



# The Ermatingers: A 19th-century Ojibwa-Canadian Family

*W. Brian Stewart*

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In about 1800, fur trader Charles Ermatinger married an Ojibwa woman, Mananowe. Their three sons grew up with both their mother's hunter-warrior culture and their father's European culture. As adults, they lived adventurously in Montreal and St Thomas, where they were accepted and loved by fellow citizens while publicly retaining their Ojibwa heritage.

*The Ermatingers* contrasts the "European" commercial and trading society in urban Montreal, where Charles was brought up, with the Ojibwa hunter/warrior values of Mananowe's society. Their sons variously risked life at war in Spain and in the Upper and Lower Canada rebellions, policed Montreal streets in an era of riots, spied on the Fenians on the US border, and made a hazardous journey to help establish the Canadian Pacific Railway's route. Brian Stewart argues that the sons' Ojibwa traditions and values shaped their adult lives: during their adventures, the sons fought for Native rights for themselves as well as for Ojibwa relatives and friends.

*The Ermatingers* is an exciting story that contributes to our understanding of Indian and European biculturalism and its effects on those who make up the various forms of Metis society today. It will appeal to general readers as well as scholars and students in Native studies and Canadian history.

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