

Red River
November, 1812

Dear Donald,

I don't know when you will get this letter. We are in an awful mess. I never wanted to come to this country, and I'm really sorry we did!

We left Stromness on June 24 and had a good trip, but it took two whole months! At first it was fun to see how the sailors worked on the ship, but it soon got really boring. There was nothing to do, and the sailors said that we got in their way. Was I glad to see land. We landed at this place called York Factory and then had to get to an awful place called The Forks. We didn't get there until October 27, and it was getting cold.

When we got to The Forks we didn't get anything that we were promised. There was no food for us. There aren't even any buildings. The fur traders didn't want us there, so we went to a place called Pembina for the winter. We've got a place to live and some food but the food is really strange. We have to eat stuff called pemmican. It's dried bison meat stored in melted fat mixed with berries and things. You boil it up into stew. Ugh! I don't like it but there isn't much else to eat unless we can hunt for some rabbits or deer.

I wish we'd never come to this awful place.

Your friend,
Andrew Mcfarlane