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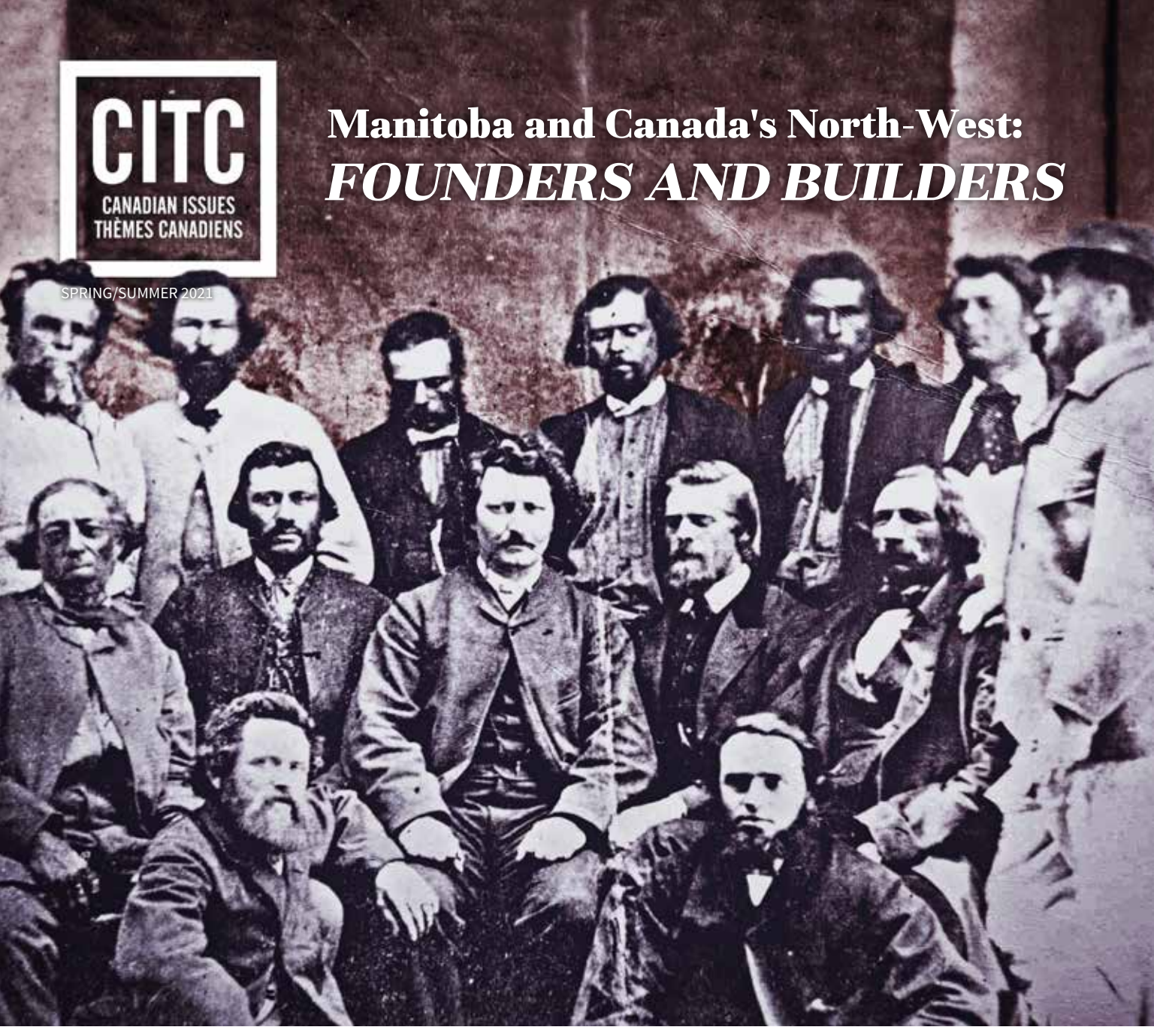
THÈMES CANADIENS
SPRING/SUMMER 2021

Manitoba and Canada's North-West:
FOUNDERS AND BUILDERS



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William George Richardson Hind, *Red River Cart*, 1862.
Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

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COVER

Unknown Photographer, Louis Riel and the Councillors of the Provisional Government of the Métis Nation, 1870. Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

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INTRODUCTION

A LAMENT TO MANITOBA

ROBERT WARDHAUGH

Robert Wardhaugh is Professor of History at Western University. He is an expert in Canadian regional (the Prairie West) and political (late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century) history. Professor Wardhaugh is author of *Mackenzie King and the Prairie West (2000), Behind the Scenes: The Life and Work of William Clifford Clark* (2010), and *The Rowell-Sirois Commission and the Remaking of Canadian Federalism* (2021) with Barry Ferguson. He is editor of three collections on the Prairie West, including *Manitoba Premiers of the 19th and 20th Centuries* (along with Barry Ferguson). Professor Wardhaugh is also co-author of the widely-used university textbooks on Canadian history, *Origins and Destinies* (with Alan MacEachern).

Over the past few decades, Canadians have heard much about historical anniversaries. We have been told that as a country it is important to commemorate and celebrate our past achievements. Without these historic milestones, our sense of nationhood will weaken and fragment. From the War of 1812 to the First World War of 1914-18, there have been no shortage of nationalistic, self-congratulatory commemorations. However, being aware of our histories is not the same as celebrating them. This point became only too apparent during the attempts to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation and its birth as a nation in 1867. For those old enough to remember the Centennial of 1967, and the surge of English-Canadian nationalism at the time, the celebrations of 2017 seemed a pale comparison. Perhaps Canadians are indeed beginning to grapple with the lessons our histories have to teach us.

In 2020 Manitoba turned 150 years old. To be more precise, the political creation of the province of Manitoba occurred a century and a half ago. While debate continues over whether Confederation should be celebrated or whether statues of Canada's first prime minister, John A. Macdonald, should be removed, there should be less debate over whether Manitoba's entry into Confederation as the fifth province in 1870 is a cause of celebration. To be blunt, it isn't. The articles presented here by a selection of Manitoba's academic story-tellers make that fact abundantly clear.

In 1957, Manitoba's most eminent historian, W.L. Morton, wrote a provincial history that still holds up to this day. Morton was raised in the small town of Gladstone, Manitoba and his interpretation of the province's history was predicated on Red River as a dual society that struck a balance between

French-Catholic Métis and British-Protestant settlers. The Manitoba Act of 1870 that created the province was portrayed as the successful embodiment of this dual character. For Morton, the struggle for Manitoba was a microcosm of the struggle for Canada. While the flood of Ontario settlers following the 1870 accord threatened this duality, the western immigration boom of 1896 to 1911 brought a diversity of peoples. In Morton's mind, Manitoba was a British-Canadian province but immigration patterns ensured a culturally-pluralistic society. There was much to celebrate. In the second edition of *Manitoba: A History*, published in 1967 to commemorate Canada's centennial, Morton lamented the decline of rural life and the weakening of the British connection, but maintained a dualistic interpretation.

How times change and historical interpretations along with them. Many Canadians today want something to celebrate when they think about their histories. While they generally understand that we should not "white wash" our past and omit more negative and darker chapters, they also reject the idea that history is more bad than good. Unfortunately, it is often the case, whether it fits into our desired construction of the past or not. And while political polarization only exacerbates and obscures the issues, the truth is that while some may celebrate Manitoba as the province it eventually became, there was little if anything to celebrate after 1870.

A quick glance at the various actors involved in Manitoba's entry into Confederation makes this point obvious. Were there any winners in 1870? The Indigenous nations surrounding Red River, such as the Anishinabe and Swampy Cree, were completely ignored in the negotiations that led to the British purchase and transfer of Rupert's Land from Hudson's Bay Company control to Canada, what Gerry Friesen dubbed "the largest real estate deal in Canadian history." The arrival of settler colonialism (the process and structure of dispossessing indigenous peoples of their land base and replacing them with invasive settlers who assert their own narratives of belonging) led rapidly to the signing of the Numbered Treaties to extinguish aboriginal title to the lands of the Prairie West. The treaty process led to broken promises and relocation, famine and disease, segregation onto reserves, and the residential school system.

"The treaty process led to broken promises and relocation, famine and disease, segregation onto reserves, and the residential school system."

The Métis were successful in the Red River Resistance. At least this is how it appeared for a brief instant in 1870. Led by Louis Riel, the dominant group in Red River successfully negotiated the Manitoba Act that brought the Settlement into Canada as a province. The Act promised protections for the French language and schools, and a land grant for the Métis. Like the Treaties, however, these promises were broken almost as quickly as they were made. Manitoba's "Father of Confederation," Louis Riel, was chased from the province and into exile by the raping and murdering Wolseley Expedition recently arrived from Canada to "restore" law and order. As Ontarians moved in, many Métis abandoned their Red River homeland and moved further into the Northwest, where they

would find themselves in an even more devastating and consequential conflict with Canada fifteen years later. The Métis convinced Riel to return and lead his people once again. And Riel attempted to follow a path similar to that followed in Manitoba in 1870. But conditions were not the same in 1885. The immediate threat of American annexationism had passed, the North-West Mounted Police were in place across the region, and the near-complete Canadian Pacific Railway allowed the Macdonald government in Ottawa to get troops out west relatively quickly. The Métis were eventually crushed and Riel was hanged as a rebel. The Métis, along with other Indigenous nations, were pushed to the margins of history where they were expected to die out or assimilate.

> **"The Métis, along with other Indigenous nations, were pushed to the margins of history where they were expected to die out or assimilate."**

The interests of Quebec were represented in Red River by the Roman Catholic Church, a close ally of the Métis and a long-standing source of missionaries in the region. Over fifty percent of the population of Red River was French and Catholic in 1870. Bishop Alexandre-Antonin Taché of St. Boniface was absent from Red River during the Resistance while he attended the First Vatican Council in Rome but Father Noël-Joseph Ritchot played an instrumental role as one of the three representatives of the Settlement who negotiated the Manitoba Act in Ottawa. While they failed to gain their desired buffer-reserve for French Catholics in Manitoba, they were successful in creating a bilingual and bicultural province. But the victory was to be short-lived. The influx of Ontario settlers in the two decades that followed left the French Catholics as only ten percent of the population. The Manitoba Schools Question of the 1890s put another nail in the coffin of the Manitoba Act and made it clear that French Catholics in the province came out on the losing end.

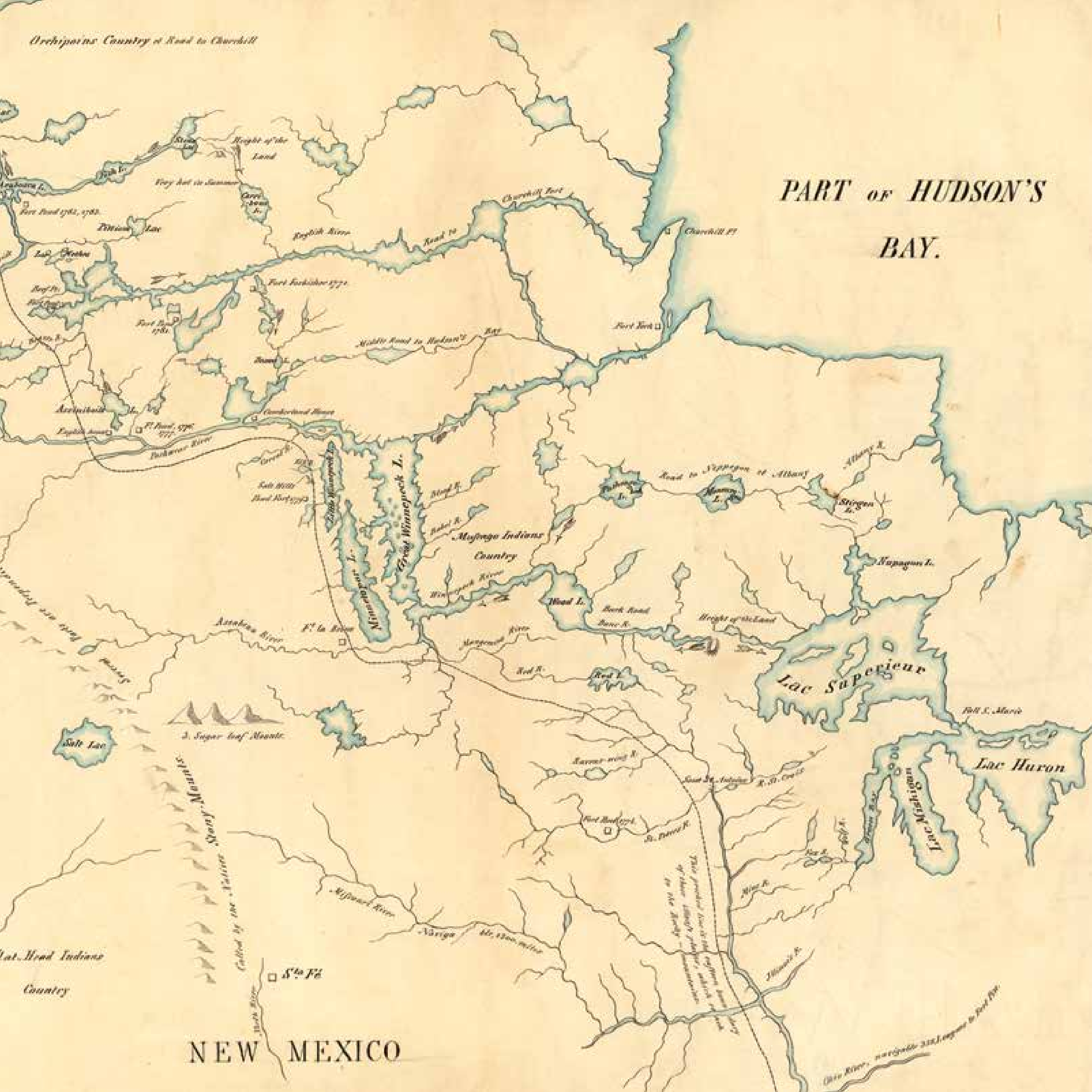
Even Canada and its prime minister had little to celebrate in 1870. It was not in John A. Macdonald's "dream of nation" to create the young dominion's fifth province only three years after Confederation had been achieved. The creation of provinces was supposed to happen further down the road. Indeed, the plan from Ottawa was to receive the transfer of Rupert's Land, sign treaties with Indigenous nations, survey the Northwest for white settlement, build a transcontinental railroad, and then bring in immigrant farmers to create the nation's breadbasket as well as consumers for central Canada's manufactured goods. The Northwest was to be Canada's colony – a colony of a colony. Macdonald's plan, however, was temporarily scuttled when the Red River Settlement resisted. Anxious over fears of American annexationism and with no rail connections to dispatch a military force from Ontario quickly, the federal government had little choice but to negotiate and accept the creation of the "postage stamp" province decades earlier than Canada desired.

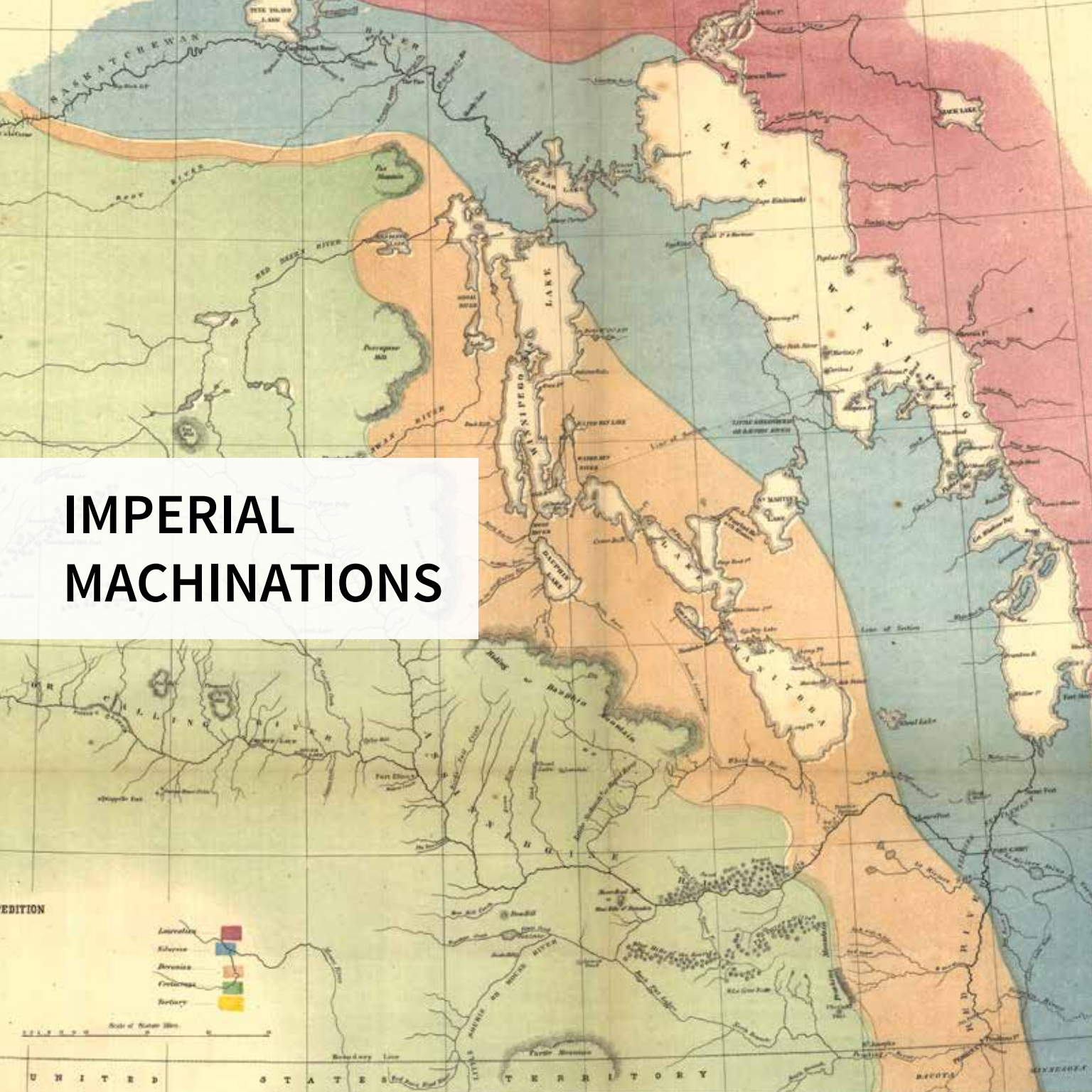
While settler colonialism was the real winner in Manitoba's creation, even its immediate adherents were only partial victors. By 1870 Red River had been infiltrated by a group known as the "expansionists," generally referring to ambitious British-

Protestant Ontarian speculators who had arrived in the Settlement as the vanguard of what was to come. The purchase of Rupert's Land provided the opportunity for Ontario to expand westward, thereby overwhelming its rival Quebec for national influence. But the Manitoba Act instead created a "little Quebec" with provisions for bilingualism and denominational (Catholic) schools. The expansionists resisted the resisters by opposing Riel's provisional government, but the result was the execution of one of their own – Thomas Scott. The fateful move would lead ultimately to Riel's exile after 1870 and his own execution in 1885. It stirred up serious divisions between Quebec and Ontario for years to come. It would take Macdonald's Conservative Party a century to recover from the damage done in Quebec. The Métis became a pawn in the larger struggle between Quebec and Ontario but the truth is, neither really cared about the Métis or Manitoba.

The story of Manitoba's creation is unique amongst the provinces of Canada. As history, the story of the Red River Resistance makes for more riveting reading than the tales of political negotiation and compromise, that resulted in Confederation and the addition of other provinces. But as the contributions to this special issue on Manitoba's Founders and Builders make clear, the consequences of the Red River Resistance and Manitoba's creation as a province are lamentable. And these consequences are still very much with us today.

Peter Pond, *Hudson's Bay's Country*, 1785. Image Courtesy of Library of Congress. ►


PART OF HUDSON'S
BAY.
Orchipoins Country et Road to Churchill
Height of the Land
Very hot in Summer
Churchill Fort
Churchill Ft
English River
Fort York
Middle Road to Hudson's BAY
Cumberland House
Assiniboils L.
Little Winnepeck L.
Great Winnepeck L.
Winnipique L.
Mistongo Indians
Country
Winnepeck River
Road to Neppegon et Albany
Albany R.
Nupagon L.
Wood L.
Height of the Land
Lac Superieur
Fall S. Marie
Lac Huron
Lac Michigan
Ft. la Reine
Assiniboin River
Red R.
Red L.
Salt Lac
3. Sugar loaf Mounts.
Called by the Natives Stony Mounts.
Missouri River
Fort Bedford
St. Peters R.
Illinois R.
Flat Head Indians
Country
Sta. Fé
NEW MEXICO
Ohio River, navigable 332 Leagues to Fort Pitt


IMPERIAL
MACHINATIONS

CANADA OBTAINS AN EMPIRE

JAMES MOCHORUK

Jim earned his BA (Hons) from the University of Winnipeg and his MA and Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba and has taught at the University of North Dakota since 1993. His book-length publications include, *The People's Co-op: The Life and Times of a North End Institution* (Halifax: 2000); *"Formidable Heritage:" Manitoba's North and the Cost of Development, 1870 to 1930* (Winnipeg: 2004); *Re-Imagining Ukrainian-Canadians: History, Politics and Identity* (Toronto: 2011), a collection of essays co-edited with Rhonda Hinther; and *Civilian Internment in Canada: Histories and Legacies* (Winnipeg: 2020.), yet another collection of essays co-edited with Rhonda Hinther. Jim has recently submitted another book manuscript to Uof M Press, entitled *For a Better World: The Winnipeg General Strike and the Workers' Revolt*, a collection of essays co-edited with Jim Naylor and Rhonda Hinther of Brandon University. He is currently working on a book-length study concerning the social and economic history of Winnipeg – and its many real and imagined communities – in the inter-war period.

Canadian historian William Lewis Morton once observed that the Canadian acquisition of Rupert's Land in 1869-70 was "One of the greatest transfers of territory and sovereignty in history…" He completed his thought by noting that the whole matter "was conducted as a mere transaction in real estate."[1] This has always struck a note with me, replete with images of bewhiskered HBC Directors, dignified British Government officials and dandified Canadian representatives sitting around a succession of board room tables in London over the course of six months, negotiating the exact terms of the "deal."

It is no understatement to say that this "deal" transformed Canada: it not only brought a huge swath of North America under Canadian control, but also made possible the realization of the real prize – getting the Crown Colony of British Columbia to join Confederation only one year later, making Canada, barely more than a colony itself, a trans-

1 W.L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967 ed), 117.

◂ Henry Youle Hind, *Geological Map of a Portion of Rupert's Land*, 1859. Image Courtesy of University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections.

continental nation within four years of its founding. This was nation building on a grand scale, and at a price tag of only £300,000 for one twentieth of the arable land in the fertile belt (plus land around existing posts and a few other lesser concessions) it humbled both Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase and William Seward's more recent Alaska purchase.[2] Even better, it kept both the HBC territories and British Columbia out of the hands of the always avaricious Americans, preserving these lands and other natural resources for the use of the (white) peoples of Canada and the larger British Empire. What had been a sparsely populated fur trading and Indigenous "frontier" would now be open for settlement and development on an almost unimaginable scale. In effect, the pathway to the Canada of today had been set.

> **"What had been a sparsely populated fur trading and Indigenous 'frontier' would now be open for settlement and development on an almost unimaginable scale."**

I have always thought of these negotiations as being akin to a high-stakes poker game. The shareholders of the HBC, most of them relatively new investors who had taken control of the company in 1863, wanted an immediate return on their investment.[3] The British Imperial Government desperately wanted to keep the HBC territories and British Columbia as part of the British Empire, but didn't want the expense or bother of maintaining a Crown Colony, or heaven forbid, dealing with another New Zealand (which was occupying the energies of up to 18,000 British troops in the 1860s). The newly founded nation of Canada had already promised its inhabitants – right in the British North America Act of 1867 – that it would take control of this territory and make it part of Canada. The stakes were high – some said Canada's future hung in the balance, for without Rupert's Land Canada would never be able to link up with British Columbia, and never be able to become a transcontinental nation capable of withstanding the ongoing pressure of American *manifest destiny* to control the continent. And, in this poker game – where the Canadians were playing with money borrowed from the British – the Canadians clearly walked away from the table as the big winners.

> **"The deal was done with absolutely no regard for the views, desires and rights of the Métis and First Nations Peoples who lived in this vast territory – those who had real skin in the game."**

This slightly re-imagined triumphalist narrative

2 Jefferson's administration paid $15,000,000 in 1803 for the Louisiana Purchase and the Andrew Johnson administration paid $7,200,000 for Alaska in 1867. The £300,000 was equal to $1,500,000.

3 In 1863 the HBC had been bought out by a group of railway and financial interests headed by Edward Watkin – the International Financial Society. See "E.A. Mitchell, "Edward Watkin and the Buying-Out of the Hudson's Bay Company, *Canadian Historical Review* (September 1953): 219-244.

was what generations of Canadian school children were offered regarding the "transfer" of 1869-70. But when I consider the deal that was struck in London, and more particularly how it was done and its long-term impact, I feel profoundly non-triumphal. To be blunt, the poker game was played for stakes that didn't really belong to any of the three players. More to the point, the deal was done with absolutely no regard for the views, desires and rights of the Métis and First Nations Peoples who lived in this vast territory – those who had real skin in the game. To these peoples, what the HBC called Rupert's Land and the Canadians called the North-west, was their homeland. Or more accurately, their homelands – plural – as the drainage basin of Hudson's Bay consisted of many overlapping ecological and environmental zones – ecoregions, ecotones (the transitional boundaries between larger ecoregions) and specific habitats; zones that were filled with cultural, spiritual and material significance for the diverse peoples who inhabited them.

As the reports of the Canadian negotiators[4] and the close analysis of those negotiations by historian R.S. Longley make clear,[5] the men involved exhibited not one iota of concern for the Indigenous peoples of the territories in question. Famously, none of the inhabitants of the territories were consulted in any way, shape, or form as the fate of their homeland was being determined. In fact, one struggles to find any mention of Indigenous rights or concerns in any of the correspondence or other documents surrounding these negotiations. The sole exception to this is contained in a letter from Lord Granville (the Colonial Secretary) to Governor Northcote of the HBC, pushing him to accept what would become the final monetary and land compensation package as quickly as possible – on the grounds that the current "state of affairs was unfair to the inhabitants of the West, and there was a grave danger that settlers might flock into the country before it had a stable government."[6] Of course, given the vagueness of his statement, Granville might well have been referring to the small body of Canadian settlers who had already moved out to the Red River colony – so even this comment may not have been about First Nations or Métis peoples.

It would also appear that both the HBC and British Imperial representatives accepted the legal fiction that, prior to the issuance of the HBC charter in 1670, the interior of North America was *Terra Nullius* (the Canadian delegates disputed the validity of the charter, but on different grounds). As a consequence, when that charter – which had made the HBC the "true and absolute Lords and Proprietors" of the entire drainage basin of Hudson's Bay – was being surrendered, all that was required was working out a compensation package acceptable to the HBC's shareholders. Indeed, it is notable that Indigenous peoples are mentioned only once in the Imperial Order-in Council which formally passed Rupert's Land to Canadian control in 1870, and this was a seemingly pro-forma statement which came

4 Canada, *Report of the Delegates Appointed to Negotiate for the Acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1869).

5 R.S. Longley, "Cartier and McDougall, Canadian Emissaries to London, 1868-69." *The Canadian Historical Review*, Volume 26, Number 1, March 1945, pp. 25-41.

6 Cited in *Ibid*., 39.

directly from the Company's Deed of Surrender, exempting the HBC from any responsibility for any land claims that might be made by the Indigenous peoples of the region.[7]

> **"As we commemorate Manitoba's 150th anniversary as part of Canada, I do think that we should be troubled by the way this "transaction" was carried out."**

At one level, one would have to be quite naïve to be surprised by this lack of concern for, or consultation with, Indigenous peoples. Afterall, the annals of British Imperial history are rife with such examples. And yet, as we commemorate Manitoba's 150th anniversary as part of Canada, I do think that we should be troubled by the way this "transaction" was carried out. Why? Well, it needs to be born in mind that the negotiations referred to above took place not in the early modern era when the conception of *Terra Nullius* was largely uncontested among Europeans and when virtually nothing was known of the land or its inhabitants. By the second half of the 19th century neither of these was the case.

Not to put too fine a point upon it, but by the late 1860s there was a roughly two-hundred-year record of interactions with many of the peoples of "Rupert's Land." So, this was most emphatically not *Terra Nullius* – and all three parties to the negotiations knew it only too well.

Since the 17th century the British Imperial Government had allied itself to various First Nations groups, signed treaties and, perhaps most importantly, had issued the Proclamation of 1763 – the bedrock upon which subsequent Crown-Indigenous relations would be based (although at the time the HBC territories were purposely excluded from the terms of the Proclamation). It had also involved itself in the affairs of the western interior on several occasions. These would include the 1749 "Dobbs" Inquiry into the affairs and conduct of the HBC; the 1803 extension of the jurisdiction of Canadian courts into parts of "Rupert's Land"; the actions of 1821 which effectively forced the amalgamation of the HBC and the rival North West Company and granted a new, exclusive license to trade (plus a grant of extraordinary powers extending all the way through to the Pacific Slope); the stationing of British Imperial troops at Red River in 1846; and, perhaps most famously, 1857's Select Committee of Inquiry, which would lay the ground work for the Canadian takeover of HBC territories in the not too distant future.

Meanwhile, the predecessor to the new Canadian state, the colonial administrations of the Canadas, had participated in the administration of "Indian Affairs" in the pre-Confederation era, and a local official had negotiated the Robinson Treaties, which would set the pattern for the "Numbered Treaties" of

7 Great Britain, *Rupert's Land and North-Western Territory – Enactment No. 3, Order of Her Majesty in Council admitting Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory into the union, dated the 23rd day of June 1870*. Clause 14 – copied from the HBC's Deed of Surrender – notes, "Any claims of Indians to compensation for lands required for purposes of settlement shall be disposed of by the Canadian Government in communication with the Imperial Government; and the Company shall be relieved of all responsibility in respect of them."

the post-Confederation era.[8] Beyond this, Canada West was also the home of the Canadian expansionist movement which had been calling for the annexation of the Northwest since 1850; a movement which – among other things – pretended to know all about, and be appalled by, the HBC's lack of concern for the Indigenous peoples in its territories.

> **"So, one could argue that the Canadian state had sent out a representative who was well aware of Indigenous land rights – and saw it as his duty to limit them as far as possible."**

But perhaps most notable of all was that when the new Canadian government commenced negotiating for control over HBC territories one of the two men it sent to London to represent Canada was William McDougall. Not only was he one of the most prominent Canadian expansionists but, while serving as Canada West's Commissioner of Crown Lands, McDougall had personally engineered the repossession of Indigenous reserves on Manitoulin Island – seeing Indigenous land rights as standing in the way of progress![9] So, one could argue that the Canadian state had sent out a representative who was well aware of Indigenous land rights – and saw it as his duty to limit them as far as possible.[10] Finally, we come to the HBC. The latter had a lengthy record of trade, alliance and even inter-marriage with its fur trade partners, and Lord Selkirk had personally participated in the signing of the first western treaty with Chief Peguis in 1817. The Honourable Company's inland officers and servants – if not its new shareholders and Board of Directors[11] – certainly knew that "Rupert's Land" was occupied by diverse and very real human beings who had a profound interest in their homelands – and they knew that these peoples had never conceded sovereignty nor ownership over those lands to any party.

Perhaps most remarkable of all is this: even the residents of the colony at Red River – the beachhead of settler colonialism in the Northwest – were ignored. And this is certainly the oversight which most fascinated Morton when he made his observation about the real estate transaction. Rather kindly, he ascribed no ill intent on the part of the Canadians and largely exonerated the Canadian Government and its representatives from any blame in the matter of not consulting the peoples of the western interior – laying it instead on the

8 Julia Jarvis, "Robinson, William Benjamin," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed January 1, 2021.

9 Suzanne Zeller, "McDougall, William," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed December 11, 2020.

10 McDougall would soon be named the first Lieutenant-Governor of the new territory – a position he never took up because of the Red River Resistance.

11 For most members of the International Financial Society who had bought out the HBC in 1863 focus was upon the southern arable portions of Rupert's Land. Their goal had been to see southern Rupert's Land become the home of a transcontinental railway and the scene of large-scale settlement. They had no broad institutional memory of the company's fur trade history.

Imperial government.[12]

Of course, it would be at Red River that the negotiators' failure to consult or consider the views of the inhabitants of Rupert's Land would yield the most immediate of results, the Red River Resistance of 1869-70. Led by Louis Riel, and supported both by the majority of the Métis, many of the English-speaking "country-born" and local representatives of the Catholic Church, this resistance would cause a brief halt in the transfer and would have an interesting constitutional/political result: Instead of the entirety of Rupert's Land and the North West entering Canada simply as a territorial/colonial appendage, the "Postage Stamp" province of Manitoba was created. This province, however, would be unlike any other member of Confederation. Once again, using Morton's words, Manitoba was to be the "Cinderella of Confederation," as the new province would not have control over its public lands or natural resources, the primary source of funding for most provincial governments – a situation that would remain unchanged until 1930.[13]

This exceptional constitutional status – one that would be shared by Saskatchewan and Alberta after they were created in 1905 – in addition to the impact of federal policies related to immigration/settlement, land, railway and taxation which seemed to favour eastern Canada over "the West" – would lead to what scholars later referred to as western alienation, a trope that was used to explain everything from the rise of Riel (not once, but twice) through to the populist, anti-federalist politics of Alberta throughout the 20th century.

There is no question that Manitoba and its population of immigrants – from Canada, Great Britain, continental Europe, and eventually from many other parts of the world – would be disadvantaged by its status and by some aspects of subsequent federal policy,[14] but this pales in comparison to the disadvantages which confronted the First Nations and Métis peoples of Manitoba and the western interior.

> **"The parsimony, neglect and callousness of the federal administrations of Sir John A. Macdonald as they "cleared the plains" in the 1870s and 1880s is all too well known – as is the subsequent and truly tragic history of Residential Schools and the systemic racism that has plagued Canadian society."**

The Canadian and Imperial governments knew, long before the transfer of 1869-70, that upon taking

12 Morton, *Manitoba*, 117.

13 It is of some note that it was Canada's other representative at the London negotiations of 1868-69, Sir George-Étienne Cartier, who was chiefly responsible for negotiating the peaceful end to the Red River Resistance and creating the new province of Manitoba, with certain guarantees of land rights for the Métis as well as linguistic and religious rights for the French-speaking and Catholic denizens of Manitoba.

14 I have covered this ground fairly extensively in a book-length study on northern development in Manitoba. See Jim Mochoruk, *"Formidable Heritage": Manitoba's Northern Resources and the Cost of Development, 1870-1930.* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2004.), Chapter 4.

"possession" Canada would have to acknowledge Indigenous land rights and negotiate land cession treaties, at least in areas that white settlers and business interests might desire for agricultural, transportation or other economic purposes. Canadian officials also learned – the hard way – that the aboriginal title and land rights of the Métis would have to be acknowledged and treated for, as witnessed by the terms of the Manitoba Act of 1870. Indeed, Canadian officials had begun their post-Confederation quest to acquire Rupert's Land in full knowledge that the transfer would only give the state the preemptive right to obtain Indigenous lands; the concept of aboriginal title was already well established in British common law and, like it or not, the Canadian government would be bound by "the equitable principles which have uniformly governed the British Crown in its dealings with the aborigines."[15] However, by turning this territory over to a Canadian government which had every intention of extinguishing those rights as cheaply and as expeditiously as possible, the transfer of 1869-70 exposed the original inhabitants to levels of abuse and maltreatment that are almost too sad to contemplate. The history of the broken promises of Treaties One and Two, of the hardball negotiations of Lieutenant-Governor Morris in Treaties Three through Six, of the horrific terms of the Indian Act of 1876, and especially of the parsimony, neglect and callousness of the federal administrations of Sir John A. Macdonald as they "cleared the plains" in the 1870s and 1880s is all too well known – as is the subsequent and truly tragic history of Residential Schools and the systemic racism that has plagued Canadian society.[16]

Could things have been different? Perhaps – but not very likely. Morton implied that a more careful, consultative approach might have at least prevented the Red River Resistance. But when one observes the actions and motivations of the Macdonald and Mackenzie administrations of the 1870s and 1880s one cannot help but think that most things would have remained the same. The Canadian and British Imperial desire to have "Rupert's Land" remain part of the British Empire, to keep that territory out of the hands of Americans, and to open up the entire territory to white settlers and developers as quickly as was possible was so deeply entrenched – part of an absolute belief in the propriety of settler colonialism – that it is very hard to imagine another outcome. Indeed, it is even possible that if Canada had not acquired "Rupert's Land" in 1870 the Americans might have annexed it in the succeeding years. And, given the outcomes of American "Indian Policy," this might have had just as bad a result – arguably worse – for Canada's Indigenous peoples.

Playing at what if history is always dangerous – and beyond the scope of this essay. So, at the end of the day, I will conclude simply by noting that when I consider the acquisition and creation of Canada's empire (and my birthplace of Manitoba) I find more occasion for sad reflection than for celebration.

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15 Canada, "Address adopted by the Parliament of Canada, December 16 and 17, 1867" printed in Rupert's Land Order, Schedule A.

16 See for example, James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Indigenous Life*. (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2014) and John Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System 1879-1986*. (University of Manitoba Press, 1999).

THE FORMATION OF MANITOBA IN 1870

BARRY FERGUSON

Barry Ferguson has just retired from the University of Manitoba where he was Professor of History and Duff Roblin Professor of Government. In addition to two ebooks on the 2016 and 2019 Manitoba Provincial elections, he has written eight books including an edited work *Manitoba's Premiers* and a forthcoming book with UBC Press, *The Rowell-Sirois Commission and the Remaking of Canadian Federalism*.

Manitoba became Canada's fifth province in in 1870 by defying the intentions of Canada and the United Kingdom for Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory. Manitoba's original provincehood was the outcome of political negotiation but vulnerable to Canadian disdain for the very constitutional principles it agreed to in 1870. This essay will examine the factors that led to Manitoba's formation in 1870. These can be seen through the three political entities that negotiated the end of Imperial rule, the start of Canadian authority and the fragile provincehood that was defined.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom (UK) was the ruling authority over vast territories described in the mid-19th century as "Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory". British imperial authority was not expressed through direct state power. After 1821, the British government imposed plural institutions in place of the HBC's older sole authority. A series of "bilateral relationships" included the fur traders of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), merchants and traders from "Canada", as well as Church of England and Roman Catholic missions. The new institutions included representative government, a civil court, and British and Canadian missions. The Council of Assiniboia (1835 to 1869) was HBC-dominated but an active local government representing the peoples (or at least the adult males) of Red River. The General Quarterly Court (1835 to 1872) was supervised by the colonial Province of Canada. Church of England missions from the UK and Roman Catholic missions from Quebec began in the 1820s and became entrenched in the Métis Nation and First Nations of Red River and the North-West separate from British or Canadian governmental control.

In 1857, the UK Parliament created a "Select Committee" to engage in a formal review of the HBC's charter. The Select Committee elicited testimony from many Red River, Canadian and British observers, including HBC officers who were outtalked by most other witnesses. The inquiry heard a great deal of concern about the fur trade economy's prospects, about the crimped opportunities for agricultural settlement, about social and legal conditions in the Red River area, and over the possibility that United States expansion might take a northern turn.

The UK government determined that as of 1859, there would be a ten-year transition to ending HBC territorial control. The UK made it clear it would hand off direct responsibility for the administration of the Indigenous peoples, the fur trade and settler communities along with 8 million km^2. of territory. Since the union of the British North American colonies was already proposed, the future of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory lay with that new entity.

Canadian and Imperial historians have for the most part criticized British governments for a lackadaisical administrative style. Yet after 1859, the UK successfully pressed the British North American colonies to complete the Confederation agreement they had talked over but were reluctant to close and to take over the North-West. The 1867 Constitution Act contained a clause, section 146, that made provision for acquiring the remaining British territories in North America and the creation of new provinces. The one task the UK failed to address was preparing the many peoples of the North-West for the impending takeover.

THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT

The second block involved in Manitoba's emergence was the Settlement (as it was sometimes called) of 12,000 people in the immediate area of the forks of the Red, Assiniboine and Seine Rivers. Composed of HBC employees, independent traders, agricultural settlers, and Anglican and Catholic missionaries, the ethno-cultural majority populations were English and French Métis that coalesced in the region. A key facet of the HBC era was that it linked the Settlement with a continental and trans-Atlantic network of trade and many ties to the outside worlds of British North America and Britain. By the time Britain and Canada began the final stage of the transfer, Red River had built up practices of political and legal rights, of religious and educational activities, and of family ties that were the opposite of the isolation, passivity, and torpor that is so often assumed or implied about the Settlement.

"Red River had built up practices of political and legal rights, of religious and educational activities, and of family ties that were the opposite of the isolation, passivity, and torpor that is so often assumed or implied about the Settlement."

CANADA

The third participant in the formation of Manitoba was the Canadian government. Canadians had been

excited by territorial expansion since the 1850s but had done little but gloat over the potential of a massive land grab. The British government organized negotiations between the HBC and Canada in 1868-69 that led to an agreement to purchase HBC title and a transfer of responsibility. The UK agreed to finance the Canadian purchase for 300,000 Pounds Sterling, and pushed the two parties to allow the HBC to claim 1/20th of arable lands in the "fertile belt" of prairie and parkland. By mid-1869 the outlines of an agreement were in place. But the British government did not closely monitor either the last months of HBC rule or Canada's takeover.

> **"Although the Canadians were aware of the challenges in administering the populations of Indigenous nations and the Red River Settlement, they seemed naïve about the entire project."**

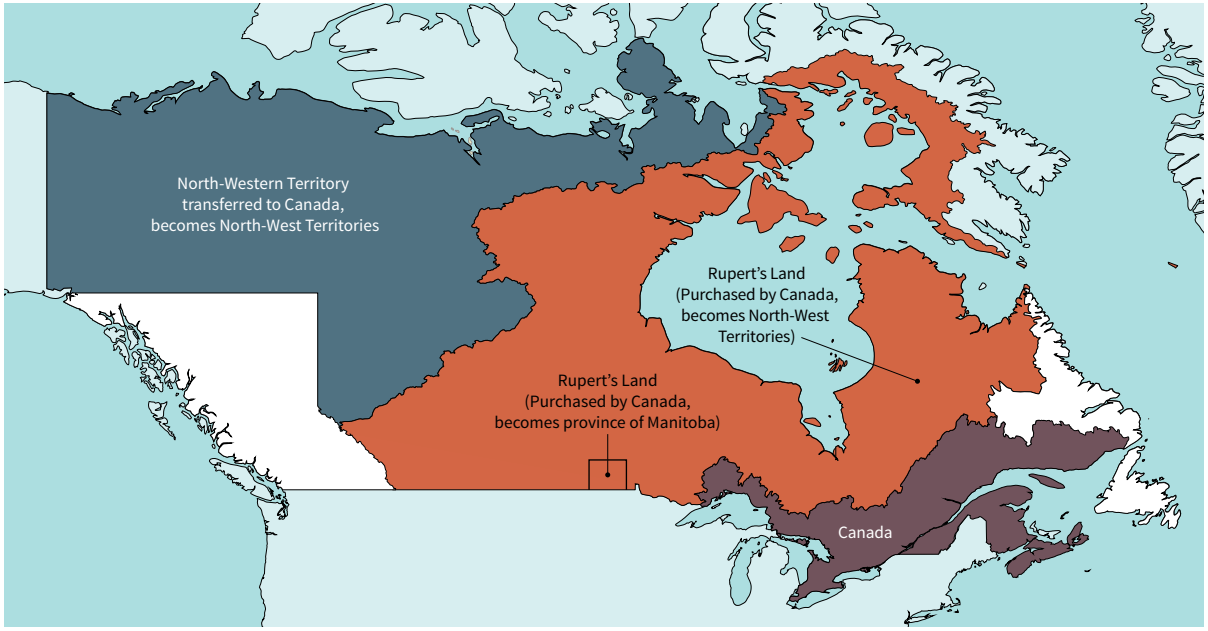
In 1868 and 1869, Canadian politicians, promoters and journalists, particularly "expansionists" from Ontario, contemplated the territorial gains. In May of 1869 Parliament debated the terms of temporary governance and government leaders boasted of their astuteness and the country's good fortune in taking half a continent with the sweep of a pen. A legislative framework was set for the "temporary" rule of the area, surveyors were dispatched to stake lands for future settlers throughout Red River, and a Lieutenant-Governor was "designated" but not installed to prepare the Settlement for a Canadian onslaught. The Canadian government failed to concern itself with the conditions and disposition of the 12,000 people of Red River or inform them of Canadian intentions and goals. Although the Canadians were aware of the challenges in administering the populations of Indigenous nations and the Red River Settlement, they seemed naïve about the entire project.

Canada's takeover was supervised by William McDougall, who was a vociferous exponent of Canadian expansion, a Macdonald government cabinet minister in Public Works and a participant in the HBC-UK negotiations of 1869. His actions consistently worried Red River's population. As a cabinet minister, he had sent the survey crews whose illegal works had alarmed local farmers over their security of land tenure. As putative but not legally-installed Lieutenant-Governor, McDougall travelled through the northern United States to the very borders of the North-West. One cabinet colleague, Minister of the Interior Joseph Howe, had dashed into Red River on an unofficial mission in September of 1869. There he consulted even-handedly with the population and – tellingly – brought back copies of the Council of Assiniboia records so Canada would know for the first time what had been legislated in the Settlement. Howe, a Nova Scotia critic of the 1867 union of British North America, crossed paths with McDougall in Minnesota and warned him to proceed with caution and tact. But Howe exerted no influence over the headstrong McDougall.

RED RIVER'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

Canada provoked Red River into action in the Fall of 1869. When the Council of Assiniboia collapsed at the prospect of the HBC retreat, the long-established Métis nation formed a new council, the *Comité National des Métis de la Riviere Rouge*. It

MAP OF RUPERT'S LAND AND THE NORTH-WESTERN TERRITORY IN 1870



forbade McDougall from entering the Settlement prior to talks. Led by its most charismatic personality, Louis Riel, the Comité provoked a final spasm of activity by the Council of Assiniboia which simultaneously condemned the Riel group and warned McDougall against entering British territory. Once the government in Ottawa became aware of the resistance, it backed away from the final purchase of the HBC lands and postponed its proclamation of possession. The Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald, and the Minister of the Interior, Joseph Howe, ordered McDougall to stay in the Dakota Territory. Communications were slow but not impossible and the messages eventually got through, though too late to stop immediate conflict.

The *Comité* invited English and French language communities to participate in a new "Council of Twenty-Four" which met during November of 1869 to formulate the goals of the Settlement in negotiating Canada's takeover. They did this by drafting a "List of Rights" of one page. These "rights" including an elected legislature, local courts to secure civil rights and land tenure, effective public revenues, equal recognition of French and English, and representation in the federal Parliament.

Without Canada's approval, McDougall attempted to assert his authority. On 1 December, he issued a proclamation accompanied by the threat of a military assault against the local administration. He

relied upon a bellicose group of "Canadians" already anticipating the plunder Canada's takeover would enable. His actions led the Council to declare itself a Provisional Government. As of December 9, 1869, and in the absence of British, HBC or Canadian authority over the area, none of which existed at that point, Red River had an effective government. From that date until July of 1870, several forms of the Provisional Government were in operation. Riel was the pre-eminent figure in these governments, but there was representation from all groups in the Settlement, including the adjacent Saulteaux nation. Many other capable people ensured the administration was not Riel's alone. Throughout the spirited debates and serious efforts to reflect the community's interests and political options, the abiding focus of Red River political life was union with Canada.

> **"Throughout the spirited debates and serious efforts to reflect the community's interests and political options, the abiding focus of Red River political life was union with Canada."**

The Canadian government recognized the Provisional Government in two ways. First, it refused to complete the HBC purchase and then rebuked and recalled McDougall. Second, Canada sent delegations in January of 1870 to conduct talks and arrange for negotiations between Red River and Canada. These efforts and the continuing talks about the Settlement's aims within the Provisional Government led to the selection of three delegates to negotiate the colony's entry into confederation. Three later versions of the "List of Rights" were debated and approved. Each included claims for provincial status, clear definitions of language and religious rights in the legislature, courts and in education, and firm claims for control of public lands and security of land tenure. The final version guided the delegates from Red River.

NEGOTIATING PROVINCEHOOD AND THE MANITOBA ACT

Red River's delegates arrived in Ottawa in mid-April of 1870. John Black was a respected legal officer in the former General Quarterly Court, a member of the Council of Assiniboia and later the Provisional Government. The capable Roman Catholic priest, Father Joseph-Noël Ritchot, was a trusted advisor to Riel and his Métis circle. Alfred Scott, was a local "merchant" (i.e. barman) and minor member of the Provisional Government. Upon their arrival in Ontario, they were harassed by ultra-Protestant supporters of Thomas Scott, a member of the "Canadian Party" which attempted to overthrow the Provisional Government and who was shot after summary conviction. Ritchot and Alfred Scott were briefly held in the Ottawa jail. The trio settled into several days of intense negotiations with federal cabinet ministers headed by George-Etienne Cartier, Macdonald's most powerful ally and pre-eminent figure in Quebec politics. The Red River delegates were able to win most of their demands, and the desperate Canadian government pushed into Parliament a new agreement for the incorporation of Red River into Canada. Under the title of the "Manitoba Act" it was passed in mid-May of 1870 and proclaimed law on 15 July, the day after the sale of the HBC lands went through. Its importance was underlined when Canada submitted the

legislation to the UK. In 1871 the Manitoba Act was approved as an Act of the United Kingdom – and entrenched as a Section of the Constitution Act.

Manitoba was granted provincehood and representation in Parliament, recognition of French and English as languages of the legislature and courts, recognition of denominational (Catholic and Protestant) schools, and a generous federal grant to support governance of the new province. The great exception lay in the control of public lands including natural resources, which were vested with the Federal government. This reservation of control would become a feature of Prairie Provincehood, a serious issue of contention when Alberta and Saskatchewan were formed in 1905 and long a debility of Prairie public finance and control over natural resources. As a sop to Red River, 1.4 million acres of land (1/6 the land area of the original province defined in 1870) was set aside as a "reserve" for the Métis children of Métis settlers. Finally, the Manitoba Act pledged that Ottawa would quickly negotiate "treaties" with the Indigenous peoples of the former Hudson's Bay territories.

THE AFTERMATH

The Act of 1870 resolved the immediate issue of Canada's takeover of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory but it left others unresolved. From the outset, Manitoba was beleaguered. The initial source of trouble was the "expeditionary force" sent by Canada in mid-1870. A combined force of 1,200, including British regulars and Canadian militias, marched into Red River in armed military formation in late August of 1870. It did not await the duly-appointed Canadian Lieutenant-Governor, Adams Archibald. The occupying force intimidated Red River, caused mayhem and loss of life, and cast a shadow over the take-over. The British soldiers soon left, but the Canadian Militiamen remained and resentments were long lasting.

> **"The killing of Thomas Scott remained a rallying cry for Louis Riel's foes in Ontario and it meant that Riel and his Métis allies were barred from secure lives let alone active participation in planning the new province."**

A second and continuing problem was the legal amnesty for the actions undertaken by the Provisional Government. Many in Manitoba and in Quebec thought an amnesty was guaranteed with Manitoba's provincehood. But the Canadian and British governments hedged on the issue for years. The killing of Thomas Scott remained a rallying cry for Louis Riel's foes in Ontario and it meant that Riel and his Métis allies were barred from secure lives let alone active participation in planning the new province.

In the 1870s, the new Lieutenant-Governor, Adams Archibald, implemented the measures to ensure adherence to the Manitoba Act. This began with the formation of a provincial legislature, cabinet government, a public service and law courts, all including francophone language and legal rights. But the administration of the Métis reserve lands, which was a federal responsibility, was a fiasco. A sense of deliberate malfeasance and a policy of dispossession vitiated the Métis population

during the 1870s and ever since. Over the subsequent three decades, other measures were taken to limit and then deny French language and political representation rights as well as Roman Catholic educational rights. The result was the annulment of the original constitutional guarantees of the Manitoba Act. This legacy of federal control over public lands and resources and the later majoritarian gutting of the province's constitutional foundations revealed Manitoba's subordination to Ottawa and to a burgeoning Anglo-Protestant settler population. Both the new majority and the federal government broke up the constitutional and legal foundations so capably negotiated in 1870. A century and a half of political, social and legal strife and conflict has ensued.

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"A GREAT INHERITANCE AND A GREAT PROPERTY": THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, ENGLISH FINANCE CAPITAL AND THE FERTILE BELT[1]

FRANK J. TOUGH

Frank J. Tough, Professor of Native Studies, Faculty of Native Studies and Principal Investigator leading the Métis Archival Project (MAP) Lab, University of Alberta, is an historical geographer with keen interests in legal and economic history. He has provided expert testimony in several Métis rights cases.

The recent closing of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) flagship department store in Winnipeg was a symbolic acknowledgement of the termination of the historical influence of the HBC on the economy and geography of Canada.[2] Founded by Royal Charter in 1670, the HBC had participated in the mercantile revolution that allowed European companies to initiate a global dominance; but unlike all the other state-chartered companies, it survived several subsequent economic revolutions (industrial, financial, consumer). It continues to outlast all the other state chartered joint stock companies (e.g., East India Company, Royal African Company). After 1870, the HBC circumvented extinction by:

- accumulating surpluses through land sales; and
- channelling its merchandizing experience and capital into the modern urban department store.

Despite the loss of monopoly, the fur trade was not abandoned.[3]

The view of Confederation as a successful implementation of a political ideal, along with the acquisition of the Northwest, is an unbalanced nation-building narrative. Cogitation by the Fathers of Confederation cannot deserve all the credit for the creation of the nation state. In fact, the impera-

1 A sojourn at Department of Anthropology at the University of Aberdeen provided an excellent collegial setting to work on the financial dynamics of the Rupertsland Transfer. A longer version of this paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Economic History Society (2018). Thanks to Erik Ellehoj for the mapping out of the HBC Territory and for calculating the surface area of Rupertsland and the North-Western Territory. At different times, Matthew Kearcher, Nicole Anderson, Nathilie Eng, Danielle Patzer and Victoria Anderson assisted with the compilation and presentation of the supporting numerical data set. Encouragement from Peter J. Usher was appreciated.

2 Ian Austen, "Canada Letter," *New York Times* (2 January 2021).

3 Arthur J. Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) p. 12.

tive for both Confederation and western expansion can be traced back to a supportive interest of British capital. This assertion that the Imperial Center, especially "the City," promoted the development of the Canadian nation state is somewhat at odds with the conviction that a sensible compact was fashioned largely out of a spirit of compromise.[4] Instead, it will be demonstrated that finance capital expedited the opening up of the Northwest.

In particular, Sir Edward Watkin played a determining role; as reiterated by E. E. Rich, he was the "motivating genius," and a key promoter of transcontinental railroad and telegraph schemes.[5] He was an influential proponent of both confederation and settlement of The Fertile Belt. The idea that the tiny 1867 nation was geographically or economically feasible without a transcontinental link to the Pacific, and later, the ongoing conversion of regional natural resources to a national wealth requires attention. The map depicts the territory that was transferred to Canada in 1870 and which now accounts for 63.5 percent of our land mass. It entailed 6,276,609 square kilometres and was the largest real estate deal ever (See Figure 1).[6]

With its royal charter, the HBC was a legal barrier to the pursuit of private ownership of land, railways, immigration, urban centres, and cereal production for export. The 1863 buyout of the HBC by the newly formed International Financial Society (IFS) avoided forcing a political rupture with mercantile capital. This investment bank began with the acquisition of the HBC; however, the IFS generally sought "undertaking, assisting, and participating in financial, commercial, and industrial operations, both in England and abroad, and both singly and in connection with other persons, firms, companies and corporations."[7] The directorship of the IFS was comprised of important English and European merchant bankers. Cottrell explained that the IFS "was one of a considerable number of investment banks formed in London during the first half of the 1860s."[8] The creation of investment banks facilitated the export of surplus English capital during the era of High Imperialism (1870-1914).

"The creation of investment banks facilitated the export of surplus English capital during the era of High Imperialism."

4 With respect to British capital's backing of Confederation, see Andrew Smith, *British Businessmen and the Canadian Confederation: Constitutional-Making in an Era of Anglo-Globalization* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008).

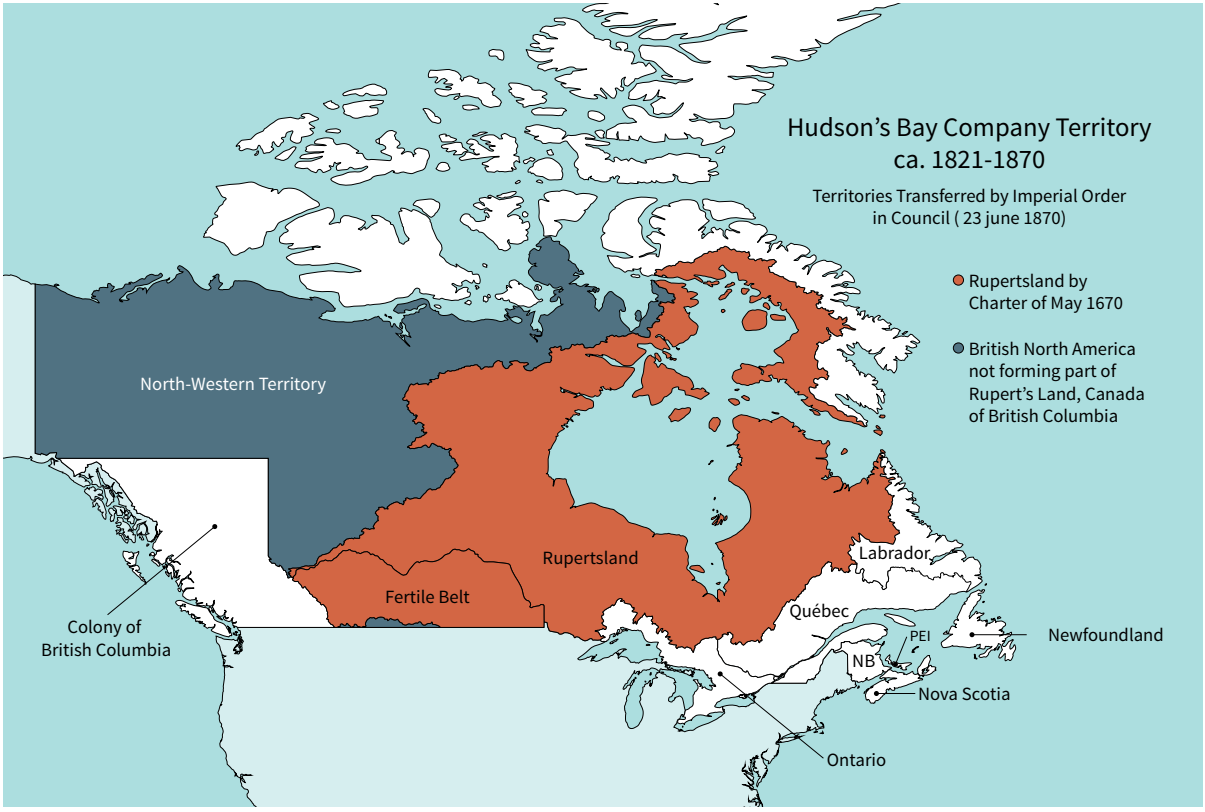
5 E. E. Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870* vol. 3, 1821-1870 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960) p. 820.

6 Given the Empire's fixation on India, it is worth noting that the HBC Territory was much larger than the 3,287,263 km^2 that now make up Indian, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

7 Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company* vol. 3, p. 836.

8 Philip L. Cottrell, « The Role of the International Financial Society in the Buying-Out of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1863, » Revue internationale d'Histoire de la Banque vol. 10 (1975) p. 192; and P. L. Cottrell, *Investment Banking in England, 1856-1881: a case study of the International Financial Society* 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 2012, [original 1985]).

FIGURE 1: ACQUISITION OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TERRITORY, BY CANADA, 1870



Notes: The border between Canada and Labrador was settled in 1927. Arctic Islands were transferred to Canada by Imperial Order in Council (1 September 1880).

After much "toing and froing" about the acquisition of the Fertile Belt for the good of the empire, HBC Governor Berens sarcastically retorted: "If these gentlemen are so patriotic, why don't they buy us out."[9] And they did. Although HBC stock was valued at £500,000, Watkin agreed to Berens' price of £1.5 million! The control of the HBC then passed to Watkin and his IFS backers.[10] Subsequently, the

9 Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company* vol. 3, p. 832.

10 The IFS was founded on 11 May 1863. The first entry in the IFS Capital Journal was a deposit on 28 May 1863 for £366,662 10 s for the issue 146,665 shares (£2/10/0 per share). Hull History Centre (HHC), International Finance [Financial] Society U DFS/24, p. 2.

IFS raised the old stock of £500,000 to £2.0 million following a very promising, and an enthusiastic prospectus; not surprisingly, a widely subscribed public issue ensued.[11] The refinancing of the HBC was not trivial, Cottrell noted that "The size of the transaction dislocated the London money market and led to a heavy demand for discounts at the Bank of England."[12] The refloating of the HBC stock earned the IFS an institutional presence in the London capital market.[13] Historically, profit taking is associated with financial maneuvers and Rich saw an "apparent gift of easy profit" for the IFS.[14] As the IFS minutes referred, "Watkin and friends," were go-betweens for the IFS and HBC.[15] Total payments of £123,967 to Watkin, Potter,[16] and Crédit Mobilier[17] indicate quick gains, the sort that characterize successful financialization.[18] Rather than the state terminating an obsolete monopoly by cancelling its charter, the HBC, in keeping with the march of finance capital and investment banking, was simply bought out by the sort of commercial forces that would also promote formal and informal empire in the late 19th century.

The IFS's buy-out of the Hudson's Bay Company forebode new, but long-lasting and formative, political, and economic directions for both the Northwest and the Dominion of Canada. Purportedly, Colonial Secretary Newcastle, as a steadfast proponent of confederation of the British North American colonies, upon learning of the IFS takeover, "evidently believed that a new era was about to open in the north-west, and the wild animals and fur traders [would] retreat before the march of 'European' settlers."[19] Despite the commercial contrasts between a stayed mercantile company and a hastily organized investment bank, an orderly purchase opened the door to evidential settlement, railways, and cereal production. Still, the HBC remained intact and continued to shape economic development in the Northwest after 1870.

The 1880 edition of Skinner's London Stock Exchange yearbook ceased designating the HBC

11 Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company* vol. 3, p. 838; and Archives of Manitoba, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, A.27/1 International Financial Society Prospectus Issue of Stock in the Hudson's Bay Company, 1863, ff. 93 d-95 (hereafter HBCA).

12 Cottrell, *The Role of the International Financial Society*, pp. 195-196.

13 Cottrell, *The Role of the International Financial Society*, p. 197.

14 Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company* vol. 3, p. 839; however, Cottrell disputed Rich concept of IFS profit taking. Cottrell, "The Role of the International Financial Society," pp. 195-196.

15 HHC, IFS, UDFS/1, *Board Minute Book* (1863-1867) pp. 3-4.

16 Robert Potter was involved in the buyout negotiations and was later appointed to the HBC governing committee. Rich, *History of the Hudson's Bay Company* vol. 3, pp. 836, 838.

17 *Crédit Mobilier's* had a momentary interest in the HBC/IFS. Even such a passing interest is telling, since *Crédit Mobilier* had been instrumental in Napoleon III financial revolution. Michael Lee, *From Malaise to Meltdown: The International Financial Folly, 1844* – (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020) p. 36.

18 Cottrell, *The Role of the International Financial Society*, p. 196.

19 Canada, *Sessional Papers*, 1869, no. 25, *Report of the Delegates appointed to negotiate for the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory*, Sir George E. Cartier and William MacDougall to Sir Frederick Rogers (8 February 1869) p. 19.

as a miscellaneous concern but instead, classifying it as a "Land, Investment, Finance and Discount Company."[20] This assessment reflected the outcome of supervised Colonial Office negotiations between the Company and Canada. A process that secured valuable considerations for the 1870 surrender of the HBC charter rights, including: (1) £300,000 cash; (2) 50,000 acres around its posts (e.g., 3,000 acres at Edmonton); and (3) 1/20th of the Fertile Belt. Manifestly, 1/20th of the surveyed Fertile Belt was a large estate in land. In 1930, the Department of Interior reported that some 7,031,257 acres had been granted to the HBC,[21] but as of 31 January 1931, the HBC still held title to 2,381,364 acres.[22] In other words, after six decades, 33.9 percent of the estate remained. Bookkeeping records for 1961 indicate some leased and unsold lands, lingering residuals of a diminished estate.[23]

> **"Because the HBC served as both the vender and the mortgagee, considerable revenues were earned by interest from the land."**

The Long Depression (1873-1896) precluded quick speculative returns for those that had bought shares in the 1863 HBC refloated. Later, and coincident with the Wheat Boom, land revenues escalated (see Figure 2). The Land Department costs involved: salaries and commissions, surveying and land inspection, advertising, rent, office costs, etc., and legal expense, and taxes.[24] The Land Department's revenues included:

- Cash received for farming land sales;
- Cash received for town lot sales; and
- Interest received on instalments and rents.

Because the HBC served as both the vender and the mortgagee, considerable revenues were earned by interest from the land. The essential components of the HBC sale policies were to:

- Finance the purchaser over seven to eight years at seven percent per annum;
- Sell at higher prices than other corporate holders of large prairie land grants; and
- Operate with a long-view of its valuable land estate, but as diminishing capital.

The sale of land around posts was a significant source of revenue. For the year ending 13 March 1913, Edmonton town lots generated £372,785 10 s

20 Thomas Skinner, *The Stock Exchange Year-Book: 1880* (London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin, 1880) p. 199.

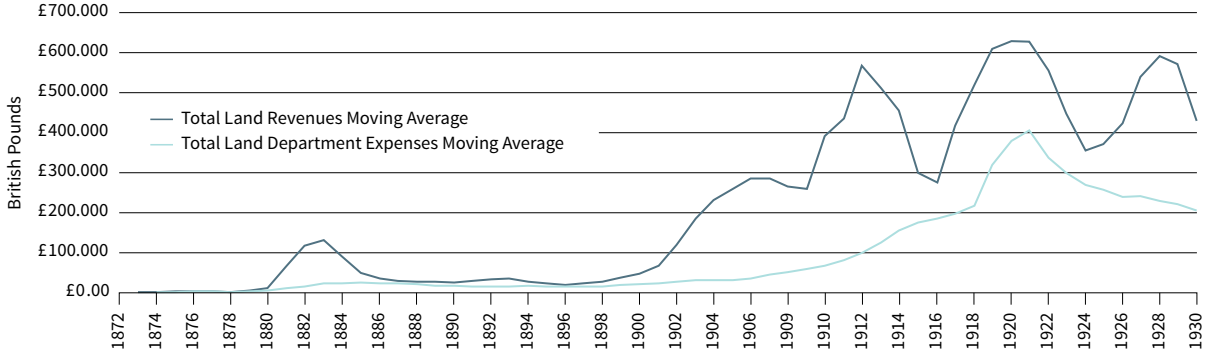
21 Canada, Annual Report for the Department of the Interior, 1930 (Ottawa: F. A. Acland, 1931) p. 26.

22 HBC, *Report and Accounts, of the Governor and Committee*, (9 April 1932) p. 7 copy found in HBCA, H9/-171-3-1.

23 HBCA, H.221/6/4, Land Department Accounts, 1956-1961.

24 See, HBC, *Reports to shareholders, accounts and proceedings (1875-1931)* Land Department Account Statements, 1872-1931.

FIGURE 2: HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY LAND DEPARTMENT EXPENSES AND REVENUES, THREE YEAR MOVING AVERAGE, BRITISH POUNDS, 1873-1931



Notes: Hudson's Bay Company, *Reports of the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company*, 1873-1932, Land Account Statements (1872-1932).

7d in cash sales.[25] Even though much remained for the HBC to sell, during the period 1873-1931, the Land Department generated £13,238,754 in revenues with expenditures of £5,669,619 – thereby generating a surplus of £7,569,135.[26] It took several decades, but these returns compared very favourably with the 1863 recapitalization.

Profits flowed to London: Between 1905 and 1922, the Company's dividend rate ranged from 20 to 50 percent; these spectacular dividends, a marvellous rentier income, were supported in good part by strong and sensible land sales.[27] Figure 3 depicts the nominal and market value of HBC ordinary shares. During the Wheat Boom, the London market perceived HBC shares as a serious asset well above the nominal value. It was after all a land and finance entity.

> **"The most beneficial payment was not the £300,000 cash, but the land grants for future sale and capital accumulation."**

In early March 1869, pressure – in form of a take-it-or-leave-it ultimatum from Colonial Secretary Lord Granville – on Canada and the HBC, produced an agreement. Canada had reluctantly accepted

25 HBC, *Report to shareholders, accounts and proceedings* (1913) Land Department Account (13 March 1913).

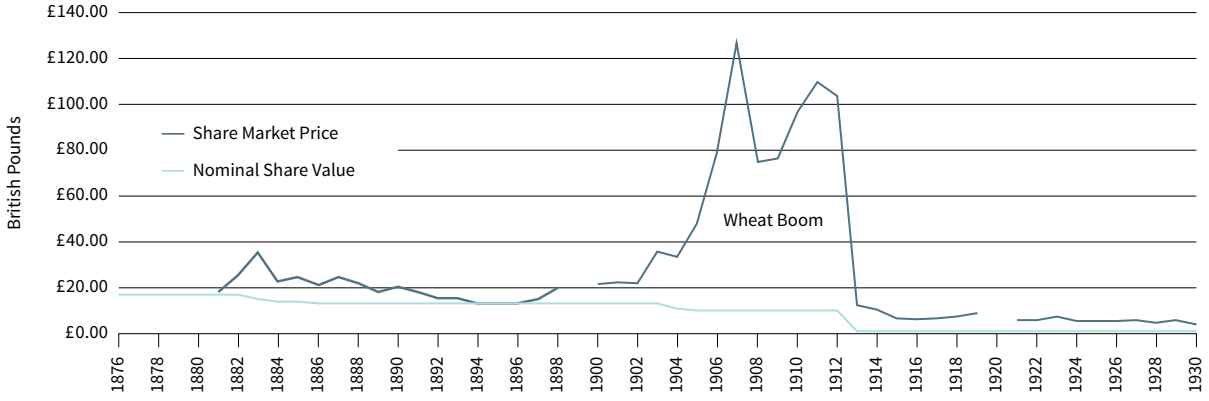
26 HBC, *Reports to shareholders, accounts and proceedings* (1875-1931) Land Department Account Statements, 1872-1931.

27 Douglas MacKay, *The Honourable Company*, 2nd. ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1949) p. 349.

the reality of compensating the HBC for the surrender of its 1670 charter rights. The most beneficial payment was not the £300,000 cash, but the land grants for future sale and capital accumulation. During the midst of the Long Depression, Governor Sir Donald A. Smith had imparted prescient advice to HBC shareholders: "I hope you will see that you have *...a great inheritance and a great property* that is well worth conserving and that with good management it cannot fail to be to the Hudson's Bay Company a mine of wealth."[28] The governor was not wrong. As Figures 2 and 3 indicate, the downstream results of the financialization of the Company's charter rights were impressive. A large and enduring land grant allowed the HBC to adapt and survive the loss of its monopoly status by:

- Providing some liquidity during the Long Depression;
- Capitalizing a sizeable fund to invest in "sales shops;"[29] and
- Procuring nice returns to English coupon clippers (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: MARKET CAPITALISATION OF HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY SHARES, 1876-1930



Notes: Thomas Skinner, *The Stock Exchange Year-Books: A Careful Digest of Information Relating to the Origin, History, and Present Position of Each of the Public Securities and Joint Stock Companies known to the Markets of the United Kingdom, 1876-1932* (London: Thomas Skinner and Co).

28 HBC, Report of the proceedings of the Shareholder's Meeting of the Hudson's Bay Company, held on Tuesday, the 17th of December, 1889, p. 5 [emphasis added].

29 For example, financing from land sales revenue for expanded merchandizing is documented in the Land Accounts for the year ending 31 March 1913. Major stores and warehouses were being developed in Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. Lord Strathcona reported that Land Account contributed £300,000 to the Saleshops Extension Fund. HBC, *Report of the Governor and Committee submit[ed] to the Proprietors the Report and Annual Accounts of the Company* (3 June 1913).

"The instrumental convergence in 1863 of seemingly incongruent interests of an ancient monopoly and emerging investment banking illustrates the resilience and flexibility of English gentlemanly capitalism."

The transfer of the HBC Territory (Figure 1) on 23 June 1870, by Imperial Order in Council, is our other 150th anniversary. Officially unrecognized, it is of little interest to historians and political scientists. Without this surrender, there would have been no need for the population of the Red River Settlement to act, but their agency contributed to the creation of the Province of Manitoba (15 July 1870).[30] The formative role of the fur trade to the economic geography of our nation was first revealed by Harold Innis in *The Fur Trade in Canada*; yet, the HBC itself remained a "builder" in the north and west after 1870. It influenced a fast-evolving economic landscape by:

- Selling farm land as an alternative to homesteading;
- Supplying town lots to urban land markets that sprang up around antiquated posts; and
- Developing modern department stores to capture rising consumption.

My argument that finance capital was a crucial material factor for the geographical expansion of the embryonic 1867 nation state does not comport easily with the ideational narrative that often conflates confederation with independence or self-government with sovereignty. In my view the Canadian academy seems reluctant to acknowledge imperial influences.[31] The instrumental convergence in 1863 of seemingly incongruent interests of an ancient monopoly and emerging investment banking illustrates the resilience and flexibility of English gentlemanly capitalism; and significantly, corresponds nicely with the pattern identified by Cain and Hopkins in which domestic and imperial developments were joined most pervasively through "the bond created by finance."[32]

30 Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970 [original 1930]).

31 In another context, see Elizabeth Mancke, "Early Modern Imperial Governance and the Origins of Canadian Political Culture," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* vol. 32, no. 1 (1999) pp. 3-20. Cain and Hopkins observed that historians from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, "... have now nationalized the study of their own histories so successfully that they are scarcely thought about outside of their own borders." P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2015*, 3rd ed. (Oxon: Roultledge, 2016 [original 1993) p. xix.

32 Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, p. 76.

MÉTIS PERSPECTIVES & HISTORIES RECLAIMED

THE MÉTIS PEOPLE: AN INCONVENIENT NATION

DAVID CHARTRAND

David Chartrand is the President of the Manitoba Métis Federation. He's been advocating for the advancement of the Métis agenda and their rightful place in Canada's Confederation for close to forty years. He is compelled to champion this cause in memory of the legacy and sacrifices of Métis Elders and ancestors.

THE BIRTH OF A NATION IN THE HEART OF A CONTINENT

It's safe to say that from the birth of our Nation to its attempted assimilation, the Métis people have proven inconvenient to a succession of would-be colonial masters. For the Hudson's Bay Company, the remote British rulers, the fledgling Canadian Government and the Anglo-Protestant settlers – we have been in the way.

> **"Despite the energy that went into defeating, scattering, or ignoring us, there has never been a time where there wasn't a Métis Nation."**

But we have remained – we have persisted. Despite the energy that went into defeating, scattering, or ignoring us, there has never been a time where there wasn't a Métis Nation. Since our inception, there has never been a time when that Nation was not political.

And that's the heart of what makes us inconvenient.

In order to understand this, some history needs to be examined.

Thomas Douglas, 5th Earl of Selkirk, had established a pattern of buying land in North America, including Prince Edward Island and Baldoon in Upper Canada for displaced Scottish farmers to settle, when he set his sights on the Red River Colony as another ideal location. At this time, several Indigenous peoples

◂ Ernest J Hutchins, *Main Street 1871*, 1970. Image Courtesy of University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections.

of the Northwest called the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers home – the Ojibwe, the Cree and of course, the Métis Nation. None of the Indigenous people were consulted on the decision.

There were periods of cooperation, help and mutually beneficial arrangements between the settlers from the east and the Indigenous peoples. However, the colonial insistence on importing and imposing British law into the Indigenous territories persisted. The Métis people grew increasingly restive under the colonial laws attempting to control land allocation, resources and trading activity.

While Brian Mulroney might have had the most publicized battle for free trade in Canadian history[1], the Métis people can lay claim to the first of such battles. Though the Métis Nation existed prior, it is generally agreed that our political consciousness as a Nation was realized at the 1816 Battle of Frog Plain – also known as Battle of Seven Oaks.[2]

The Battle of Seven Oaks was a clear victory for the Métis Nation, demonstrating that attempts to impose laws from the east – colonial laws – that harmed the Métis peoples' right to live, trade, settle and profit were simply not sustainable. The Métis Nation was too strong, too resilient, and too independent to be controlled.

It was during this battle the Nation's flag was unfurled, giving notice to any and all comers that the Métis Nation was alive and well on the prairies. *La nouvelle nation*, or the new nation, as the Métis called themselves in 1816, had demonstrated the collective consciousness required to meet the definition of a Nation.

That Nation was going to need its collective will over the ensuing two hundred years, because The Battle of Seven Oaks was not the last battle the Métis people would face.

THE PRICE PAID FOR POLITICS

In 1870, the Manitoba Act[3] was negotiated by Louis Riel and his emissary Father Joseph-Noël Ritchot. It was then ratified by the Métis Provisional Government, an entity that also happened to be the first Indigenous and first Métis-led government, making Louis Riel the first premier of Manitoba.

The foundations of the Act were derived from a list of rights developed by Louis Riel and the Convention of 40[4] and through democratic and widespread discussion among the Métis of the Red River Settlement.

This was the beginning of the province of Manitoba, meant to protect the Métis peoples' rights from the wave of settlers from the east. The Act specifically said that all lands held in the custom of the country

1 Policy Options, How free trade came to Canada: lessons in policy analysis.

2 The Canadian Encyclopedia, Battle of Seven Oaks.

3 The Manitoba Act, 1870.

4 Reconstituted Debates of the Convention of Forty/La Grande Convention, 1870.

by Métis people prior to 1870 would be formally granted under the new Canadian laws. Section 31 of the Act specifically outlined that 1.4 million acres of land were to be allocated to Métis children and heads of families.

But in the end, the Canadian Government used the Act against the Métis people and successfully drove them away from the land they had been born to and that was rightfully theirs. Stripped of their land by the outright thievery of the Canadian Government and their representatives, Métis people were forced to find other places to live.

Thus, began the exodus of the Métis people from the heart of their Homeland. Some ended up living in ramshackle houses on road allowances – land destined to be roadways.[5] Some followed Louis Riel south to Montana, or Minnesota and North Dakota. Others went north. Still others, the majority, went further west and settled in our harvesting territories and beyond. Nowhere is there evidence of our people going east and receiving any support from kin in the eastern provinces, largely because there weren't any Métis settlements in eastern Ontario and beyond.

Some who moved further west were still prepared to fight for their place in Canada's Confederation and called on Louis Riel to once again return to protect the Nation's families and Homeland from eastern settlers. Many of those were participants in the Battle of Batoche[6], the culmination of the Northwest Resistance. With just 300 Métis fighters facing off against thousands of British soldiers, many of whom were Orangemen from Ontario, this was the last and worst defeat of the early Métis Nation.

Even those who avoided battle did not escape hardship. Cut off from family and other members of the Métis Nation, following the diminishing buffalo herds, the Métis people continued to suffer losses. Excommunicated and treated like expats in the nation they created, many nation members, including children, died from the hardships.

After 1870 and the reign of terror[7] faced by the Métis people, many did more than walk away from Red River and their promised land settlements. Fearing persecution, those who could hide, did so. They hid their identity for fear of the wrath of the Orangemen and for fear of retaliation by the government of the day. Many either allowed or actively encouraged others to think of them as French-Canadians.[8]

It took years to even begin repairing and restoring the culture of the Métis Nation.

Today, I'm proud to say we've had successes. Be it with harvesting laws, sharing our culture, investing in Métis education, building housing and economic

5 Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, Road Allowance People.

6 The Canadian Encyclopedia, Batoche.

7 The Reign of Terror Against the Métis of Red River.

8 Podcast, Hiding in Plain Sight: The Métis Nation.

strength, we are seeing the beginnings of prosperity for our Nation. We're seeing a resurgence of our Nation, and the possibility of regaining the greatness we once had.

But success can come at a cost. People outside of the Homeland are looking at what we have with great interest, hungry to exploit us – again.

BECOMING CONVENIENT – ANOTHER THREAT FROM THE EAST

It is clear that the Métis Nation of 1816, with its new flag and its great vigour, recognized it was going to have to protect the Métis People, our government, our culture and the existence of our Nation. Even then, we knew we were going to have to fight to keep what was ours by tradition, heritage and birthright.

> *We must seek to preserve the existence of our own people. We must not by our own act allow ourselves to be swamped. If the day comes when that is done, it must be by no act of ours.* -Louis Riel, 1870[9]

It's important to know that there is no blood quantum involved in defining who is Métis. It is not on the concept of race that the Métis Nation stands – what unites us is our heritage, our connection to our Homeland, our culture, our common purpose and our shared feeling of responsibility to right the wrongs done to our ancestors. By all the universal indicators of a Nation – shared land, laws and language – the Métis Nation existed in the 18th century and remains today.

> **"What unites us is our heritage, our connection to our Homeland, our culture, our common purpose and our shared feeling of responsibility to right the wrongs done to our ancestors."**

The 2013 Supreme Court of Canada *MMF v. Canada* decision[10] was a landmark in revealing our Métis history and helping to establish a renewed nation-to-nation relationship between the Métis Nation and Canada. The subsequent 2016 *MMF – Canada Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation*[11] is the expression of the new approach. We are now renewing the partnership with negotiations for self-government and for land claims. Together, we will take steps to right the wrongs and finally begin to build a pathway to reconciliation.

But there is a rising movement in the eastern provinces of Canada, starting in Ontario – people with mixed heritage attempting to identify as Métis. This identification is based on having one or more Indigenous ancestors, but no ties to the Métis Homeland.

9 Reconstituted Debates of the Convention of Forty/La Grande Convention, 1870.

10 Thomas R. Berger, Q.C. – The Manitoba Métis Decision and the Uses of History.

11 Framework Agreement for Advancing Reconciliation.

Perhaps these newcomers looking to align themselves with the Métis Nation are interested in the economic benefits that are suddenly attached to citizenship. Perhaps they see an avenue to political power. Or perhaps, like many in today's world of increasingly visible and divisive community lines, they are simply seeking a sense of belonging – seeking it and in doing so, appropriating the identity of others.

Whatever their plight, they are not Métis Nation. We defend against them to preserve our Nation here in in the west. This is our Homeland, where we were born. We have no other home.

Even so, we Métis are a tiny portion of the population in the prairies. Canadians with mixed heritage may number in the millions. Given these odds, it wouldn't take long for Louis Riel's people to be overtaken and swallowed up in a larger pan-Aboriginal entity under the guise of a new Métis Nation. Everything we know, everything we stand for and believe in, the things our ancestors sacrificed for, could be in jeopardy. This is precisely what was hoped for by John A. Macdonald when he wrote that the Métis "[...] will be altogether swamped by the influx of strangers who will go in with the idea of becoming industrious and peaceable settlers."[12]

How can the people in eastern Ontario now declaring themselves to be Métis claim the heritage of Louis Riel's people? Can they own the suffering and the persecution of the reign of terror and the resulting violence and condemnation? Can they walk the land and know that they are in a place where the soil is stained by the blood and suffering of the Métis Nation?

Will we continue to be sentenced to a role of convenience or inconvenience by external forces? Or will we finally be recognized as a full participant in Canada's Confederation, as a distinct nation with distinct characteristics and identity?

Time will tell.

But I, like Louis Riel and the other defenders of our Nation, will not stand idly by and let those external forces steal our fate. We are the Métis people, the people who own themselves. Like the prairie flowers that are echoed in our beadwork, resilient to and grown in this challenging land, the Métis people will continue to stand and withstand on the prairies, as we have for more than 200 years.

12 Thomas R. Berger, Q.C. – The Manitoba Métis Decision and the Uses of History.

TREATY 1 IN CONTEXT: UNDERSTANDING SPIRIT AND INTENT

KARINE DUHAMEL

Dr. Karine Duhamel is Anishinaabe-Métis and lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She served as Director of Research for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and continues to work as an independent consultant examining how Indigenous and colonial histories resonate and impact Indigenous Peoples today.

INTRODUCTION

2021 marks the 150th anniversary of Treaty No. 1, an agreement made by the Government of Canada with the Anishinabek and Swampy Cree of southern Manitoba in 1871. While the narrative around treaties often calls upon a contractual understanding of the treaty, the relationships formed in 1871 were in fact a reflection of a profound preoccupation and understanding by First Nations of their rights with respect to land, governance and freedom in a rapidly changing world.

> **"Understanding the treaty in a new context, with Indigenous people as rights bearers and as relatives, has implications for what we do today and into the future."**

Understanding the treaty in a new context, with Indigenous people as rights bearers and as relatives, has implications for what we do today and into the future.

THE PROMISE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF TREATY

Treaties were not new to First Nations on the continent in the 19th century. In fact, long before Europeans came to North America, treaties existed among different Indigenous nations to preserve peace and to confirm how territories and resources might be cared for. These agreements were founded upon understandings about the world were informed by a strong sense of giftedness and responsibility related to culture, law, language, history and way of life.

Foundational gifts given by Creator were the basic elements from which creation grew. In a literal way, the people lived and continue to live in a world

made of gifts.[1] According to the Creation stories of many nations, humans were the last to be created and relied upon the natural world. But the natural world needed humans too, therefore creating a condition of interdependence that included important rights and responsibilities for the people.[2] For instance, Anishinaabe Elder Francis Nepinak describes oceans, lakes, and rivers as the veins of a human body, the plants as the hair of the body, and the ground as its flesh.[3] As a sacred responsibility and a sacred trust, First Nations did not consider land to be a static entity to be bought or sold.

> **"The principled nature of such agreements meant that no fine print was necessary; the relationships established, nurtured and protected, often in kinship terms, informed the interpretation of the treaty, alongside traditional understandings about the world itself.**

For instance, the Dish with One Spoon wampum agreement, made between Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe nations in 1701, was based on three basic principles that emphasized responsibility and interdependence, rather than ownership. The principles including taking only what is needed, leaving something for everyone else, and keeping the land clean for this and future generations.[4] Agreements such as this one were founded on principles that could be articulated over generations and required careful interpretation and attention to changing needs, as well as renewal and trust. The principled nature of such agreements meant that no fine print was necessary; the relationships established, nurtured and protected, often in kinship terms, informed the interpretation of the treaty, alongside traditional understandings about the world itself.

TREATY MAKING IN A CHANGING WORLD

It was within the context of these understandings, and a rapidly changing world, that First Nations sought to confirm their rights to territory. Treaty No. 1, concluded in 1871, followed on the heels of other treaty negotiations in Canada between the colonial government and Indigenous peoples – between 1760 and 1923, the British Crown signed 56 land treaties with Indigenous Peoples – but it was the first of eleven Numbered Treaties concluded between 1871 and 1921.

1 Basil Johnston, *Ojibway Heritage: The Ceremonies, Rituals, Songs, Dances, Prayers and Legends of the Ojibway* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), 13. Cited in Aaron Mills, Karen Drake, and Tanya Muthusamipillai, "An Anishinaabe Constitutional Order," in *Reconciliation in Canadian Courts: A Guide for Judges to Aboriginal and Indigenous Law, Context and Practice*, ed. The Honourable Justice Patrick Smith (Ottawa: National Judicial Institute, 2017), n.p.

2 Ibid.

3 For this and more Elders' perspectives on this relationship, see *Ka'esi Wahkotumahk Aski: Our Relations With the Land*, D'Arcy Linklater, Harry Bone, and the Treaty & Dakota Elders of Manitoba, eds. (Winnipeg: Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba, 2014.)

4 Borrows in Aimée Craft, *Breathing Life into the Stone Fort Treaty: An Anishnabe Understanding of Treaty One* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 24; see also Hill in C. Maracle, *Grandfather of All Treaties* (Toronto, Ontario: Vtape, 2015).

First Nations in what became Manitoba had been advocating for a treaty for decades, and accelerated their efforts as more and more settlers began to arrive. For instance, in 1857 and again in 1859, Anishinaabe Chief Peguis wrote to the Aborigines' Protection Society and to the publication *The Aborigines' Friend and Colonial Intelligencer*, both based in the United Kingdom, for support to secure a "fair and mutually advantageous treaty" for Anishinaabe in the territory.[5] A few years later, Peguis and his son, Henry Prince, published an "Indian Manifesto" in the settler newspaper The Nor'Wester, insisting on annual payments for those cultivating Indigenous lands.[6] In these efforts, First Nations affirmed their direct relationship with the Crown and their traditional responsibilities as the foundations for how to proceed.

But from the perspective of Canadian officials, treaty making was a means to an end – the settlement of the West and a broad national policy that depended on a rail line for economic growth. Government officials sent to negotiate the terms of Treaty No. 1 in 1871 were primarily intent on securing the title as economically and quickly as possible through extinction of title to both lands and to resources, rather than renewing relationships. As Governor Archibald wrote, to Secretary of State Joseph Howe:

> *We were all of [the] opinion that it would be desirable to procure the extinction of Indian title, not only to the lands included within the Province [of Manitoba], but also to so much of the timber grounds east and north of the Province, as were required for immediate entry and use…*[7]

Parties therefore approached the negotiations from very different perspectives – perspectives which would forever inform their interpretation and understanding rights in Manitoba, and elsewhere.

MAKING TREATY AT STONE FORT

Over 1,100 First Nations men, women and children gathered around Lower Fort Garry, or the Stone Fort, in July of 1871, but the government's intentions for what was to come were not laid bare. Instead, oratories by government officials, recorded in newspapers in Manitoba at the time, called upon the language of familial responsibilities and relationship which would have assured First Nations of fair treatment, if honoured. In his opening remarks, Archibald assured the attendees that Queen Victoria, whom he referred to in kinship terms as the "Great Mother," wanted to deal fairly with them as any loving, kind and protective mother would.[8] First Nations listening to him understood mothers through an Indigenous lens, as figures who encour-

5 Laura Peers, "The Ojibwa, Red River and the Forks, 1770-1870," in *The Forks and the Battle of Seven Oaks in Manitoba History*, Robert Coutts and Richard Stuart, Robert Coutts and Richard Stuart, eds. (Winnipeg: Manitoba Historical Society, 1994), 198.

6 Ibid.

7 Arthur J. Ray, James Miller & Frank Tough, *Bounty and Benevolence: A History of the Saskatchewan Treaties* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 64.

8 Sarah Carter, Your Great Mother Across the Salt Sea': Prairie First Nations, the British Monarchy and the Vice Regal Connection to 1900, Manitoba History 48 (Autumn/Winter 2004-2005), n.p. See also Craft, *Breathing Life…*

aged children to make their own decisions about how they wished to live. Archibald said as much, explaining that the Great Mother desired Indigenous peoples to adopt agriculture, but she would not force them to make drastic changes and would ensure the lands be kept for First Nations "as long as the sun shall shine."[9]

> **"for cultures founded upon the oral transmission of teachings, the oral promises provided by Archibald would have represented the heart of the agreement, rather than the document itself."**

Protocols also worked to generate trust with those gathered. For instance, Anishinaabe Elder Florence Paynter of Sandy Bay First Nation in Manitoba describes the use of the pipe in Treaty ceremonies as a way of signalling the Creator's presence and approval of the agreement – making the agreement impossible to renege.[10] Moreover, for cultures founded upon the oral transmission of teachings, the oral promises provided by Archibald would have represented the heart of the agreement, rather than the document itself. Finally, the exchange of significant gifts, including the gifting of a treaty medal that depicted First Nations' retention of lands and way of life with the symbol of a handshake, on equal plane with Europeans, would have convinced those in attendance that the agreement would be honoured "as long as the sun shines, grass grows and rivers flow", within a relationship based on respect and equality.[11]

TREATIES AND THE NEXT 150

Treaty No. 1 was signed on August 3, 1871, at Lower Fort Garry, after 8 days of tense negotiation. First Nations pushed back in important ways, from decades prior and during the negotiations, on restrictions to their freedom of mobility and their use of lands and resources. Despite these efforts, they were cajoled, threatened and bullied into signing an agreement they could not read.[12] Evidence that the written terms did not match understandings reached can be seen by what happened next, when as early as 1875, a second treaty was negotiated with the same groups to try to reconcile differences arising from the negotiations.

Archibald would later echo this sentiment back to Howe while reporting on the Treaty 1 negotiations: "I look upon these proceedings, we are now initiating, as important in their bearing upon our relation to the Indians of the whole continent."[13] Indeed – the signing of the treaties ushered in a new era for First

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 For more on this, see Craft, Breathing Life; see also Alexander Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with The Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories* (Toronto: Fifth House Books, 1991).

13 Morris, *The Treaties of Canada...*, p. 32.

Nations, who were increasingly limited to reserves, severed from their traditional lands, and ultimately, made the subject of Draconian legislation whose terms seemed to directly contravene the promises made. In addition, the blueprint created by Treaty No. 1 and built through a narrow interpretation of treaties in the time since, has impacted relationships, livelihood, and community and individual wellness in ways that are difficult to quantify.

“The signing of the treaties ushered in a new era for First Nations, who were increasingly limited to reserves, severed from their traditional lands, and ultimately, made the subject of Draconian legislation whose terms seemed to directly contravene the promises made.”

We live in a world made of gifts, and those principles, key in understanding treaty in 1871, are as important today as they were then. How might treaty principles, properly understood through the perspective of kinship and responsibility, restructure the approach to the next 150 years? As Cree scholar Harold Johnson explains, what we do next, with respect to the treaties and to our relationships, will set the course for the future: “We will both be part of whatever future we create, *kiciwamanawak*.”[14]

14 Harold Johnson, *Two Families: Treaties and Government* (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing Limited, 2007), 85. “Kiciwamanawak” means “cousin” in Cree, and speaks to Johnson’s point about how non-Indigenous people became relatives through Treaty.

Paul Kane, *Établissement de la Rivière Rouge*, 1848. Image gracieuseté des Archives et collections spéciales de l’Université du Manitoba. ►

MÉTIS LANDS IN WESTERN CANADA: AN UNRESOLVED ISSUE

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The Northwest Is Our Mother – Louis Riel

In the 19th century, the Métis travelled over a vast territory to hunt buffalo. They travelled from Red River to the plains and, once the hunt was over, they returned home. This back and forth movement fostered a close relationship with the land. The Métis thus built "extensive economic networks based on inter-generational extended family networks across the northern Plains" (Macdougall 2016, 261). As pointed out by historian Brenda Macdougall, these relational constellations not only strengthened kinship ties, but above all anchored the Métis solidly in their territory (2016, 261).

As time went by and the demand for bison products increased, hunters established non-permanent villages on the plains. They hunted *vers le large* all winter from mid-November to mid-March to benefit from the quality of the very woolly bison hides. Those who lived in Red River returned home in the spring and then resumed the hunt in the summer. However, the demand for bison hides caused some families to stay on the prairie longer, sometimes for up to two years. This phenomenon became more pronounced as the bison herds became more and more remote due to the gradual disappearance of the animals.

The connection to the land/territory was such that women sewed symbols of it into the clothing they produced for their families and the world at large. The distinctive style of brightly coloured floral designs developed by the Métis will become the norm across the Northwest throughout the 19th century. On the clothing worn by community

members, women reproduced the plants, flowers and berries that were used not only to feed the family but also to care for the community. According to Sherry Farrell Racette, Métis women not only played a very important economic role by selling the fruits of their labour to passing strangers, which often enabled families to survive, but they also, in their own way, ensured the dissemination of the expression of an identity, territory, pride and nationalism unique to Canada (2005, 5).

“Métis women not only played a very important economic role by selling the fruits of their labour to passing strangers, which often enabled families to survive, but they also, in their own way, ensured the dissemination of the expression of an identity, territory, pride and nationalism unique to Canada.”

Despite the fact that the Métis lost access to large territories at the end of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century, mobility remains an important part of Métis identity today. As Bret Nickels pointed out in the context of the Goodon proceedings, movement, a central feature of historic Métis culture, remains an important characteristic of contemporary Métis people living in Manitoba. Today Métis land use extends from the prairies, through the Parkland and woodlands of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In addition, the Métis continue to use some historic trade routes that radiate from southern Manitoba to the Qu'Appelle Valley, Wood Mountain, the Cypress Hills region, and northward through Saskatchewan to Battleford (2005, 10-11). What is true for Manitoba, is also true for Saskatchewan and Alberta (R.v. Laviolette 2005; R.v. Hirsekorn 2013).

COVETED LAND

Influenced by the Ontario annexationist movement, in 1869 the Dominion government signed an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company to purchase Rupert's Land. Once the immense territory had been ceded, the Canadian administration decided to take possession of the land. However, the main interested parties, the Indigenous peoples, were not consulted. At the scene, the surveyors sent by the Dominion met some resistance from the Métis, who were not in favour of reconfiguring their river lots into townships and sections.

“The flawed application of the system had the effect of dispossessing the Métis of their land.”

This failure of consideration towards the people of the region pushed the Métis to create a provisional government, led by Louis Riel. Negotiations between the Dominion and the Métis led to a compromise. Their demands were enshrined in the Manitoba Act of 1870. Among other things, the Métis were to receive 1.4 million acres of land (567,000 hectares). These lands were to be set aside for Métis heads of families and their children born before July 15, 1870. Each head of family was to receive the equivalent of 160 acres of land while the children were to receive the equivalent of 240 acres of land. The purpose of these land grants was to allow Métis

children a head start before the expected influx of settlers from the east. However, the flawed application of the system had the effect of dispossessing the Métis of their land (RCMR 2018, 4; see also Tough and McGregor 2007).

Families living outside Manitoba, moreover, had no guarantee that the land question would be resolved. Very aware of what was happening in Manitoba and conscious that the massive influx of new settlers to the West would drastically change their reality, Métis living elsewhere on the prairies sent petitions to Ottawa "as a means of informing the colonial state of their interests and in defending their rights" (Hamon 2019, 38). For example, in Alberta in 1877, the Métis of Blackfoot Crossing "petitioned the government for farming tools, seeds, and assistance to settle the land". In 1878, the Métis of Cypress Hills wrote a petition "for land in the form of a reserve" (RCMR 2018, 10). In 1880, the Métis of Edmonton and St. Albert asked the government to survey the land in the area (RCMR 2018, 10). Also, in the 1880s, Métis from the Batoche area of Saskatchewan sent several petitions to Ottawa expressing concern about title to their river lots. Their petitions remained unanswered. In 1884, in the face of government indifference, the Métis asked Louis Riel, who had been exiled to the United States, to return to Canada. Once in Batoche, Riel established a provisional government and drafted a list of demands to settle land rights. John A. Macdonald's government responded by deploying a militia. After several victories, the Métis, under shelling by General Middleton's artillery, were forced to surrender in May 1885. Louis Riel was arrested, tried and hanged (Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, *Métis*, 2018, 34-35).

CERTIFICATE COMMISSIONS

The Dominion Lands Act of 1872, which authorized the granting of lands in the Canadian West to individuals or groups of individuals, did not include the Métis, however, until it was amended in 1879. As a result of the amendments to the Act, Métis scrip commissions were established to collect information from applicants and then issue scrip to beneficiaries. For example, the one in Edmonton, Alberta, established on June 3, 1885, had the power "to satisfy all existing claims in connection with the extinguishment of Indian title." It 'offered' the Métis a government certificate known as scrip that could be exchanged for a parcel of Crown land or money to buy land through the homestead system. The money scrip was valued at $160 or $240 and the land scrip was equivalent to a quarter section of 160 acres or a 240-acre parcel. Both were to be used to purchase land that had been surveyed by the government and then processed into homestead. The government commission registered 1,000 applications for certificates in Edmonton during the first summer. The commissioners returned to Edmonton and St. Albert again to negotiate certificates in July 1886. In all, Canada processed the scrip claims of more than 24,000 Métis in the West and North between 1870 and 1935 in transactions with a land value of 5.4 million acres (Goyette 2004, 101). Unfortunately, the slowness of the system, the complexity of the process and the fraudulent methods used meant that most Métis land scrip ended up in the hands of land speculators. Furthermore, the land 'offered' to Métis people was rarely located where they lived, which meant moving away from their communities and extended families. As a result, most decided to sell their scrip for a fraction of its real value. The consequences of this dysfunc-

tional system resulted in the gradual dispossession of Métis people from their lands. The Métis became the people of the road allowances – Crown land used for road construction in rural areas and certain areas of low fertility. These communities emerged as opportunities for seasonal work arose (Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada, Métis, 2018, 40-41).

> **“The complexity of the process and the fraudulent methods used meant that most Métis land scrip ended up in the hands of land speculators.”**

Despite encroachment, dispossession and lack of recognition by governments, Métis people have maintained a connection to the land over the years, pressing forward year after year in their many political and legal claims, preserving traditional knowledge structures that are integral to their culture. During the 20th century, while Métis people sought recognition of their rights, the federal government assumed that it had settled the Métis land question through the scrip system. In 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada in *Manitoba Métis Federation Inc. v. Canada (Attorney General)* concluded that “the federal Crown has not honourably implemented the land grant provision of section 31 of the Manitoba Act, 1870” (*MMF vs Canada* 2013). This judgment is important because it recognizes both the injustices committed by the Crown and the need for future negotiations between the federal government and the MMF regarding modern Métis land claims. While elsewhere in Western Canada, the issue of Métis land remains unresolved, the Framework Agreement signed by the Métis Nation of Alberta with the Federal Government in 2017 – following the Daniels decision (2016) – for example, recognizes the need to address the injustices suffered by the Métis Nation as a result of the scrip system and declares a common commitment to develop a solution that promotes reconciliation (RCMR 2018, 26).

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OF MÉTIS WOMEN AND HUNTING BRIGADES: REIMAGINING RED RIVER HISTORIES

NICOLE ST-ONGE

Nicole St-Onge received a BA (Anthropology) from uTrent and an MA in Anthropology and then a PhD in History from the University of Manitoba. Currently she is a full professor in the department of History at the University of Ottawa (Canada). Her research focuses on French Canadien voyageurs, Great Lakes fur trade communities and Plains Métis buffalo hunters. Her most recent publications are "Familial Foes?: French-Sioux Families and Plains Métis Brigades in the Nineteenth Century," *The American Indian Quarterly* 39, 3 (2015), 302-337, " 'He was neither a soldier nor a slave: he was under the control of no man": Kahnawake Mohawks in the Northwest Fur Trade, 1790-1850", *Canadian Journal of History* 51(1), (2016) 1-32 and B. Macdougall & N. St-Onge, *Métis in the Borderlands of the Northern Plains in the Nineteenth Century,* J. O'Brien & C. Andersen (eds), *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, Routledge (2017) and, "*Le poste de La Pointe sur l'île Madeline, tremplin vers le monde franco-anichinabé de la traite des fourrures*," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 73 (1-2), 13-43 [2019].

That the COVID-19 pandemic occurred in tandem with the sesquicentennial anniversary of the province of Manitoba offered me a reason, and afforded the lockdown time, to meditate upon the state of Red River Métis research. Some scholars have argued that Selkirk's settlement has been overstudied to the detriment of other Northwest Métis communities, yet silences and gaps continue to limit our understanding of Red River's Native population.[1] My current research on the Red River Valley-based commercial bison hunting brigades, for example, has prompted me to ponder the extent of our knowledge of the lived experience of the nineteenth-century Métis women of Red River. Scholarly consensus holds that the contribution of Métis women was pivotal for the commercial success of these hunting brigades, but we know so little about their lives during the glory decades

1 In his 1988 Métis studies literature review, J. R. Miller discussed a perceived "Red River myopia," an assertion that too much of what had been published had focused on the colony situated at the forks of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers. This criticism was echoed in 2001 by Fritz Pannekoek, who coined the term "bog of Red River" to describe this ongoing fixation on Selkirk's settlement. J. R. Miller, "From Riel to the Métis," *Canadian Historical Review* 69 (1988): 1-20; and Frits Pannekoek, "Métis Studies, the Development of a Field and New Directions," in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, eds. Theodore Binnema, Gerhard J. Ens, and R. C. Macleod (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001), 111-128.

of the commercial bison hunts, as well as after the ecological catastrophe incited by the disappearance of these vast herds. Gaps of this nature demonstrate that scholars need not yet abandon Red River.

> **"The contribution of Métis women was pivotal for the commercial success of these hunting brigades, but we know so little about their lives during the glory decades of the commercial bison hunts"**

For years, scholars have called for greater attention to the role of women in Plains Métis society. In 1983, Jennifer Brown suggested that Métis society was characterized by matriorganization.[2] A decade apart from each other, Diane Payment and Martha Foster each emphasized the centrality of women, especially of sisters, in the organization of communities and hunting brigades.[3] Research conducted by Cheryl Troupe, Emilie Pigeon, Brenda Macdougall, and myself have demonstrated the key roles played by clusters of closely related women in bringing together otherwise unrelated groups of men into effective and cohesive hunting brigades.[4] For example, the famed "Trottier brigade" was described by member Norbert Welsh as webbed together by a senior woman, Louise Laframboise (m. Isidore Dumont), and her three nieces, sisters Philomène (m. Moise Landry), Ursule (m. Charles Trottier), and Angélique Laframboise (m. Antoine Trottier).[5]

> **"Métis women were thus crucial both for their roles of bringing together a brigade and for their skills in the transformation process needed to produce the pemmican and robes."**

But the determination of matrifocal cohesiveness has left other economic, social, and cultural aspects of Métis women's lives still shrouded in mystery. Anecdotally, we know of the pivotal role collectively played by Métis women in the transformation of prodigious amounts of bison meat, fat, and hides into marketable and profitable pemmican and robes. Historian George Colpitts has made clear that these were exacting and extremely time-sensitive procedures, especially during the large summer hunts when heat-induced spoilage and rancidification were an ever-present danger.[6] Period accounts

2 Jennifer Brown, "Women as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Métis Communities," *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3 (1983): 39-46.

3 Diane Payment, "*La vie en rose ?* Métis Women at Batoche, 1870 to 1920", in *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom, and Strength, eds. Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 19-38; and Martha Harroun Foster, *We Know Who We Are: Métis Identity in a Montana Community* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006).

4 Cheryl Lynn Troupe, *Métis Women: Social Structure, Urbanization and Political Activism, 1850-1980* (Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2009); Emilie Pigeon, A Social Network of Hunters? Métis Mobility and New Methodological Approaches in History (poster presentation, Canadian Historical Association, 2013), and Brenda Macdougall and Nicole St-Onge, *Rooted in Mobility: Métis Bufallo-Hunting Brigades,* Manitoba History 71 (2013): 16-27.

5 Norbert Welsh, *The Last Buffalo Hunter* (1939; Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1994); and Troupe, *Métis Women*.

6 George Colpitts, "A Métis View of the Summer Market Hunt on the Northern Plains," in *Bison and People on the North American Great Plains: A Deep Environmental History*, eds. Geoff Cunfer and Bill Waiser (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2016): 201-225.

claim that a single skilled Métis woman could butcher upwards of ten bison carcasses a day.[7] Métis women were thus crucial both for their roles of bringing together a brigade and for their skills in the transformation process needed to produce the pemmican and robes – the very raison d'être of these commercial hunting brigades. But did these key indispensable roles in hunting ventures translate into enhanced agency and status within the broader Métis society?

> **"Outsider (largely male) nineteenth-century observers – fur trader, clergy, and adventurers – often viewed native women as mere drudges and slaves working ceaselessly for uncaring and unkind men."**

The large-scale commercial hunting brigades were a nineteenth-century adaptation to both a specific northern plains ecosystem with its vast bison herds and the specific demands of an international fur trade economy. Brigades were unique social configurations emerging from the provisioning needs of a far-flung, salaried workforce. Did this reality elevate the importance of Plains Métis women, and thus their influence, within Plains Métis society? Outsider (largely male) nineteenth-century observers – fur trader, clergy, and adventurers – often viewed native women as mere drudges and slaves working ceaselessly for uncaring and unkind men.[8] While such biased and gendered observations have been forcefully critiqued by scholars examining the lived experiences of First Nations women, more work needs to be done in regards to Plains Métis brigades women.

> **"Brigade Métis women possessed more agency than those in the Red River Colony's population who were less invested in the commercial hunts."**

Economic historians might well assume that the need to create large amounts of marketable surpluses of pemmican and robes exacerbated already unequal gender roles.[9] But if we consider the opposite – that Métis women's position was enhanced by the vital roles they played within la nouvelle nation – one could speculate then that they achieved greater agency than found in either the eastern euro-agrarian settlements or among neighbouring Plains tribes. Indeed, one might even argue that brigade Métis women possessed

7 Townsend's Blog, Pemmican.

8 Denise K. Lajimodiere, "American Indian Females and Stereotypes: Warriors, Leaders, Healers, Feminists; Not Drudges, Princesses, Prostitutes," *Multicultural Perspectives* 15, no. 2 (2013): 104-109.

9 Pekka Hamalainen has argued this was the case in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century among the Comanche, where their increasing involvement in a market economy led to a rise in polygamy and female slavery linked to proportional decline in the status of many women. Pekka Hamalainen, *Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 247-257.

William George Richardson Hind, *Buffalo on the Prairie*, ca.1863.
Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

more agency than those in the Red River Colony's population who were less invested in the commercial hunts. While recent publications likening these brigades to "mobile villages" have argued that "Métis brought this long-standing ethic of sharing with them from their farming communities," perhaps this assertion puts too much emphasis on the influence of the agrarian social elements of the Red River Settlement on brigade dynamics.[10] A majority of Plains Métis involved in the large commercial hunts were descendants of salaried, professional fur trade employees and First Nations women. They may have engaged in some agricultural pursuits at Red River, but it is far from clear that they were replicating a French Canadian or Scottish peasant *mentalité* in a mobile state. Neither is it clear that the Métis simply mirrored surrounding Plains tribes' social customs. Thus, while elements from the French, Scottish, and various Native societies contributed to the emergence of the Plains Métis, the final product – the commercial hunting brigades and the role that women played within them – may well be unique phenomena.

> **"The bison herds' demise in the 1870s and 1880s was not just an economic catastrophe, but also a profound social disaster that directly impacted gender roles and relations."**

Sadly, the logic of Métis social organization emerging and adapting to large-scale commercial hunting lost its rationale once the northern plains bison herds collapsed. If the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' bison economy produced a unique Plains society, then the bison herds' demise in the 1870s and 1880s was not just an economic catastrophe, but also a profound social disaster that directly impacted gender roles and relations. Such massive changes must have been wrenching for both men and women, giving the Métis little choice but to reconsider and restructure their social matrix to function in a new post-commercial hunt reality. If we accept as a working hypothesis that Plains Métis women held great agency and importance within the bison hunting brigades, what did the sudden complete end of commercial bison hunts in the 1880s mean for them? Although Métis-organized freighting caravans and York boat

10 Emilie Pigeon and Carolyn Podruchny, "The Mobile Village: Métis Women, Bison Brigades, and Social Order on the Nineteenth-Century Plains," in *Violence, Order, and Unrest: A History of British North America, 1749-1876*, eds. Elizabeth Mancke, Jerry Bannister, and Scott W. See (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), 236-263.

brigades continued for some years after the bison hunts collapsed, in no way did these pursuits mobilize to the same degree women's collective labour. After bison hunting ceased to be the economic basis of Plains Métis society, new livelihoods and new social relations had to be constructed or renegotiated, for the dynamics of nineteenth-century wage labour or family farming were quite different from those supporting large-scale commercial hunting.

> **"The transition to commercial agriculture in the climactically difficult 1870s was especially traumatic for the traditional bison-hunting parishes."**

Questions remain as to what occurred to former brigade members who continued to reside in the Red River Colony after the final unsuccessful hunt of 1868. How did former brigade members hailing from parishes such as Saint-Francoix Xavier (White Horse Plains) and Saint-Norbert adapt to the changing circumstances? How long did women maintain their seemingly central social and economic roles in the post-hunt era? We know the transition to commercial agriculture in the climactically difficult 1870s was especially traumatic for the traditional bison-hunting parishes. Historian Gerhard Ens has noted that infant mortality rate tripled in the parish of Saint-Francois Xavier during this decade.[11] My own research in the adjacent parish of Saint-Eustache indicates that the post-1914 years were hard for many Métis men and women, reduced to seasonal field work for nearby French-Canadian market gardeners.[12] Evelyn Peters' recent work on Winnipeg's Rooster Town has pointed to the same precarious living and working conditions for several twentieth-century urban Métis families.[13] However, such works leave unexplained the transition decades between the pre-1870 bison commercial hunting lifeways and the post-World War I era Métis communities, especially when it comes to women's economic contributions and social agency.

Martha Foster, Diane Payment, and Cheryl Troupe have each studied how the end of the commercial hunts affected western Plains Métis communities in Saskatchewan and Montana. Interestingly, they have found clear signs of continuity in women's social networks' role in binding together communities and in maintaining collective economic pursuits, such as communal gardens, between the pre-bison herd collapse and the post-hunt era.[14] That makes more attractive the curiosity as to how former brigade Métis women who remained in the old Red River Colony parishes after 1870 experienced these transitional decades. Could the rise of disruptive pressures on Métis women's traditional social and economic roles be yet another factor

11 Gerhard Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Métis in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: UTP, 1996): 156-159.

12 Nicole St-Onge, "Memories of Métis Women of Saint-Eustache, Manitoba, 1910-1980," *Native Studies Review* 17, no. 2 (2008): 45-68.

13 Evelyn Peters, Matthew Stack, Adrian Werner, *Rooster Town: The History of an Urban Métis Community* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 2018).

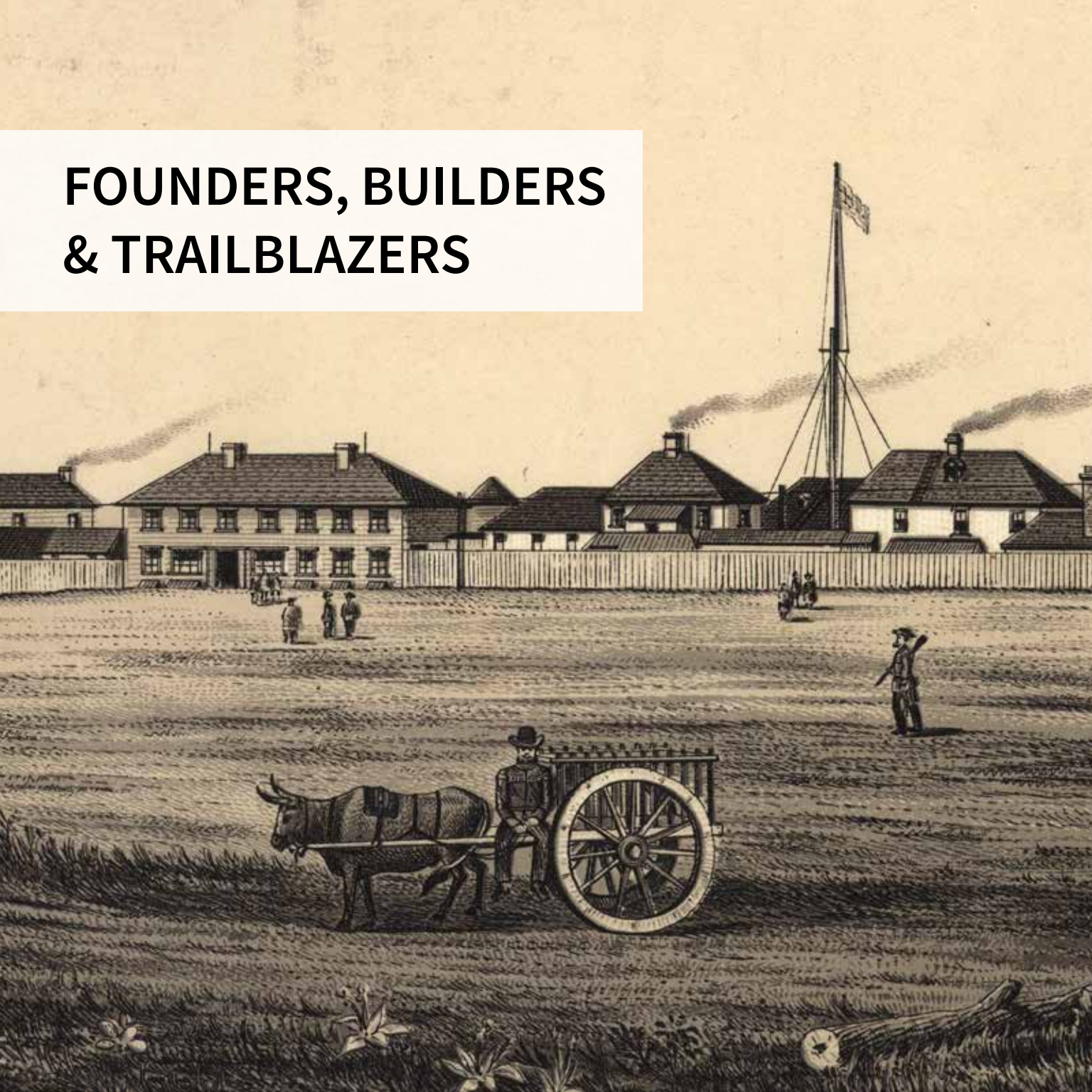
14 In her study of the Trottier brigade who settled in Round Prairie, Cheryl Troupe discussed how women maintained large communal gardens while the men worked as day labourers even after their move to the city of Saskatoon. Troupe, *Métis Women*, 77-83.

Unknown Photographer, This Indigenous woman is supposed to have been manning the boat used by the North West Half Breed Claims Royal Commission, 1885. Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

explaining some of the departures after 1868? Commonly cited explanations for the departure of many former hunting families from Red River include a growing climate of settler racism and violence, chronic farming hardships, and a dislike for menial salaried work. But perhaps an overlooked factor was a desire by Métis women to maintain a more communally oriented society where they held greater agency.[15] These questions surrounding the historic roles of the Red River women members of the fabled bison hunting brigades before and after the end of the hunts will hopefully fuel another generation of historians to revisit the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

15 This may explain some of the differences in economic pursuits and general attitude disapprovingly noted by ethnologist Marcel Giraud, based on field research conducted in the 1930s. Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis canadien* (Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1945), 1231-1286.

FOUNDERS, BUILDERS & TRAILBLAZERS



LOUIS RIEL AND CANADA: A NEW RELATIONSHIP, 150 YEARS IN THE MAKING

JEAN TEILLET

Jean Teillet's legal career has focused on Indigenous rights and reproductive rights. She is currently a treaty negotiation advisor for the Stó:lō Xwexwilmexw, a coalition of six Stó:lō bands in BC. Ms. Teillet has appeared at the Supreme Court of Canada in twelve Indigenous rights cases. She maintains an active role as a public speaker on Indigenous rights, identity, access to justice and Charter issues. She is the author of *Métis Law in Canada* and her popular history, *The North-West is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel's People, the Métis Nation*, was listed in the Globe & Mail's top 100 books of 2019. Ms. Teillet is an adjunct professor of law at UBC. She is on the board of Indspire, Save the Children Canada and the Association of Canadian Studies. In 2016, the Association of Ontario Midwives made Jean an honorary lifetime member in recognition of her services to midwives and Indigenous women. Ms. Teillet is the great grandniece of Louis Riel.

Louis Riel is now acknowledged as a Father of Confederation and the Founder of Manitoba. The Manitoba Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a Resolution to Recognize the Historic Role of Louis Riel as Founder of Manitoba in May of 1992. That same year the House of Commons and the Senate passed unanimous resolutions to recognize and honour him.

> *…that this House recognize the unique and historic role of Louis Riel as a founder of Manitoba and his contribution in the development of Confederation; and that this House support by its actions the true attainment, both in principle and practice, of the constitutional rights of the Métis people.*[1]

In 2016, a photo of Riel was mounted on the wall in the Manitoba Legislature among the portraits of all the other Premiers of Manitoba. The photographic portrait names him as the first leader of the province. Manitoba has named the third Monday in February as Louis Riel Day and he is remembered

1 *Resolution to Recognize the Historic Role of Louis Riel*, House of Commons and Senate of Canada, March 10, 1992, by Joe Clark, then Minister of Constitutional Affairs. The Manitoba Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a *Resolution to Recognize the Historic Role of Louis Riel as Founder of Manitoba* in May of 1992.

◂ Unknown Artist, Fort Garry in 1860 (Now Winnipeg), 1885. Image Courtesy of University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections.

in solemn ceremonies across Canada on November 16th, the anniversary of his hanging. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had this to say on November 16, 2020.

> *As we mark the 150th anniversary of the Métis Nation's entry into Confederation, today we also join the Métis people and all Canadians to honour Louis Riel. The Founder of Manitoba and an elected Member of Parliament, Louis Riel was a great defender of minority rights and the French language. In addition, his struggle to preserve Métis culture paved the way for the Canada we know today.*[2]

There are Louis Riel schools in Ottawa and Calgary and a Louis Riel School Division in Winnipeg. There is a Louis Riel bridge, park and monuments. There are biographies, movies and plays about Riel. A major highway in Saskatchewan was renamed the "Louis Riel Trail" in 2001. There are more books about Riel than books about the other most famous historical Canadian, Sir John A. Macdonald. No one is trying to tear down the statue of Riel that commands the grounds of the Manitoba legislative building in Winnipeg.

We've come a long way from 1885 when three thousand men shipped from Toronto to the North-West "eager to smash Riel and the Rebels" for the purpose of "squelching Riel and his crowd of malcontents" in the North-West Resistance.[3] And even further from 1870 when Sir John A. Macdonald hoped to lure Riel to Ottawa, where upon arrival the Prime Minister promised he would be "one gone coon."[4]

Unknown Photographer, Louis Riel, 1865. Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, Ernest Brown Fonds.

It took just over a century for Canada to reimagine its relationship with Louis Riel, a reimagining that is still in progress. Riel was tried, found guilty and hanged for high treason, but despite this, most Canadians don't understand exactly what he did that was so very wrong. There was no intent to

2 Statement by the Prime Minister on Louis Riel Day, November 16, 2020.

3 *Telegram*, March 29, 1885; World, March 29, 1885

4 Sir John A. Macdonald to Sir John Rose, February 23, 1870.

overthrow the government and many Canadians sympathize with the Métis stance that taking up arms to protect their lands was not a rebellion and certainly not treason. It is this understanding of Riel and his actions that have led to over a dozen proposed bills in Parliament, all calling for Riel to be exonerated. The latest call for Riel's exoneration was an attempt to accomplish his legislated rehabilitation for Manitoba's 150th anniversary in 2020.

> **"Many Canadians sympathize with the Métis stance that taking up arms to protect their lands was not a rebellion and certainly not treason."**

Louis Riel was a comet. He burst on the scene in 1869 and flamed out seventeen years later in 1885. He captured the Canadian imagination quickly and has retained our attention ever since. Canadians had a wide variety of reactions to him at the time. During his life, he was revered as a saint and hero by his own people, the Métis Nation. He earned the lasting enmity of Sir John A. Macdonald by blocking the plans for an expansive colonial empire in the North-West. Riel was hated in Ontario. But he was so admired in Quebec that almost 30% of the population of Montreal (50,000 people) marched in protest when he was hanged. Virtually no one was indifferent to Riel.

Today we tend to forget how unique Riel was in his day. First, he was young, just 25 years old in 1869 when he steered Manitoba into the Canadian Confederation and thereby blocked the plans of British and Canadian politicians who were mostly

> **"Perhaps his most distinguishing characteristic though was that he was proudly Métis at a time when Indigenous people were thought to be savages and incapable of sophisticated political thought."**

twice his age. He was born in the North-West. Most Canadian politicians of that day were born in Britain, as was Sir John A. Macdonald, or were the sons of the Canadian elites in eastern Canada. Perhaps his most distinguishing characteristic though was that he was proudly Métis at a time when Indigenous people were thought to be savages and incapable of sophisticated political thought. Men with Indigenous ancestry, like John Norquay who became an early premier of Manitoba, made their way by embracing a non-Indigenous identity. Riel stood alone in proclaiming himself to be Métis and to be one with his people, the Métis Nation.

Riel also had democratic notions that were well in advance of the politicians of his day. Knowing he needed to bring the population of Red River into consensus about the terms on which Manitoba would join Confederation, he called for a series of conventions to which he invited representatives of every parish. There was equal representation for French/Catholic and English/Protestant parishes. Ojibwa Chief Prince was also a full representative at the conventions. Full translation was available to enable each representative to speak in the language of their choice. In Canada, only men who owned property could vote in federal elections and they were the men who negotiated Confederation. But

in the Red River conventions to decide the terms of Manitoba's entry into Canada there were no such property ownership rules. Riel himself owned no property at that time. These were the democratic ideas that were established prior to Manitoba's entry into Canada.

> **"Manitoba and the entire North-West became a colony of a colony."**

Once Canada obtained Manitoba on July 15, 1870 all of these democratic practices died instantly. Riel was forced into exile and everything he sought to establish was overturned. A despotic government was established that was accountable to Ottawa and Manitoba became a province in name only. Manitoba and the entire North-West became a colony of a colony.

Sir John A. Macdonald sent in troops and instigated a reign of terror in Red River that lasted for almost three years. He had already given notice of his intentions when he wrote that the Métis were "wild people," "miserable" and "impulsive half-breeds" that he wanted "put down," "kept down" and "kept quiet." He wrote of using a "strong hand," and would happily give the head of his army "the chance and glory and the risk of the scalping knife."[5]

Winnipeg, under Canada's new rule, disintegrated into a violent, racist turmoil. Métis, French and Catholics were beaten, their daughters raped, their houses burned, and their lands stolen. Men were viciously assaulted, some left for dead. The troops burned opposition presses and held Métis women at gunpoint while they ransacked their homes. Métis leaders were exiled and nine men who had participated in good faith in the negotiations of Manitoba into Confederation were murdered by the troops. Even the *New York Times* reported on the violence. The Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, did nothing to reign in the troops or stop the violence. The men who initiated the violence then moved into positions of power and were appointed as the chief of police, the mayor and the lieutenant governor. The troops were converted into the police force. The first chief justice of the Manitoba court was thoroughly corrupt and facilitated the legal dispossession of Métis lands.

> **"Manitoba did not just "enter" Canada, it was burned, assaulted and beaten into Confederation."**

Riel spent two years arguing, debating and writing the foundational ideas for Manitoba's entry into Canada. He brought the representatives of Red River to his point of view. It was an astonishing act of democracy in the face of Canada's abandonment of any such principle. All civil society and democratic values were not just overturned but smashed to bits in a violent takeover of Manitoba. Manitoba did not just "enter" Canada, it was burned, assaulted and

5 Morton, *A History of the Canadian West*, 872; Pope, *Correspondence of Sir John Macdonald*, 128; Sir John Macdonald to Sir John Rose, Ottawa, February 23, 1870; Pope, *Correspondence of Sir John Macdonald*, 113; Macdonald to George Stephen, Ottawa, December 13, 1869.

beaten into Confederation. The parts of the Manitoba Act, 1870 that specifically protected Métis lands, the French language and the Catholic schools were dismissed by the new regime in Manitoba. It took the better part of 150 years and three trips to the Supreme Court of Canada to force Manitoba to honour those constitutional commitments.

> **“Riel’s legacy has always been associated with fighting for the rights of his people, the Métis Nation. His legacy is now also tied to the idealistic and democratic practices that he used in order to bring Manitoba into Confederation.”**

Riel’s legacy has always been associated with fighting for the rights of his people, the Métis Nation. His legacy is now also tied to the idealistic and democratic practices that he used in order to bring Manitoba into Confederation. These are the ideas and aspirations we embrace today and that is why Canadians have re-imagined a new relationship with Louis Riel.

THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF LOUIS RIEL AND JOHN NORQUAY

GERALD FRIESEN

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Louis Riel and John Norquay: bright, articulate, ready to lead, able to command. These two children of Assiniboia won the attention and the affection of their people.[1] They had much in common. Both were descended from First Nation, Métis/Half-breed, and European forebears. They spent their childhood years in the District of Assiniboia, Norquay in St. Andrews parish (b.1841), and Riel in St. Boniface (b.1844). Both saw their homeland as the north-western interior of North America. Both had the advantage of greater formal schooling than their western contemporaries.[2] Both spoke French and English and could communicate in Indigenous languages.[3] They faced similar challenges: how to manage the adaptation by residents of Red River, and of the wider North-west, to the Canadian government's takeover of prairie lands.

Louis Riel's political education began in Red River. It took on new dimensions during the years he spent in Montreal (1858-66), where he studied in an excellent school and was made to feel self-conscious about his family ancestry. When he returned to the west, he relied for advice on clergy

1 The story is told in lively fashion in Jean Teillet, *The North-West is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel's People, the Métis Nation* (Toronto: Harper Collins Canada 2019)

2 Max Hamon, *The Audacity of His Enterprise: Louis Riel and the Métis Nation That Canada Never Was, 1840-1875* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press 2020). After a few years in parish schools, Norquay attended St. John's Collegiate School in the Red River Settlement as a scholarship student for three or four years.

3 Riel would have known Michif and may have known First Nation languages. Norquay traded for two seasons with Michif-speaking people and it was frequently said that he spoke Bungee, Dakota, and Anishinabek.

from Quebec who reinforced his Québécois, French-language and Catholic loyalties.[4] He said that he belonged to a "national" group: "Eh bien, je suis métis moi," he wrote in February 1869 in refuting a rude generalization about Red River.[5]

Language ("English" and "French"), church (denomination and parish), and the descriptors "Métis" and "half-breed," "native" and "*les sauvages*,"[6] constituted the social and political categories of Assiniboians that Riel employed in his discussions of politics. Riel prepared a record of the first political assembly at Upper Fort Garry in November/December 1869 in which he consistently distinguished between "les deux sections de la population," the delegates of the "English" parishes and those from *les paroisses métisses françaises*.[7]

"Riel: "the fate of the "Métis" became his preoccupation from the time of his departure from Upper Fort Garry in August 1870 until his death in November 1885."

Unknown Photographer, Portrait de Louis Riel, 1875. Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada, Jean Riel Fonds.

4 Ens & Sawchuk, *From New Peoples to New Nations*, pp. 92-112.

5 Raymond Huel ed. *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel* v.1 (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1985) [hereinafter *CWLR*], 1-010, p. 14. One of the first published statements of the resistance, written on 6 October 1869, probably by Riel, spoke on behalf of "*la population métisse canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge*," people who, according to the document, were "*sujets loyaux de Sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre.*" Also relevant is *CWLR*, document 1-013, p. 19 in which the phrase, "the Métis-Canadien population of Red River" throughout this important announcement of the group's plans.

6 *CWLR*, 1-060 and 1-062, pp89-95.

7 *CWLR*, 1-017, pp. 23-32. Another document of that period, again likely to have been written by Riel, referred to Métis delegates to the first provisional assembly as the "representatives of the French-speaking population of Rupert's Land." *CWLR*, 1-016, pp. 22-23. Yet another spoke of "the English half-breeds and other native women and children." *CWLR*, 1-020, pp. 34-35.

He also distinguished two broader categories of residents, whites and First Nations. The whites were the people "whom progress and civilization fill with ambition." He wrote that the First Nations regarded the newcomers expectantly and with apprehension. And, of course, he added a third category: the people of Red River who had been formed out of the two great populations in western North America and could serve as intermediaries between them:

> *En effet, nous sommes liés avec les deux [whites and First Nations] par le sang et les habitudes.*[8]

His use of these categories did not change much throughout his life. But the fate of the "Métis" became his preoccupation from the time of his departure from Upper Fort Garry in August 1870 until his death in November 1885.[9]

"Norquay: "His fullest statements of Manitoba's "provincial rights" claims in 1883-84 insisted that equality of the provinces must be a cardinal rule of the federation."

Norquay was a Manitoba cabinet minister for sixteen years and premier of the province for nine (1878-1887). His political education was based on the institutions of the British parliamentary tradition. He viewed Assiniboia as an infant "state" wherein citizens had united voluntarily to preserve order. He accepted Assiniboians' insistence on their status as free British subjects.[10] He claimed to have taken a moderate position in the resistance of 1869-70, though he spent much of that winter far from the

Unknown Photographer, John Norquay, Premier of Manitoba, 1878-1887. Image Courtesy of Library and Archives Canada.

8 *CWLR*, 1-060, pp89-93. "linked with both by blood and customs."

9 *CWLR*, 1-071, pp. 102-03 and 1-074, pp. 105-09, and especially 3-156, pp. 278-94.

10 Gerhard J. Ens & Joe Sawchuk, *From New Peoples to New Nations: Aspects of Métis History and Identity from the Eighteenth to Twenty-First Centuries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2016) pp, 71-91.

action, trading for furs on Lake Winnipegosis. In the 1870s his defence of Assiniboians transcended the Canadian Party/Riel conflict by insisting on the rights of "old settlers," a category derived from a family's history in Red River, not its language or religion or race. He accepted the Canadian nation-state's institutions of government, economy, and law. His fullest statements of Manitoba's "provincial rights" claims in 1883-84 insisted that equality of the provinces must be a cardinal rule of the federation. In cases of federal/provincial conflict, he argued that the constitution should be the deciding legal document and, in case of disagreements, the courts should rule.

Norquay warned his friends when Riel returned to the North-West Territories in 1884-85. He wrote to his sister's family near Prince Albert: "Bad Councils apparently have prevailed. I only hope that no acts of an irreparable character will be perpetrated." But he also agreed with those in the North-west who criticized Ottawa: "I feel for my countrymen [the Assiniboians] because I think they have not been treated as they should be." Most importantly, he believed that reforms could be won.[11] He deplored the outbreak of violence, supported his two sons who joined Canada's field force, and wrote critically of the 1885 resistance: "I hope that this insane movement will soon come to an end and that you will all return safe. But if fighting has to be done my desire is that the Rebels will be knocked to h–l [sic]. I only wish I was with you if ever any serious action does become necessary."[12]

> **"Whereas Norquay downplayed approaches that might contribute to the racializing of his countrymen, Riel emphasized Métis-ness."**

A vast conceptual distance separated Norquay from Riel. Norquay saw Assiniboians as voters, as residents of a province, as individual economic actors. No matter their language or religion, they had become Manitobans and they possessed rights as individual citizens of a nation-state.

Riel thought in terms of a Métis peoplehood, a "new people," whose First Nation and European "blood" created a distinct "race" (his words). As a "primitive people, simple and of good faith, placed by Providence in happy circumstances," these Métis had had in the past almost no need of government except in the buffalo hunt, when a leader and a number of captains organized affairs and where majority votes decided important questions: *C'était l'état d'un people neuf, mais civilisé, et jouissant d'un gouvernement à lui, fondé sur les vraies notions de la*

11 Norquay to Andrew Spence (Prince Albert) 27 March 1885, Norquay Premiers Papers [NPP], *Letterbook E.*, E305-306.

12 Norquay to "W.R. Nursey [,] Military Camp, Qu'Appelle or elsewhere," 7 April 1885, NPP, *Letterbook D.*, p. 235. The dashes in "h – l" are Norquay's own, not mine.

13 "A new people, but civilized, enjoying its own government, founded on true notions of public liberty and equity." They created "the laws of the prairies." These phrases appear in an important article that Riel wrote in the week before he died. *CWLR*, v3, document 3-156, pp. 278-294. These quotations come from p. 278, 281-83. He said that the North-West operated "sous la protection des lois métisses." *CWLR* v3, p. 283.

liberté publique et sur celles de l'équité. These Métis created *les lois de la Prairie*.[13]

Whereas Norquay downplayed approaches that might contribute to the racializing of his countrymen, Riel emphasized Métis-ness. Though willing to expand his political community's boundaries to include anglophone Protestants, Riel's primary goal was to defend a distinct Métis peoplehood. These people constituted a nation.

Riel was a risk taker. He was prepared to risk violence in pursuing political ends. Norquay was a negotiator. When faced with difficult decisions at several moments in his career, and when violence was talked of, he refused to embark on that path.

The contrast between the two leaders' views of adaptive strategies had implications not just for their generation but for today's and tomorrow's Canada. Riel's thinking about nation led directly into the talk of "race" – he used the term himself to describe the Métis – that dominated political discourse for over a century. It also underlay his successors' drive for the inclusion of Métis in the 1982 constitution as a collectivity possessing Aboriginal rights. Norquay, in contrast, avoided the racializing constructs, preferring instead to see province and nation-state as inclusive political communities and the individual voter as their foundation.

Riel's strategy fit the political circumstances of the twentieth century. What might happen in the twenty-first? Is it possible that citizens will transcend the racializing and racism of the past? If they do, they will find that Norquay's political philosophy anticipated and articulated their ideals.

IN HIS OWN WORDS: ABBÉ NOËL RITCHOT AND THE CAUSES OF THE RED RIVER RESISTANCE

PHILIPPE MAILHOT

Philippe Mailhot holds a PhD in Canadian History from the University of Manitoba. His thesis is entitled *Ritchot's Resistance: Abbé Noël Joseph Ritchot and the Creation and Transformation of Manitoba*. He has held several positions related to his field of study, but is best known in Manitoba for his 25 years as Director of the St. Boniface Museum. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, he has received several awards and honours, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, the title of "Fellow" of the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) in 2013 (the highest honour bestowed by the CMA). The Festival du Voyageur awarded him the Order of the Capot in 2015.

In discussions of the origins of the Red River Resistance, the difficulty of retracing the first-hand perspective of those who opposed Canada's attempt to assume authority over the North-West is often evoked. The papers of Joseph-Noël Ritchot, Parish Priest of St. Norbert from 1862 to 1905, are a notable exception. Born in l'Assomption Lower Canada, in 1825, Ritchot had come west in 1862 at the invitation of Bishop Taché and was soon appointed as *curé* of the Métis Parish of St. Norbert at the southern end of the Red River Settlement. Unlike many of his peers, Catholic and Protestant, he had a great deal of respect and admiration for the Métis, by whom he was equally well regarded in his lifetime and beyond.

As an early leader, and as the Red River's lead negotiator facing off against Prime Minister John A. Macdonald and Minister of Militia and Defence, George-Étienne Cartier, Ritchot played a pivotal role in the creation of Manitoba. Historian George F. Stanley's use of Ritchot's notes and "Ottawa Journal" in his *Louis Riel* (first published in 1963) made that biography the first to shed some light on the role played by Ritchot in the Red River Resistance. Stanley made clear that Ritchot was not simply a religious advisor.

> *It was Ritchot, more than any other person who was watching events and guiding the thoughts of the people to whom he ministered in his parish at St. Norbert* (Stanley, 1972, pp. 56-57).

A fuller examination of Ritchot's papers, some of which were believed destroyed in a fire, permitted the present author to produce his own more

Unknown Photographer, Abbé Noël Joseph Ritchot, ca.1870. Image Courtesy of Collection générale de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface.

expansive study of the cleric's role (Mailhot 1986). With the exception of his testimony before the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territory in 1869-70, Ritchot never wrote or spoke publicly about what inspired him, and others, to become "resistors" in 1869 and beyond. What follows is an attempt to present, in the words of a major protagonist, the individuals, issues, and events that Ritchot considered to be the principal causes of the 1869-1870 resistance.

In April 1874, Ritchot testified before the Parliamentary Select Committee looking into the causes of the North-West "difficulties." Although focused mostly on the question of promised amnesty, Ritchot did speak briefly about the origins of the resistance.

> *The causes of the troubles arose chiefly … from the fact that the people had no notice whatsoever of the transactions which seemed to be going on … with reference to the transfer of the North-West Territory to Canada. The nature of these transactions was completely unknown in the North-West, and the people were dissatisfied from the first at being left in that position. That, so far as I could see, was the chief cause of the discontent* (Ritchot, Testimony).

Several years earlier, on 30 May 1870, in a two-part memorandum prepared for George-Étienne Cartier, Ritchot noted that when first hearing of the potential transfer, "the Métis responded positively", as they felt the existing government of Assiniboia "was not up to responding to the needs of the country. Nonetheless, they felt that the time for a change "had not yet come" (Ritchot, *Notes, "B"*).[1] Earlier, Ritchot had told Cartier, 'all awaited with joy the day when they would be permitted to strengthen the bonds that united them, for some these were bonds of blood for others bonds of sympathy [,] with Canada, thus becoming a part of the Dominion.'[2] However, the contradictory reports of the newspapers arriving in the settlement presented "the negotiations as more or less

1 *"Les Métis éprouvèrent de la satisfaction", "insuffisant pour répondre aux besoins du pays", "n'était pas encore venu."*

2 *"Tous attendaient avec joie l'époque où il leur serait permis de resserrer les liens qui les unissaient, les uns par le sang, et les autres par la sympathie [,] au Canada en devenant partie de la puissance".*

unfavourable to the interests of the population: which had the effect of awakening the interest of the people" (Ritchot, *Notes*).[3] According to Ritchot, the Métis were surprised not only to learn from the newspapers that the arrangements had been concluded but also 'to see that the Councillors of Assiniboia themselves could not provide them with any information (Ritchot, *Notes, "B"*).[4] Ritchot asserted that while news of the transactions between the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and Canada "did not greatly displease the people of the country, they did not seem to very much approve the manner that an affair of such great importance was being handled. It looked like all things were being settled without considering Red River inhabitants: almost as if they did not even exist" (Ritchot, *Cahier II*).[5]

> **"It is perhaps not surprising that the Canadian Party and others came to see Ritchot as the *éminence grise* of what they regarded as the papist inspired resistance."**

In his parliamentary testimony, Ritchot suggested further that the "dissatisfaction was increased at first by the conduct of a certain *Canadian* party" in the fall of 1868. The de facto leader of this so-called Canadian party, and the major proponent of union with Canada, John Christian Schultz, had arrived in Red River in 1861. He came to be seen by Ritchot as the bête noire behind much of what insulted and infuriated the residents of Red River. In his *Cahier II,* Ritchot is very direct. "On the other hand, the only newspaper in Red River financed and run by Schultz had over the last months – as was its custom – nothing but insults and contempt to hurl at the Métis."[6] In addition, Ritchot noted, the newspaper insulted the HBC administration which in his view had acted in good faith, having "resolved difficulties and rendered justice in as much as its authority

Ken Gigliotti, Monument to Louis Riel and Father Ritchot on the grounds of St. Norbert Church, 2013. Image Courtesy of *Winnipeg Free Press*.

3 *"Les négociations sous des jours plus ou moins défavorables aux intérêts de la population: ce qui eut pour effet de réveiller d'abord l'attention du peuple".*

4 *"De voir que les conseillers d'Assiniboia eux-mêmes ne pouvaient leur donner aucun renseignement".*

5 *"N'aurait pas trop déplu aux gens du pays, mais on ne paraissait pas trop approuver la manière dont se traitait une affaire de si haute importance. On paraissait régler toutes choses sans faire de cas des habitants de la Rivière-Rouge; pas plus que s'il n'y en avait pas eu".*

6 *"D'un autre côté, le seul journal de la Rivière-Rouge rédigé aux frais et sous la direction de Schultz n'avait depuis plusieurs mois – selon sa coutume – que des injures et des mépris à jeter sur les Métis".*

7 *"Réglait les difficultés et rendait la justice favorablement autant qu'il était de son pouvoir".*

allowed" (Ritchot, *Cahier II*).[7] It is perhaps not surprising that the Canadian Party and others came to see Ritchot as the *éminence grise* of what they regarded as the papist inspired resistance.

Ritchot also informed the Parliamentary Committee that difficulties were increased by the "arrival of a party of Canadian employees" in the autumn of 1868. Ritchot was referring to the work crew sent out by Canada under the supervision of John Snow to survey and build the Dawson Trail between Lake of the Woods and Red River. Ritchot told of assisting at a court hearing where Snow had been accused of trading with local indigenous peoples for "certain lands, part of which the people of the nation had claimed for themselves." Snow had been charged with giving them "flour, pork, and drink in exchange for these lands" (Ritchot Testimony).

Ritchot also refers to companions of Snow who were attempting to stake land near St. Norbert at Schultz's instigation. The individuals involved are described as "a few strangers accompanied by one Mr. Mair, Upper Canadian, who had come out with Mr. Snow, and William Hallett, all inspired to action by Doctor Shultz (sic)" (Ritchot, *Cahier II*).[8] Charles Mair was an early member of the Canada First movement founded in Ontario and had come out west as a member of Snow's crew. He had already gained notoriety for disparaging comments about the inhabitants of Red River, which had been published in Toronto. He famously was slapped and horsewhipped by Annie McDermot Bannatyne, wife of the Red River Postmaster. William Hallett was prominent in the English Métis community and associated himself with the Canadian Party as well. Ritchot's *Notes* prepared for Cartier tell of how the above noted land speculators were "stretching out lines and staking land upstream on the Sale or St. Norbert River and also at Point à Grouette [Ste Agathe] on the Red River which greatly displeased the population. The Métis conveyed to these agents the order to withdraw" (Ritchot, *Notes*).[9]

This appearance of Canadians seeking to claim lands near St. Norbert led Jean Baptiste Tourond, one of the St. Norbert Métis who had driven off the speculators, to action. He convened a July 5th assembly which named "a commission charged with ensuring that these strangers would not seize, to the detriment of the rights of the Nation, lands set aside and recognized until now by custom and usage, as commons, or by national understanding as belonging to one part of the population" (Ritchot, *Notes*).[10] Tourond was placed in charge of the committee to ensure that "no strangers establish themselves on the lands along the Assiniboine River following it upstream as far as Poplar Point and from there as far as Turtle Mountain to the boundary, and a bit below Fort Garry along the Red River including the Seine River, up to Lake Winnipeg and from their

8 *"Quelques étrangers accompagnés d'un M. Mair, Haut canadien venu avec M. Snow & William Halette, le tout sous l'inspiration du docteur Shultz (sic)..."*

9 *"Furent tirées des lignes et marquer des terres en haut de la rivière Sale ou St Norbert [,] et à la Pointe à Grouette [Ste Agathe] sur la rivière Rouge ce qui déplut fortement à la population. Les Métis intimèrent à ces agents l'ordre de se retirer".*

10 *"Une commission chargée de veiller à ce que ces étrangers ne s'emparassent pas au détriment des droits de la nation, de terrains laissés et reconnus jusqu'alors par la coutume et l'usage, comme communes, ou par une entente nationale à telle partie de la population".*

including Oak Point and all that easterly portion of the country from Lake Winnipeg to the boundary" (Ritchot, *Cahier II*).[11] The "entente nationale" to which Ritchot refers existed between the "Métis Canadiens-Francais" and the English-speaking Métis north of the Assiniboine River. One would be hard pressed to find a clearer definition of what the French Métis regarded as the homeland for their *nation*.

Dr. Schultz was also rumoured to be the "prime mover" behind the July 29 public assembly convened by a prominent francophone Métis who served as one of the appointees to the HBC's Council of Assiniboia, William Dease. He organized the meeting "for the purpose of demanding the money, or a portion of the money, the Hudson's Bay Company was to receive from Canada for the country, and moreover, to overthrow the Government of the Hudson's Bay Company" (Ritchot, Testimony.) In Ritchot's view, Dease was "[a] man without principles who was as much ignorant as he was vain"[12] (Ritchot, Récit). Ritchot then stated that he had "warned my people to be on their guard, as to the object of the meeting, as I considered it to be of a dangerous character."

It seems that Ritchot's suspicions were shared, "the leading and influential men among the Métis reserved their judgment and let it be known they would wait on more certain information before acting, and their opinion prevailed" (Ritchot, *Notes*).[13]

The arrival of the Dominion Survey crews at Red River in August was seen by Ritchot as especially troublesome. In his 1874 testimony, he noted that after their arrival "there were repeated difficulties with reference to the surveyors. The inhabitants demanded of the surveyors on what authority they came to survey the lands of the country. The surveyors never produced any paper or gave any satisfactory answer" (Ritchot, *Testimony*). In his Notes to Cartier, Ritchot writes:

> *In the middle of the summer a certain number of men, at whose head was Colonel Dennis, arrived in the Colony and declared they came in the name of the Canadian Government and that they had been charged to divide into lots, all the lands of the North-West and set themselves to work. As they only gave as proof of their authority to act but their words [,] the Métis enjoined them to produce authentic proof of their rights to carry out such works in their country; which they did not. Thus, the Métis intimated to them the order that they cease these works* (Ritchot, *Notes*).[14]

11 *"Aucun étranger ne s'établissent sur les terres de près la rivière Assiniboine en la suivant en remontant jusque plus haut que les petits trembles [Poplar Point] et de la jusqu'au-delà de la montagne de la Tortue jusqu'aux lignes, et du Fort Garry un peu en descendant la rivière Rouge renferment la rivière la Seine [,] prenant le lac Winnipeg et de là renfermant la pointe de chênes [Ste. Anne] et toute la partie est du pays depuis le lac Winnipeg jusqu'aux lignes".*

12 *"[Un] homme sans principes et aussi ignorant qu'orgueilleux".*

13 *"Les hommes supérieurs et influents parmi les Métis se tinrent sur la réserve et ils furent d'avis qu'il fallait attendre des données certaines avant d'agir, et leur opinion prévalut".*

14 *"Au milieu de l'été, un certain nombre d'hommes, à la tête duquel était le Colonel Dennis, arrivaient dans la Colonie et déclaraient qu'ils venaient au nom du gouvernement du Canada et qu'ils étaient chargés de diviser en lots toutes les terres du Nord-Ouest et se mirent à l'œuvre. Comme ils ne donnaient pour preuve de leurs droits et autorisations d'en agir ainsi que des paroles [,] les Métis les rejoignent de produire des preuves authentiques de leurs droits de faire de tels travaux dans leurs pays : ce qu'ils ne furent pas. Alors les Métis leur intimèrent l'ordre de cesser ces travaux".*

“No authority in the country had the right to assign titles to any lands beyond the lands Lord Selkirk had given to the HBC.”

Ritchot also felt that it was “à propos to remark”[15] that no authority in the country had the right to assign titles to any lands beyond the lands Lord Selkirk had given to the HBC. His May 1870 Notes also informed Cartier:

> *There have never been, even to this day, titles of ownership of this land except by virtue of custom and national agreement*[16] (Ritchot, Notes).

Cartier was also informed that the problems posed by the survey crews were found in the demeanor of the individuals involved. “We must also observe that in the midst of all these entanglements, several of the Canadian employees as well as several of the adventurers from Ontario made compromising observations on several occasions on behalf of their cause of a kind that to make the nation understand that its rights and its liberties were threatened” (Ritchot, *Notes*).[17] Ritchot gave further vent to his view of the surveyors in his *Cahier II*: “New arrivals under the authority of a certain Dennis bearing a pompous title and surrounded by employees with similarly pompous titles such as Colonel, Major, Captain, even down to the lowest valet of the expedition who wanted to adorn himself with a title and an air of grandeur.”[18] These surveyors, who Cartier is told are regarded as scoundrels, “canailles” by the Métis, after being ordered to stop their work and fearful of the Métis, were “prompted by Schultz and company” to work “on the open prairie”[19] near Pembina while the locals were busy with the harvest (Ritchot, *Cahier II*).

In his own notes, Ritchot wrote of a period of despair by the late summer of 1869. Those in favour of the transfer were happily making arrangements and planning to profit under the new regime. On the other hand:

> *After having witnessed the failure of all efforts by those from whom the people could anticipate aid, a few Métis, motivated by a young man of theirs, named several persons of confidence among themselves with the aim of taking into consideration the present state of things and to see if there was not some means to make at the very least a vocal protest against the injustice and the injury done to the nation by Canada... After being assured that they were within their rights and that honour demanded a protest, they resolved to oppose injustice and to repel*

15 *“À propos de remarquer”.*

16 *“Il n’y avait et il n’y a encore aujourd’hui de titres de possession de ce terrain qu’en vertu d’une coutume et entente nationale”.*

17 *“On doit de plus observer que dans tous ces démêlés plusieurs des employées du Canada ainsi que plusieurs aventuriers arrivés d’Ontario firent à plusieurs reprises des observations compromettantes pour leur cause et de nature à faire comprendre à la nation que ses droits et ses libertés étaient menacés”.*

18 *“De nouvelles arrivées sous la présidence d’un nommer Dennis revêtu de titre pompeux, entouré d’employés pareillement revêtus de titres de colonel, major, capitaine, enfin jusqu’au dernier valet, de cette expédition qui voulait se revêtir d’un titre et d’un air de grandeur”.*

19 *“Inspirée par Schultz et compagnie”, “au large”.*

the injury and the shame with all of their power and to employ all that justice and right permitted them even at the risk of appearing imprudent and reckless (Ritchot, *Cahier II*).[20]

> **"For many, the 11th of October marked the beginning of the armed Red River Resistance which for the next three weeks was headquartered in Ritchot's St. Norbert Presbytery."**

The "young man" was, of course, Louis Riel. The "assurances" had been provided by Ritchot whose parishioners had begun the process of organizing a coherent response. The "protest" was the unarmed but intimidating halt imposed to the Dominion Survey on October 11, 1869, by Riel, Tourond, and others.

For many, the 11th of October marked the beginning of the armed Red River Resistance which for the next three weeks was headquartered in Ritchot's St. Norbert Presbytery. There, under Riel's leadership and Ritchot's assurances that the cause was just, the movement codified "The Laws of the Prairie",[21] under which a council was elected and to which the "soldiers" swore allegiance. A wooden rail fence, *La Barrière*, was erected across the Pembina Trail where it crossed la Rivière Sale a few hundred yards west of Ritchot's home. An ever-growing camp of Métis militants began to take shape nearby. The stated goal was to prevent the Canadian appointed Lt. Governor, William McDougall from entering the territory and asserting Canadian authority without the permission of the residents. Efforts to either dissuade or divide the militants were made at this time as well. The efforts of Métis moderates, some of the "English" settlers, and an attempt at a counter-coup by William Dease all failed. Once it was clear that McDougall had been stopped, the decision was made to seize Fort Garry and thus establish firm control over the settlement after which a negotiated entry into the Canadian Confederation could be arranged.

> **"Ritchot's writings and correspondence prior to, during, and after the resistance are a key to a broader understanding of the movement and its principal players."**

The Red River Resistance remains one of the most discussed events in Canadian history. While much of the focus has justifiably been placed on Louis Riel, Ritchot's writings and correspondence prior to, during, and after the resistance are a key to a broader understanding of the movement and

20 *"Après avoir vu échoir toutes les entreprises des hommes de qui naturellement le pays devait attendre du secours, quelques Métis seulement excités par un jeune homme des leurs font nommer quelques personnes de confiance parmi eux afin de prendre en considération l'état actuel et voir s'il n'y avait pas moyen, au moins, de faire une protestation manifeste contre l'injustice et l'injure faites à la nation par le Canada... Après s'être assurés qu'ils étaient dans leur droit et que l'honneur demandait une protestation, ils résolurent de s'opposer à l'injustice et de repousser l'injure et la honte de tout leur pouvoir et d'employer tout ce que la justice et le droit leur permettaient au risque même de paraître imprudents et téméraires".*

21 *Les Lois de la Prairie.*

A copy of Ritchot's manuscript (An example of Ritchot's handwriting, Centre du Patrimoine St Boniface).

its principal players. While challenging to read due to a difficult script, his papers offer a trove of contemporary detail relating to the birth of Manitoba, Louis Riel, and the Métis. His own efforts to secure the verbal promises made to him during his negotiations in Ottawa but ignored in the words and execution of the Manitoba Act also are well documented in his papers. The above discussion is but an example of the perspectives to be gained from Manitoba's "other" Father of Confederation. Further examination will no doubt yield other insights and add to the knowledge required to fully understand Manitoba's complicated and controversial "birth."

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Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territories in 1869-70; Journals of the House of Commons, Appendix 6; 1874.

Ritchot to Cartier, *Notes sur le Nord-Ouest*; 30 May 1870; Library and Archives Canada, Correspondence (Macdonald Papers) MG26 A Vol. 103 p.41396-41410.

Ritchot to Cartier, *Notes sur le Nord-Ouest*; 30 May 1870, "B"; Library and Archives Canada, Correspondence (Macdonald Papers) MG26 A Vol. 103, pp.41411-41419.

Ritchot, *Cahier II; Archives Société Historique de Saint-Boniface, Fonds Ritchot*, 0287/155/1.

Ritchot, Récit, Ritchot's papers also contain a notebook which features an undated récit that touches on the early evolution of the resistance. (An excellent transcript of the above was prepared by Alfred Fortier and published in *Bulletin de la Société Historique de Saint-Boniface,1998-1999-Numéro 1*). The original, however, did need to be consulted as Fortier, like so many others, had difficulties with Ritchot's challenging handwriting.

SEE ALSO

Mailhot, Philippe R. 1986. *Ritchot's Resistance; Abbé Noël Joseph Ritchot and the Creation and Transformation of Manitoba* PhD Diss. University of Manitoba.

Stanley, George F. 1972. *Louis Riel*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

It should also be noted that Ritchot's original draft of his *Notes sur le Nord-Ouest* can be found in the above-noted ASHSB, Fonds CACRSB, Série Alexandre Antonin Taché, T7531-7546.

GLIMPSES OF THE LIFE OF CATHERINE MOIGNON PATENAUDE SIMPSON 1832-1906

SARAH CARTER

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In the census of 1901 there is an entry from Onion Lake, North West Territories (Saskatchewan) for Catherine Simpson, age 70. She is identified as "Iriquois" [sic] under the column "Racial or Tribal Origin," her "Nationality" is "Indian" and her "Mother Tongue" "Cree."[1] This is almost the last document I can locate for Catherine Moignon Patenaude Simpson who led a long and eventful life in the Canadian West. Her ancestry reflects the diversity of the people of what became Canada; her father was Haudenosaunee, her mother Métis. Her language was Cree.

"Her ancestry reflects the diversity of the people of what became Canada; her father was Haudenosaunee, her mother Métis. Her language was Cree."

There is a famous 1863 photograph of her, her husband, son, and the English tourists she helped guide from Fort Pitt (Saskatchewan) over the Rockies to the coast through arduous

1 Library Archives Canada. 1901 Census Item no. 87313. Sub-district Onion Lake. Available here. Her husband James Keith Simpson is 76 and he is listed as "Scotch" under the "Racial or Tribal Origin" and "Nationality" columns. Some of the findings in this article also appear in Sarah Carter and Inez Lightning, *Ancestors: Indigenous Peoples of Western Canada in Historic Photographs*, Bruce Peel Special Collection, University of Alberta, Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2021, pp. 18-20

conditions.[2] However, her erasure from history (outside of her family and community) has been so complete that recent publications clip her out of the photo. From the glimpses we can capture of her life, she was an exceptionally courageous, resourceful and resilient Indigenous woman who was swept up and carried along by the momentous events of that era related to the acquisition of the West by Canada, the treaties, and the resistance of the Métis. This short article takes a takes a step toward reviving and restoring her history and legacy.

Catherine Moignon had a long family history in the region of Frog Lake; she was born there in 1832.[3] This is in the parkland or transition belt that divides the plains from the northern forested regions, (on the Alberta side of the border with Saskatchewan). It is the home of the Woods Cree including her band under the leadership of Chief Seekasskootch.[4] Her mother, Marie Nadeau, was Métis. Her father Joseph Moignon was the "Iriquois" of the 1901 census. Haudenosaunee men were employed by the fur companies because they were expert voyageurs, hunters and trappers, and they also worked as interpreters and guides. When their contracts expired, some of the Iroquois remained, making their living as freemen, marrying and raising families. The Métis, including Catherine's mother, also occupied this region, where after the establishment of Fort Pitt in 1830, the locals provided buffalo hides, meat and pemmican to the Hudson's Bay Company. As Cree historian Joe Dion wrote, the Cree called Fort Pitt *Waskahikanis*, or the Small House, and it was located at an ancient crossing of the Saskatchewan River.[5]

In 1848, at age sixteen, Catherine was married at Fort Pitt to Louis Patenaude. He was known as "The Assiniboine" as he had been raised among them.[6] He spoke a mixture of Cree and French. They had two sons, Benjamin and Louis, who survived to middle age, and were also members of the Seekaskootch First Nation, and two daughters, Margaret and Catherine who died young of smallpox.[7]

We have Viscount Milton (William Wentworth-Fitzwilliam) and Dr. Walter Butler Cheadle to thank for the glimpses they provide of Catherine in 1863 through the records they created of the

2 See the covers of Walter B. Cheadle, Cheadle's Journal of Trip Across Canada, 1862 – 1863 (Victoria: Touchwood, 2010) and Michael Shaw Bond, Way Out West: On the Trail of an Errant Ancestor (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2001).

3 Library Archives Canada. Scrip record of Catherine Moignon. A genealogical site indicates that Catherine's last name may not have been "Moignon" as in the scrip application, but "Mondion" or "Mondlon".

4 Catherine appears as "Mrs. Simpson" on the treaty annuity paylists. See LAC, RG 10, Reel C7146, Canada Heritage Online. Her sons Louis and Benjamin Patenaude were also members of the Seekaskootch First Nation.

5 Joe F. Dion, *My Tribe the Crees* (Calgary: Glenbow Museum, 1979) 76.

6 Viscount Milton and W.B. Cheadle, *The North-West Passage By Land* (London: Cassell, Petter, and Galpin, 1865): 176. There is no record of which Assiniboine/ Nakoda/ Nakota people he was raised among.

7 LAC, Métis scrip application of Catherine Moignon, 1886.

expedition.[8] Milton, from a wealthy, noble British family, suffered physical and mental ailments, and his companion Cheadle was a medical doctor. They sought adventure, and after the fact, claimed they were in search of a direct route through British territory to the gold regions of the Cariboo, though a recent study explains that Milton was ordered out of England by his father, as he was "mixing with bad company in gaming houses and brothels."[9] The father paid for Cheadle to accompany his son. On his return to England, Milton's reputation was restored, as he was "received as a conquering hero," and his talks and publications with Cheadle became hugely popular.[10]

Catherine and her husband met the hapless travelers at Fort Pitt, in April 1863. A child of theirs had just died (according to Milton and Cheadle) after an unspecified illness, and the Assiniboine, an accomplished voyageur and hunter, agreed to assist the party across the mountains, but only if his family could accompany him. The Englishmen were reluctant, fearing so many mouths to feed, but later admitted the arrangement "proved our salvation."[11] They soon met up with another helpless foreigner, eccentric Irishman and scholar Eugene Francis O'Beirne, ("Mr O'B") who would prove a nuisance and a handicap.[12]

> **"They were obliged to butcher their horses to survive and she dried the meat. One day the party survived on a tasty porcupine."**

The Assiniboine was resourceful, knowledgeable, adept and strong (though he only had one hand) but so was Catherine. She cooked, gathering what she could en route; one day when the party was weak with hunger she made a paste of a large quantity of bilberries [small blueberries] mixed with a small amount of flour.[13] On another occasion she produced some dried meat she had saved for when they were near starvation.[14] They were obliged to butcher their horses to survive and she dried the meat. One day the party survived on a tasty porcupine. She did the laundry and patched together shreds of moccasins.

8 There are several works created by William Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, Viscount Milton and Walter Butler Cheadle. These include "An expedition across the Rocky Mountains into British Columbia,by the Yellow Head or Leather Pass," Royal Geographic Society, *Proceedings* (London) IX (1864-65, 17 – 21; *An Expedition across the Rocky Mountains into British Columbia, by the Yellow Head or Leather Pass* (London, 1865); and *The North-West Passage by Land: Being the Narrative of an Expedition from the Atlantic to the Pacific... to British Columbia... by one of the northern passes in the Rocky Mountains* (1st ed. London, 1965, 9th ed., London, 1901). Cheadle's journal was first published as *Cheadle's Journal of A Trip Across Canada, 1862 – 1863*, intro. and notes by A.G. Doughty and Gustave Lanctot (The Canada Series, ed. F.P. Grove, I, Ottawa, 1931).

9 Catherine Bailey, *Black Diamonds: The Rise and Fall of an English Dynasty* (London: Penguin Books, 2007): 36.

10 Ibid., 41.

11 Milton and Cheadle, *North-West Passage*, 177.

12 Lewis H. Thomas, "O'Beirne, Eugene Francis," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, v. 9 (1861 – 1870).

13 *Cheadle's Journal*, 204.

14 Ibid., 209.

Catherine hacked through dense underbrush with an axe; Cheadle noted she "cut away much better than I can, "chopping away with "untiring perseverance."[15] She saved horses stuck in bogs, in one case having "taken off the packs & trying to whack [a horse] into sufficient exertion to get out again."[16] She was angry at Mr O'B for not coming to her aid and she "relieved her feelings by a torrent of violent language in the Cree tongue, eminently abusive of Mr O'B, who she declared… took to his heels and bolted, afraid lest he should be left behind with only a female protector! She was very indignant, and declared she would never lift a finger to help him in anything for the future."[17]

> **"Without her and her family, these English greenhorns would not have been able to defy starvation and fight their way across torrential rivers and dense forest for eighty-seven days."**

The trip ended in Victoria where their photograph was taken, and where Milton and Cheadle claimed to have "clothed them in gorgeous apparel, seated them in a 'buggy' drawn by a pair of fast-trotting horses" and showed them the sights.[18] They all attended a performance of the dancers, singers, actors and comedians the Marsh Troupe. In his journal Cheadle noted that in Victoria "Everyone knew 'Our Indians,' & they had numerous visitors in the old cabin they lived in by permission of the Hudson's Bay Company."[19] (While Milton and Cheadle stayed in the rather more posh Hotel de France.)

If Milton and Cheadle are to be credited with helping "prepare opinion in both Britain and Canada for the ending of Hudson's Bay Company rule, confederation, and the inclusion of the west in the union" through their 1863 trek, then Catherine deserves some of that credit.[20] Without her and her family, these English greenhorns would not have been able to defy starvation and fight their way across torrential rivers and dense forest for 87 days.

Catherine and family parted company with the Englishmen in late September heading to Kamloops where they intended to spend the winter. They made it back to Fort Edmonton in 1864. Her husband died there of an unspecified ailment just after their return.[21] That same year, she married James (Jim)

15 Ibid., 207.

16 Milton and Cheadle, *The North-West Passage*, 183.

17 Ibid., 263.

18 Ibid., 352.

19 *Cheadle's Journal*, 234.

20 V.G. Hopwood, "Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, William, Viscount Milton", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography V. 10* (1871-1880).

21 In a postscript to 1865, 2nd edition of *The North-West Passage By Land*, Milton and Cheadle wrote that the Assiniboine and family arrived safely at Edmonton in 1864, but "a few weeks afterwards, the strong, untiring man, who had escaped so many dangers… with such wonderful resource and skill… fell a victim to some epidemic or acute disease." Postscript p. 1.

Unknown Photographer, Hand-tinted version of photograph taken in Victoria, B.C., 1863. Left to right: Catherine Moignon Patenaude Simpson, Louis "The Assiniboine" Patenaude, Dr. Walter Butler Cheadle, Viscount Milton, Benjamin Patenaude. Image courtesy of Bruce Peel Special Collections, University of Alberta.

Keith Simpson, the "natural" son of Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company Sir George Simpson, at Lac La Biche. Simpson had worked with the HBC but at this time was raising horses and hunting buffalo with a home at Lac la Biche. The couple were never to share in the Governor father's riches.

After the Treaty Six negotiations at Fort Pitt in 1876 Catherine was on the paylist of the Seekaskootch First Nation at Onion Lake, as "Mrs. Simpson."[22] Her sons Louis and Benjamin Patenaude were also members. A member of the Nehiyawak (Cree) First Nation led by Chief Seekaskootch (Cut Arm), she became a "treaty Indian" in 1876.

At time of the 1885 resistance the Simpsons lived at Frog Lake where "Misi Jim," as he was known to the locals, managed a small HBC store.[23] Frog Lake had become a tinder box of tension and starvation by 1884-5 following the arrival of Chief Mistahi-maskwa and his people, placed there by the Canadian government. The resources of the district were severely strained and only the old and the ill got rations. Mistahi-maskwa was unable to

22 See note 5.

23 Dion, 89 – 90.

Viscount William Fitzwilliam Milton & Walter Butler Cheadle, *Mr. O'B Triumphantly Crosses the River* in The North-West Passage by Land (London: Cassel, Petter & Galpin), 1865. Image courtesy of University of British Columbia Library, Rare Books and Special Collections.

Viscount William Fitzwilliam Milton & Walter Butler Cheadle, *Our Party Across the Mountains* in The North-West Passage by Land (London: Cassel, Petter & Galpin), 1865. Image courtesy of University of British Columbia Library, Rare Books and Special Collections.

stop the bloodshed on April 2, 1885 perpetrated by young men of his band led by Wandering Spirit that resulted in the murders of nine men, including two priests and employees of the Department of Indian Affairs.[24]

Catherine, whose husband was away at Fort Pitt, was visited by Mistahi-maskwa on the morning the shooting began; he warned her that he could not control his men, and that there was going to be trouble. While there the shooting began, and the chief ran out shouting that the firing must be stopped. According to eye-witness accounts, Catherine saved the life of HBC clerk W.B. Cameron, assisted by another Cree woman (Mrs. John Horse) who together put a big red shawl over him, concealing him.[25] Cameron however, did not credit Catherine with saving his life. Like Mr. O'B of decades earlier, Cameron perhaps did not want to acknowledge a female protector. In Cameron's account Catherine was described only as the "elderly half breed wife" of Jim Simpson who herself had to be told to seek protection.[26] She was fifty-three in 1885.

Chief Seekaskootch arrived at Frog Lake the next day, and he admonished Wandering Spirit for killing innocent people.[27] In June, Seekasktootch was among four Cree killed by the scouts led by North West Mounted Policeman Major Samuel Steele at Loon Lake. Catherine, her husband and sons were with the Cree and many others of the Fort Pitt and

24 Sarah Carter, introd. *Two Months in the Camp of Big Bear*, by Theresa Delaney and Theresa Gowanlock, (1885 rpt.: Regina; Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1999) XVI – XX.

25 Account of George Stanley, in Frog Lake Community Club, *Land of Red and White* (Frog Lake Community Club, 1977), 42.

26 William Bleasdell Cameron, *Blood Red the Sun* (Calgary: Kenway Publishing Co., 1950), 52.

27 Account of George Stanley, 42.

Frog Lake communities chased by the field force until they emerged at Fort Pitt on June 2.

The Simpsons both testified in favour of Mistahimaskwa who was none-the-less convicted of treason, sent to Stony Mountain Penitentiary, and died of tuberculosis shortly after his release in 1888. Speaking through an interpreter Catherine said at the trial that the chief tried to stop the bloodshed, telling her to "gather up your things, I can't be everywhere to look after my young men. I think there is going to be trouble," and when they heard the shots he ran outside saying "don't do so, stopping it."[28]

In 1886 at Onion Lake Catherine received Métis scrip in the amount of $160.00.[29] To do so, she had to withdraw from Treaty, leaving a record through that process that details her family history. She and her husband then ranched near Onion Lake. James is identified as a "rancher" in the 1901 census. He died later that year.[30] Catherine was likely responsible for the Cree words that are on her husband's grave marker. Below "In Memory of James Keith Simpson, Who Died 28 December, 1901" the words "at rest" are written in Cree.[31]

"Catherine should be remembered more widely, as she helps us understand the lives of resilient, strong Indigenous women of the 19th century, a time of rapid and tumultuous change."

Catherine dies on November 9, 1906, and she was laid to rest at the Notre Dame du Rosaire Cemetery, Onion Lake, Saskatchewan[32]. She left many descendants through her Patenaude sons. One descendant, Judy Half, was pleased in 2013 when Edmonton's Royal Alberta Museum acquired two dessert plates commissioned by Milton to commemorate their trip, one with the famous photograph featured here. Curator Judy Half is the fourth-generation granddaughter of Catherine and Louis.[33] Catherine should be remembered more widely, as she helps us understand the lives of resilient, strong Indigenous women of the 19th century, a time of rapid and tumultuous change.

28 Testimony of Catherine Simpson in Joseph-Adolphe Chapleau, *Return to an address of the House of Commons*, dated 1st March, 1886 (Ottawa: Department of the Secretary of State, 1886), 203-5.

29 Library Archives Canada. Scrip record of Catherine Moignon.The document signed by Acting Indian Agent George Mann, dated June 10, 1886 discarhging her from treaty, is in this digitized file.

30 Robert W. Hendriks, *William Bleasdell Cameron: A Life of Writing and Adventure* (Athabasca: Athabasca University Press, 2008): 199n41.

31 Thanks To Betty Karpinski, Edmonton, for this translation. Email 15 Feb., 2021. Betty wrote "The Main Verb is Animate Intransitive – meaning to "make rest" or to "be at rest" and is marked for the 3rd person (he/she). It would loosely be equivalent to the commonly used epitaph "Rest in Peace" although Peace, Death and Eternity are not included, they would be implied by the marker on the gravestone: James Keith Simpson makes rest or is at rest literally."

32 Saskatchewan Catholic Church Records, 1846-1957, Family Search Website. Thanks to Laura Hanowski, Saskatchewan Genealogical Society.

33 Alexandra Zabjek, "Museum's Rare Plates Commemorate Alberta Trek," *Edmonton Journal*, 25 July, 2013, p. A4.

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX OF HISTORICAL FIGURES

ANNIE MCDERMOT BANNATYNE (1830-1908) was a prominent Métis woman in the Red River colony. After marrying Andrew Bannatyne, an employee of the HBC and successful merchant in the settlement, she helped fundraise for and promote various causes in the community, namely the Winnipeg General Hospital. After Charles Mair, a writer from Toronto, insulted the Métis women of Red River in his writing, she famously slapped and horsewhipped him.

SIR GEORGE-ÉTIENNE CARTIER (1814-1873) was leader of the Parti bleu in Canada East (southern modern-day Quebec), participant in the Lower Canada Rebellion, and one of the key Fathers of Confederation. After 1867 he was Minister of Militia and Defence in Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's government, and notably oversaw negotiations during the purchasing of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory. He was also a central figure during the subsequent provincialization of Manitoba, and unsuccessfully sought amnesty for Louis Riel.

WILLIAM DEASE (1827-1913) was a prominent Métis, with strong ties to the Anglophone community, who was nominated as a member of the Council of Assiniboia. He was often in conflict with Louis Riel, who denounced him for working too closely with the Canadian Party and those who sought to remove the Métis from their land. Dease later became president of the Agricultural Association of Manitoba, and was a candidate in the provincial elections of 1874.

JOHN STOUGHTON DENNIS (1820-1885) was a militia officer and surveyor who was assigned to survey the Red River Colony for future settlement by William McDougall. His surveys faced opposition from the Métis, especially after he increasingly associated with the Canadian Party and John Christian Schultz.

THOMAS DOUGLAS, 5TH EARL OF SELKIRK (1771-1820) was a Scottish peer and major shareholder in the Hudson's Bay Company. Hoping to found an agricultural colony in modern-day Manitoba, he formed the District of Assiniboia after receiving a grant from the HBC in 1811. While establishing the Red River Colony and sponsoring immigration settlements to populate it, he was met with fierce resistance by the local Metis population, who traded with both the HBC and its competitor the North West Company, and who aimed to preserve the right to free passage and free trade in their homeland. The resulting Battle of Seven Oaks/ Victory at Frog Plain in 1816 is widely considered one of the first clear moments where Métis political consciousness as a Nation was made clear.

GABRIEL DUMONT (1837-1906) was a buffalo hunter, merchant and soldier who was one of the central leaders of the North-West Resistance. As leader of the buffalo hunt for the Saskatchewan Métis, he was recognized for his talent as a hunter and marksman, as well as for helping to band his community together in the wake of the devastation of the buffalo herds. While not active in the Red River Resistance, he soon afterwards helped mobilize the Saskatchewan Métis and was elected president of the Council of St. Laurent in 1873. Working to uphold Métis laws and landholding systems, Dumont helped to articulate the Laws of St. Laurent, a formal constitution for his people. After unsuccessfully petitioning the Dominion government for recognition and protection for their lands, Dumont travelled to the Montana Territory to seek the help of Louis Riel, who had gone there during his exile. Together, the two friends would create a new Provisional Government among the Métis. Dumont led many of the Métis forces against the North-West Mounted Police at the Battle of Duck Lake, where his brother was killed and he survived a gruesome shot to the head. He continued to lead his troops whilst injured in subsequent battles, until the Métis forces were defeated and Riel surrendered. Dumont fled to the U.S. and was granted amnesty by the Canadian government in 1886. After travelling extensively, he settled once again in Batoche.

JOSEPH HOWE (1804-1873) was a Nova Scotian journalist and politician who in 1869 became secretary of state for the provinces during the annexation and provincialization of Manitoba. Though in diminishing health, Howe visited the Red River settlement during this time. His meetings with representative groups of Red River residents led him to a very sympathetic understanding of the agitation of Red River over the activities of the Canadians there. He carried back a copy of the records and legislation of the Council of Assiniboia. During his return trip, he met William McDougall in Minnesota. They spoke for a brief time due to inclement weather. Howe cautioned McDougall and later wrote a strong letter warning him to avoid aligning himself with the "Canadians" or otherwise provoking the sensitivities of a divided Settlement.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826) was a Founding Father and third President of the United States (1801-1809), who sought to enlarge the American territory and maintain access to the valuable Mississippi River and port of New Orleans. Along with Secretary of State James Madison, and the U.S. Minister to France, Robert Livingston, Jefferson would orchestrate the purchase of the Louisiana territory from France in 1803. The acquisition, costing $15 million, effectively doubled the geographic size of the U.S.

GRANVILLE LEVESON-GOWER, 2ND EARL GRANVILLE (1815-1891) was a British Liberal politician who in 1868 became Colonial Secretary under Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone. Known for his shrewd and patient diplomacy, he helped improve relations between the United States and Britain after the American Civil War.

SIR JOHN ALEXANDER MACDONALD (1815-1891) was a lawyer and businessman who served as the first prime minister of Canada from 1867 to 1873, and again between 1878 and 1891. Together with George-Étienne Cartier and George Brown, he helped form the Great Coalition that paved the way towards the division of the Province of Canada and the inclusion of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick under Confederation. As the new nation sought to become bicoastal, Macdonald's government orchestrated the purchase of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory. After the Red River Resistance, Macdonald planned to respond to the demands of the Métis, and the provisional government led by Louis Riel, by sending troops and forcefully bringing the settlement under control. At the insistence of the British Government, he was forced to negotiate and the Province of Manitoba was created in 1870. Upon suppressing the 1885 North-West Resistance, Macdonald controversially executed Riel, polarizing many francophone-Catholics from the Conservative party. Furthermore, his approach towards Indigenous peoples, minorities and those of mixed-heritage resulted in discriminatory and devastating policies, including the Chinese Immigration Act of 1885, the 1876 Indian Act and the residential school system.

WILLIAM MCDOUGALL (1822-1905) was a Canadian lawyer and politician, considered to be one of the Fathers of Confederation, having attended all three Confederation conferences. Descending from United Empire Loyalists that settled in York, Upper Canada (now Toronto), he was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory in 1869.He was prevented from assuming his duties as he was denied entry into the Territory in one of the opening acts of the Red River Resistance. Famously campaigning against Manitoba receiving provincial status, he was a Canada First nationalist who believed British Protestantism to be the foundation of Canadian identity, and harboured anti-Catholic and anti-Indigenous views.

CHIEF MISTAHIMASKWA (BIG BEAR) (1825-1888) was a Plains Cree chief who notably refused to sign Treaty 6 in 1876. He led his people through a period of rapid transformation in the Prairies, which witnessed significant settlement in the region and the destruction of buffalo herds. Known to be cautious and independent, his refusal to sign Treaty 6 made him popular among many who were distrustful of government promises and initiatives. Seeking to unify the Cree in order to protect their livelihood and land, Mistahimaskwa also sought to partner with the Métis and met with Louis Riel. His negotiations were ultimately unsuccessful, and in response a faction of his followers grew agitated and attacked local settlers, killing nine men including two priests and an Indian agent. While Mistahimaskwa did not condone the violence, he was still blamed and tried for the actions of his men.

CHARLES NOLIN (1838-1907) was a Métis farmer, politician, fur trader and merchant. In 1885, alongside Maxime Lépine, he organized a committee seeking to ensure the recognition of Métis rights in the Northwest. A cousin to Louis Riel by marriage, he initially took part in Riel's Council at Batoche. However, Nolin opposed the North-West Resistance and distanced himself from the violence. Subsequently, he was put on trial by the Provisional Government but later acquitted. He testified against Riel at the latter's trial, and briefly served in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories from 1891 to 1892.

SIR STAFFORD HENRY NORTHCOTE, FIRST EARL OF IDDESLEIGH (1818-1887) Educated at Eton, and Balliol College, Oxford; a lawyer (Lincoln Inn's Fields and the Inner Temple), with a long political career, both as an MP (1855-1857, 1858-1885), and a Peer (1885-1887). Northcote had served as a personal secretary to William E. Gladstone at the Board of Trade, but later aligned his politics with Benjamin Disraeli. Northcote held key appointments associated with governance of the United Kingdom and its Empire (Board of Trade, Secretary of State for India, Chancellor of the Exchequer, First Lord of the Treasury, and Foreign Secretary). Engagement as the 23rd Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company (1869-1874), his only corporate appointment, was a brief commercial interlude in his political career; but it came at a time when an Imperial decision on the future of the HBC Territory was pending. His political experience and credibility must have counted towards his ability to negotiate an intricate agreement effecting the surrender of charter rights on terms that ensured the commercial survival of the Company. Due to strident allegations concerning HBC compliancy with the events at Red River 1869-1870, he visited Canada to meet with influential politicians. From the galley of the House of Commons, he keenly observed Prime Minister Macdonald's introduction of the Manitoba Bill on 2 May 1870. The HBC steamer *Northcote* was named after him. It was put out of action by the Métis during the Battle of Batoche.

JOHN NORQUAY (1841-1889) was Premier of Manitoba from 1878 to 1887, after a long tenure as cabinet minister, having become increasingly politically active after the Red River Resistance and Manitoba Act of 1870. He was of Métis ancestry, and often advocated on behalf of Manitoba's Métis community in government. His time in office was also characterized by railway development in Canada and in particular Manitoba, and he varyingly held the support or animosity of Sir John A. Macdonald.

CHIEF PEGUIS (1774-1864) was a Saulteaux chief who settled in southern Manitoba at the end of the 18th century. The Saulteaux provided aid to the HBC and settlers in the province, after Peguis granted the latter land through signing a treaty with Lord Selkirk. The traditional knowledge of Peguis and his people was crucial to the early success of the settlement, and he and his wife later chose to be baptized in 1840, taking the names William and Victoria King.

LOUIS RIEL (1844-1885) was Métis. He was born in Red River and as a youth was educated in Montreal. He returned to Red River during a period of rapid changes and heightened tensions, notably between the Métis and the newly arrived anglophone-protestant land speculators called the Canadian Party. Being ambitious, educated, and invested in the traditions of his Métis community, Riel became a leader to his people. When Canada and Great Britain devised a plan to turn the North-West over to Canada without consulting the people of the North-West, the Métis began what is now known as the Red River Resistance. Riel and his supporters took control of Upper Fort Garry and created a provisional government, replacing the Council of Assiniboia in order to force negotiations with Ottawa. The provisional government created a List of Rights, the terms on which they wanted the North-West to join confederation. Their demands were contested by a group of counter insurgents led by men from the Canadian Party, who made repeated efforts to assassinate Riel and overthrow the provisional government. One of the counter insurgents, Thomas Scott, was tried, sentenced and executed. The provisional government sent three men to Ottawa to negotiate with Canada, the result of which was the creation of the province of Manitoba in the Manitoba Act, 1870. During the negotiations, Prime Minister Macdonald prepared an army and sent it to Red River. When the army arrived in late August of 1870 it instigated a reign of terror that was to last for almost three years. Many of the members of the provisional government were murdered by the troops. Riel was forced to flee to the United States where he lived in exile until 1884. He returned to Canada to lead the Métis in their fight to protect their lands in the North-West Resistance of 1885. After the Métis were defeated at the Battle of Batoche, Riel surrendered and was tried and hanged for high treason. He is now recognized as the founder of Manitoba.

FATHER JOSEPH-NOËL RITCHOT (1825-1905) was a Catholic priest, missionary, educator, and advocate for the Métis community. After arriving in the Red River colony in 1862, he became familiar with the plight of his parish and in 1869 provided support and counsel to the leaders of the resistance movement. The following year he would form part of a delegation sent to Ottawa to negotiate the colony's entry into confederation. While some demands were seemingly met, the inconsistent honouring of the terms of the Manitoba Act of 1870 would result in further displeasure, distrust and conflict between the Métis and Ottawa. Ritchot continued to live in the community until his death, notably helping to build religious and educational institutions.

SIR JOHN CHRISTIAN SCHULTZ (1840-1896) was the fifth Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, from 1888 to 1895. Born and raised in Upper Canada, he relocated to the Red River colony in the 1860's, working as a speculator and owning a variety of businesses. Schultz was well-known as a corrupt and dangerous man, prone to organize mob violence and employ bribery to obtain what he desired. As leader of the local Canadian Party, he worked to encourage anglophone immigration to the settlement from Ontario as well as annexation by the federal government, in doing so promoting discrimination and organizing attacks against the Métis. He was generally viewed as a scoundrel, an opportunist and a fraud whose main

motivation was the promotion of self. Indeed, Many of Schultz accomplishments were fabricated, and he was distrusted and reviled during his long political career.

THOMAS SCOTT (1842-1870) was a Protestant Irishman who emigrated to Canada in 1863, and moved to the Red River Colony in 1869. Working as part of a crew building the Dawson Road, he met John Christian Schultz and joined the Canadian Party in violent opposition to Riel's Provisional Government. He was involved in an attempt to assassinate Riel, overthrow the provisional government, attack the Métis armed with a canon and burn their homes. He was captured at Fort Garry and held prisoner by the Provisional Government of Louis Riel, and was alleged to have continually insulted the Métis and threatened Riel himself. His execution on 4 March 1870 influenced the composition of the Red River Expedition (Wolseley Expedition), which recruited numerous Orange Lodge members in response. The decision to execute Scott ultimately led to Riel's exile and execution.

CHIEF SEEKASKOOTCH (CUT ARM) (d.1885) was a Woods Cree chief who was among the signatories of Treaty 6. Seekaskootch was killed in the Battle of Loon Lake (Battle of Steele Narrows), which concluded the North-West Resistance.

WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD (1801-1872) served as U.S. Secretary of State from 1861 until 1869, notably during the years of the American Civil War (1861-1865). A crucial figure in the Union cause, during his political career he helped advance the rights of African Americans and abolitionists. He oversaw the purchase of the Alaska territory from the Russian Empire in 1867, which cost $7.2 million at the time. While one of the principal incentives behind the purchase was the potential for trade with Asia, the territory would only witness significant immigration after the Klondike Gold Rush beginning in 1896.

SIR GEORGE SIMPSON (1792-1860) was a Scottish businessman and explorer who sailed to North America in 1820, and rose through the ranks of the HBC. Eventually being appointed governor of the company, during an era of fierce competition between the HBC and the NWC, he was praised for his business savvy and negotiating tact. Subsequent to the merger of the two companies, he oversaw a period of immense success for the HBC, during which he was also noted for his remarkable ability to endure extensive travel throughout the continent.

SIR DONALD ALEXANDER SMITH, first Baron of Strathcona and Mount Royal, (1820-1914), of Scottish highland origins, his HBC engagement spanned from long-term management of remote posts to a principal shareholder (1889) and governor (1889-1914). His transfer to Montreal in 1868 coincided with Canada's preparations to annex the HBC Territory. Montreal provided opportunities to partner with local capitalists. After the failure of William McDougall to effect political power on behalf of the Dominion, Smith was appointed by Prime Minister Macdonald as special commissioner to confer with Louis Riel. As the husband of Isabella Sophia Hardisty, and supported by Richard Charles Hardisty, Smith was positioned

to work social links in Red River society. Following the acquisition of the HBC Territory, Smith was well positioned to apply his commercial acumen. He led the HBC Land Department during the early years when the much-anticipated rapid settlement of the Fertile Belt failed to occur. Later, as Governor, he repeatedly advised shareholders to forgo quick gains on land sales, and to instead treat the grant as a diminishing capital asset. His investments reflected a myriad of commercial concerns (banking and trusts, railroads, rolling stock, cotton manufacturing and knitting, a newspaper, a land company, etc.); notable senior appointments included: president of the Bank of Montreal (1887) and chairman of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (1909). Smith's life was not simply business: As a politician he was elected as a Manitoba MLA (defeating John Schultz) and was a long serving MP (1871-1880, 1887-1896); as a diplomat, Canada's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom (1896-1914); and as Chancellor of McGill University (1889-1914).

ALEXANDRE-ANTONIN TACHÉ (1823-1894) was a Catholic priest and missionary. After joining the Oblate order, he was appointed to the mission of Saint Boniface. He studied the local Indigenous languages, Cree and Athapaskan, and completed missionary work among various communities in the region. He progressively rose through the ranks of the order, while a new diocese was formed in the northwest, eventually becoming the first archbishop of Saint Boniface. He worked diligently to convert and educate local communities, including the Métis, and promote French Canadian language and culture in the region. He was also an early teacher and mentor to Louis Riel.

JEAN BAPTISTE TOUROND (1838-1891) was a Métis farmer and politician, who worked alongside Louis Riel to halt the land speculations and claims of anglophone immigration supporters in Red River.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN, First Baronet (1819-1901), a politician MP (1857, 1864-1868, 1874-1898) and a 19th century railroad capitalist during a period when railways held the equivalent power of the IT oligopolies of today. He understood that the expenses of construction and operation of railways required the interlocking capacity of financiers, politicians, and railway companies. Through the London-based British North America Association, which included support from several businesses, but notably, the Barring and Glyn bankers, Watkin and others convincingly promoted the acceptance of a political union of the small colonies. A nation state was a better geographical and financial foundation for railway schemes (Grand Trunk, and the Intercolonial railway). Coincident with lobbying on both sides of the Atlantic for political union, he had pursued the freeing up of the Fertile Belt for the purposes of a railway to the Pacific Ocean, and telegraph line. He played a central role in the International Financial Society takeover of the HBC in 1863. While Watkin successfully reoriented the Company, even the English shareholders (who had bought into the new HBC with the objective to gain quickly from land speculation) realized that they lacked the capacity to establish the necessary conditions for settlement.

GARNET JOSEPH WOLSELEY (1833-1913) was one of the most prominent generals in the British army during the second-half of the nineteenth century. Born in Ireland, his campaigns included victories in China, India, Canada, Burma and numerous African nations. After the Red River Resistance, Wolseley was assigned to lead the expeditionary force sent to establish Canadian authority following negotiations which led to the Manitoba Act. While the mission was supposed to be peaceful, Wolseley instead unleased his troops to murder, rape, burn property and brutalize in order to subdue the Métis. Seeing the Métis as bandits, he refused to stem the violence and abdicated his responsibility as commander by ceding his authority to the notorious scoundrel John Christian Schultz. The period of his occupation is remembered as a reign of terror in Manitoba and was even characterized as such in the *New York Times*. The expedition also sought to apprehend Riel, who evaded capture by fleeing to the United States.