewyan, Fort Vermilion, Fort Simpson