Thomson Sherle

2477 Westminster Ave.

London, England

June 18, 1868

Dear Father

I just landed in Montreal a couple of days ago, communicating with people here has been less difficult than I thought because most people here speak English, but I hate the French speaking people here because of their dumb language. Sailing from London was a long trip but I think it will be worth it. My plan is to move west to buy land and farm out there so that I can raise a family and make a living. Luckily I met up with a couple of people in a local tavern and they were talking about moving west to the Red River settlement, just where I wanted to go. Because the season is just turning to summer the weather has been sunny with not a rain cloud in sight and it is very hot here as well. I am very excited to start my new life here in the Dominion of Canada. I’ll write back to you when I leave to go settle out west, but first I need to find lodging for the winter and a job.

From

Ethan

Thomson Sherle

2477 Westminster Ave.

London, England

May 3, 1869

Dear Father,

Sorry it has been so long since my last letter. What happened well, I found a nice British woman that I married, and her name is Sarah. We also joined up with a couple of English speaking people that were also going to settle in the Red River Area as well. I paid for my rent, food, water, etc. by transporting foreign goods like tea, furs, coal etc. as well as fish and timber from other provinces, from the trading ship to the docks and to industries. I was going to send a letter earlier but the weather was so bad in the Atlantic and here in Montreal that I just couldn’t. Our group is going to portage our way to the settlement, going through the great lakes then we will be on foot the rest of the way. The men in our group have saved up as much money as needed so that we could to buy canoes, food, water clothes etc. for the trip. We will be heading out next week and I’ll write to you again when we get there.

My deepest regards,

Ethan

Thomson Sherle

2477 Westminster Ave.

London, England

Jan 11, 1870

Dear Father,

I did it, I finally made to the Red River Settlement. It’s so refreshing and cool here. There is so much vegetation here. We have bearberries, stinging nettles, wildflowers and so much more. There is not a lot of forest or trees in this area, more prairie land, which is good for settling on, to farm. Now I’m not sure if you heard the news, but there was a rebellion by the Metis against the surveyors and new lieutenant Governor McDougall. In November armed Metis blocked McDougall’s entrance into Red River. Then more Metis people took over Fort Garry which gave them control of the settlement, they didn’t even have to fire a single shot! After Rupert’s Land was officially purchased, Louis Riel (who is the leader of the metis people) formed a provincial government which Riel is leading. After all of that, our group arrived and my wife and I bought a plot of land to build our farm house on so that we could begin to raise our family. Send all my love to mother and the rest of the family, tell them I’m doing fine. Write back soon.

From

Ethan

Thomson Sherle

2477 Westminster Ave.

London, England

June 28, 1873

Dear Father,

Hello, how are you, Sarah and I have been doing just fine. We’ve been blessed with a new member of the family. A baby boy named Albert, he turns two in March. Much has happened over here in the past three years. Firstly, a man named Thomas Scott who was a surveyor, got arrested by the Metis military and began to fight with guards and verbally assault them, he also threatened to kill Riel for this he was sentenced to death. Riel recommended mercy for Scott but he was executed. The news got to Prime Minister MacDonald, many English-speaking Ontario Protestants wanted Riel brought to justice. MacDonald needed the support of Ontario and Quebec but he was having a hard time keeping them happy. Manitoba, which used to be the Red River Settlement, has now become the fifth province of the Dominion of Canada and to keep Metis people happy, the Manitoba Act included the Metis List of Rights. Originally I hated these Metis people because of their native background, but seeing and hearing about their rebellion and way of life made me change my mind. There was still much unrest in Manitoba so MacDonald sent in troops. They were looking for Riel but didn’t find them, so some of the troops attacked Riel’s friends. Fearing for the safety of his life and his friends, Riel fled to the states. Secondly, British Columbia had three gold rushes and many people moved there, then when BC ran out of money, it became the sixth province in Canada. As you can see there was many things that happened in the last three years. The farmstead has been going well and we’ve also got resources like coal, fish and lumber from the provinces to the east of us. Send our love to the family back home and will talk soon

From

Ethan