

# Women in Battle

by Vi Sanderson  
Copyright June 14, 1982

This is a fictional story based on true Metis history. I would not have been able to write this story without the help of the Great Spirit and the Grandmothers and Grandfathers, who are still able to recall the Riel Rebellion and the true history of the Metis Nation. And recently, the voices of those who remember have been recorded. I would like to thank Shannon Two Feathers, Maria Campbell and family for their assistance. I portray Valrie Perron, my husband is Rene Perron.

At first we were in shock and disbelief when the news reached us. I'm sure all of us thought about our men and children. For what seemed like a long time, no one spoke, even the youngest who had been fussing, was very still. His young eyes looked into mine and I pledged to fight and protect my man and children. I would give my life to all my people for the sake of our Metis Nation.

Like the mother wolf, who senses danger to her cubs, I immediately started packing blankets, warm clothes and what dry meat we had. Rene, my husband seemed excited by the news, these Perons, they're such fighters.

"Valrie, my wife," he said tenderly, holding my for a minute, "I must go ahead, to Gabriel's. There might be trouble at the crossing. You and the children must start out for the caves. We are in grave danger. We will have to fight together this time."

My four sons were already going out the door; Rene, twelve years old, was holding four year old Danelle. While Donald, six and Evon, eight years, struggled behind with the bundles. I said a prayer, for a safe journey for us and those women and children travelling to the caves. I walked out into the darkening sky, following the boys through the trees.

We had walked about two miles when we heard the gun shots. Rene came to a dead stop, who, very much like his father, had been walking in the lead. I checked our guns. They

were all loaded and ready. I told the boys not to shoot until I started shooting. Little Danelle clung to me a bit harder. I was carrying him on my back. I took over the lead of my little helpers and walked slightly to the direction of the river.

I saw them first standing in a little clearing. There were three Canadian Government troopers. We all dropped to our knees. I then told the older boys to circle the troops and to check out for more of them. I waited what seemed like a lifetime. The boys returned and gave me the signal that there were only these three troopers. I raised my gun to my shoulder as did my boys. We shot at the same time.

I ran toward them; they were all dead. I checked their pockets and I found a piece of paper which I stuffed in Danelle's pants. He had quit crying and was getting over his fright. We took their horses with us; we could sure use them.

I later checked the piece of paper and discovered it was a direct order from the commander to shoot any Metis women and children seen in the woods. "Have No Mercy!" it said. I wondered if our future nation of Le Metis would ever know and record this history.

We had travelled for about three miles when I saw a group of our women, children and men. They saw us about the same time. We cried joyously to see so many of our own blood. Even La Salle was there. She had been whipped in public a few weeks ago at Fort Carlton.



## Women in Battle



La Salle was married to a white man, one of the troopers at Fort Carlton. There were a few Metis women who married government troops. The General had become suspicious of all Metis women and ordered La Salle's husband, Lieutenant Morrison, to publicly whip her because he believed she was a spy for La Metis Nation. Several others were shot and buried in secret. Their families were told they had disappeared and the Metis men were probably protecting them. But we all knew the truth. La Salle got away easy.

The men ordered us to travel in a group alone. There was trouble at the river. They would have to be decoys for us. The older boys were ordered to fight with the men. I kissed my three older boys goodbye; somehow I knew my Peron boys would not be returning to me. There was not much time left. We had to move on, we could already hear the gun shots in the distance.

When we reached the crossing, the men and boys kept the troops busy while we crossed the river. We never lost any lives this time. We made it safely to the caves. Several of us went back, sneaking through trees and crouching along bushes to fight with the men.

We reached them safely and I found my man. He looked so tired and hungry. We gave them what dry meat we had. While they ate between shots, we started reloading their guns and some of the women started

helping the wounded. A few of our men lay dead. I went around and said prayers for them. When I went back to where Rene was I realized he'd been shot in the shoulder and was bleeding heavily. My brother Alfonse took over the post as I tried to make my dear Rene as comfortable as possible. He grabbed my hand and held it tightly. "Be strong, my Valrie. Do not give up, never surrender, my brave woman. You will help win our battle." He died in peace, in my aching, hurting arms.

My hurt seemed to die. I took the gun and began shooting alongside the men. Alfonse, my dear brother, got shot too. His last thoughts on his wife and children now waiting at the caves. "Go back my sister and protect the children and my dear wife." I cried, reloaded my gun and crept back to the caves. I tried not to think of my lost family but tried to think of victory to our Metis Nation.

During the early morning as the pink, red mist rose from the river, the women, who were fighting in the front lines, returned to the caves. Most were wounded. We all rushed to help them and by mid-morning we managed to get everyone as comfortable as possible. Now we had to worry about food and water.

It's been four days since we arrived here. We are running short of food; the children have been given most of it. The weather has been angry for days now. The nights have

been cold and damp in the caves. A couple of the small children will not reach daylight and the cough will get most of us. Although we've been lucky to get water from the rain at the buffalo dugout, that's probably where this sickness and cough came from.

We can't make fires to warm ourselves. The troops might spot us. We can still hear gun and cannon shots echoing against the hills. I shiver, not with cold, but rather what would happen to us if the government troops found us.

We number sixty women and a few children. Everyone is getting very hungry. Five women and two children are close to death with the cough. Two women, young Terrese La Vallie and much older Veronica women, young Terrese La Vallie and much older Veronica Lafontaine volunteered to look for food. We say a prayer before they leave, for safe travel and a safe journey back.

We waited another three days before a couple of our men came to us, Gabriel Dumont and Joseph La Fonce. They told us they never seen the women. We were later told by government troops that they had disappeared.

After leading us to safety, Dumont and Joseph left. They had told us that many women and children were at Fort Carlton. I longed to see my sons, wondering if they were still alive.

Along with my Kookum and small son, I packed a buggy.



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One of the wounded men helped me hitch the horses. There would be little danger to us now; they arrested Louis Riel at the mission this morning in Batoche. My Mooshum was there praying with Riel when the troops marched into the church and arrested him. They left Mooshum and his friend alone. Later, my Mooshum asked Father Andre why he told the government troops that Riel was at the church praying. The priest told my Mooshum that he believed Louis Riel had committed a crime to his people. My Mooshum says, "It will be a long time before he believes the mission priest again."

After a tearful goodbye to Mooshum, my grandmother climbed in the buggy. My Mooshum was married to her sister who had died of sickness and gun shot wounds.

As we neared Fort Carlton we could see many women and children. Like us, they are here to look for food as most of us are near starvation. A friendly Frenchman steps forward and introduces himself as Jean Paquet. He helps us down and shows us where we are to camp. I wonder about this man, he looks very familiar, something about him. Before he leaves he hands me a piece of blue cloth with pretty designs painted on. I smile and thank him shyly. It's been a long time since a man looked at me that way. My Kookum giggles for the first time in weeks and I feel guilty and think of Rene.

We have been here almost two months now. I have lost my Kookum and last son since the sickness and cough took them away. I have found a few remaining relatives and stay close to them. Jean Paquet, an industrial businessman, has become my friend. He has asked me to marry him and return to Paris, France with him next week. I have agreed to go. I'd rather go home with him than be some government trooper's or priest's house-keeper.

I will return to my land someday, and be proud I helped my Metis men in battle.

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# Letters from Batoche

My great grandmother used to tell me how her mother wrote letters to her husband during the Rebellion. He came home but he had lost his hand. It had been gangrenous and was amputated. These letters are not the ones she wrote, but from what Grannie told me, I tried to imagine what it was like for her. They are fictional but the stories are from my family.

R. Miller

Mount Nebo  
June 2, 1885

Dear Michel,

Since you left to join Gabriel Dumont so much has happened and although I try not to think of it, I am concerned for your safety. I am sending this letter to Prince Albert; I pray that you will receive it.

We have heard that Riel surrendered and is being taken to Regina for trial. We are not sure of the charges yet, but we heard that he and all those who surrendered with him or were captured will be hanged.

Our messenger tells us that many of our people managed to escape, including Gabriel. But no one knows who escaped, was captured or killed for sure. I pray that you are not among those killed or captured. Please if you are alive send me word. The red scarf I gave you the night we met, send it home and I will know you are safe.

The troops have been to our settlement claiming to seek traitors and rebels. They have destroyed many of the homes and have taken what they want, including all our guns, ammunition and food.

The old ones told us to hide the guns but we did not believe they would take them, once they realized that we were only women, children and old men, and that we needed the guns for food. How foolish we were.

One of the old men was killed while trying to protect his granddaughter from the troops and also Joseph and Ceceil's eleven year old son.

Many of the children and old people are sick from lack of food. I am among the women who hunt; remember how I laughed when you taught me to set snares and make a fish net.

Louie Calvier, Delphena's son is here and he will post this for me. I will write again, even if I do not hear from you.

Your Wife,  
Marianne

Mount Nebo  
Nov. 13, 1885

Dear Michel,

Winter is coming fast and I am not sure how many of our people will survive it. There has been much sickness throughout the settlements and it has taken all of our old people and many of the very young children.

The men who have come back, have changed. There is no work and very little food to feed their families. The troops have ordered that no ammunition or guns to sold to any Metis or Indian. They come often to search our homes and confiscate all guns that are found. With no weapons to hunt, the men are unable to provide for their families. They are fast losing their self respect and dignity.

The trading posts have raised food prices which even the wealthiest of our people cannot afford. We do not even have fur or hides to barter with.

Some of the men have begun to drink. They buy from the whiskey runners who of course did not raise their prices. This is hard on their families because money is so scarce. I cannot blame them. There is much fear that the troops will come and they too will be imprisoned and the dreadful feeling of defeat.

They see their children slowly dieing from the coughing sickness and their women, once strong now torn apart with grief and pain. It is hard for us all and is something that we shall never forget.

Pierre was here yesterday and he said he saw you last spring. I believe that you are well and will be home soon.

Your Wife,  
Marianne

Mount Nebo  
May 21, 1886

Dear Michel,

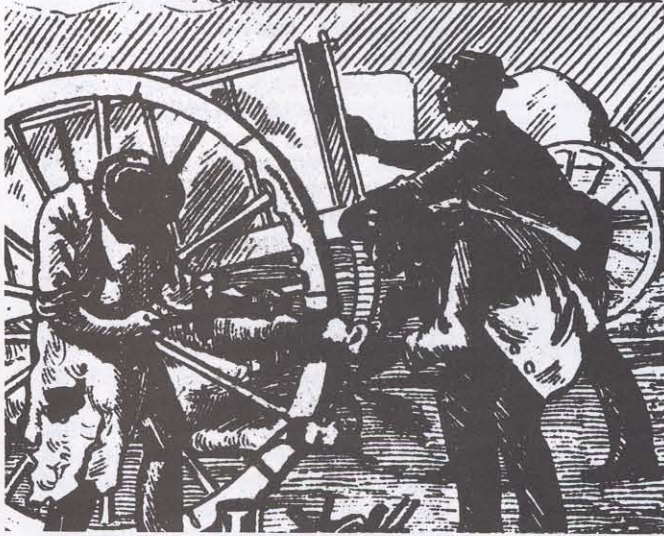
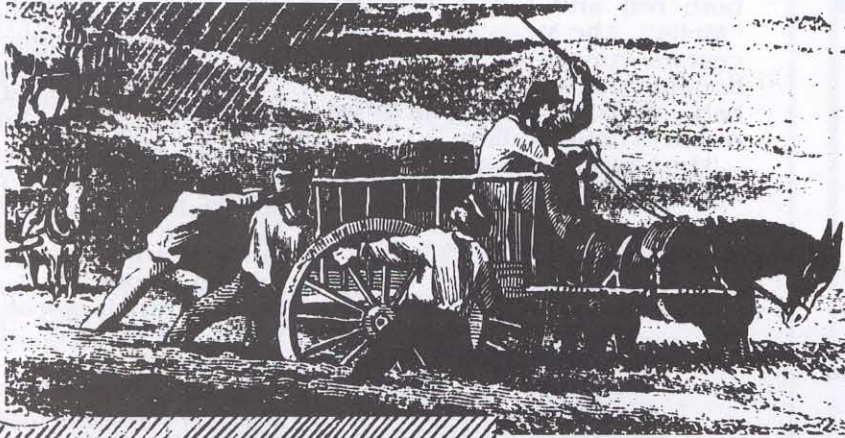
Pierre came back from Prince Albert yesterday with the red scarf and your letter. I believed that you were doing fine for a long time. But I still had doubts. I will now see for myself when you arrive home next month.

In late November, a messenger came with the news of Riel's hanging. He said that there were eight men to be hanged at Battleford; this made many women fear for the safety of their men. Our people were angry that such a thing would happen.

The sickness is leaving with the return of spring and more men are coming home now. The people have lots of work repairing their homes. In June we will begin to mud plaster the houses. Children are looking forward to the fun they will have stompng in the mud.

Pierre and his brother Jean will break ground for my garden in two days. I have found some seed we had put away a long time ago. The garden will be in when you return home. The saskatoons along the lake are blooming now and I will have a lot of berries to can this fall. It will be a good summer. Our people are happier now than they have been for a long time. It is good to feel the sun, it has been cold for so long...

Your Wife,  
Marianne



# Red River Carts

by Rob Lafontaine

In the late 1700's and the early 1800's pioneers settling the west and in particular the Metis people needed a form of transportation that was both adaptable and sturdy. It had to be able to cope with the buffalo trails that were being used as roads and at the same time it had to be adaptable enough to cross the numerous lakes, creeks, and rivers in the western region.

Red River carts were seen as early as 1784 but Alexander Henry of Pembina is credited with improving on one of the many crude types in use and fashioning what is known today as the original "Red River Cart".

The cart was built entirely of wood and was capable of carrying up to 1000 pounds. It had two wheels, each five feet high. The wheels had wide, dish-shaped rims, each about

three inches across. The body was a light box frame attached to and balanced on the axle. The whole of the cart was held together by wooden pegs and wedges as well as strips of roughly tanned oxhide called "shagganappe". The oxhide was put in water and wrapped around the frame when it was wet. The shrinking of the leather promised a nice, tight fit. The harness was also homemade and held together by "shagganappe". The wheels could be removed for fording rivers and streams.

Incorporating both European and Indian values, the Metis used the cart for freighting and also as one of the main parts of the buffalo hunt. The Metis would follow the buffalo trails until their scouts sighted the beasts in sufficient numbers. The carts were then drawn in a circle with the shafts to the outside. The hunt would begin and the carts were used to

transport the meat and hides to the settlement. One of the biggest hunts occurred in 1820. About 500 Red River carts were used to transport the spoils of the hunt to Selkirk.

The freighting business by the Metis almost changed the course of history. Used to transport fur the carts travelled overland to southern destinations such as St. Paul and New York. In 1843 there was regular cart service between Pembina and St. Paul's. Up to 1000 carts a year would travel between the two centres; the Metis trading furs for sugar, salt, powder and other necessities of European life. The Hudson's Bay Company rules forbade any trade to other companies but with their merger with the Northwest Company in 1821 they had a virtual monopoly on trade. The Metis, independent in spirit, sought better prices elsewhere.

It was technology that finally moved the sturdy little carts into history. In 1873, steamboat travel was just beginning and in 1878 the railroad became a reality. Both railroad and steamboat were cheaper, quicker and less arduous. They quickly cornered the freighting market or farmers might be hauling their grain to the coast in Red River carts today.

The Red River carts will forever be identified with the Metis people. The cart had a high screeching sound that drove incoming immigrants into descriptive phrases of the sound. The wheels could not be greased; grease would become clogged with dirt and the wheels would not turn because they would be cemented to the axle. The high-pitched screaming could be heard for miles. The Indian people often referred to the Metis as "halfman-halfcart" after the Red River cart and the halfbreeds' ability to withstand the horrible noise it made. □

- Drying fish makes them a better source of protein (a fresh fish usually contains 15-20% protein, whereas a dried fish usually contains 50-90%).

- Of the 1,942 claims approved of Metis living in the Northwest Territories outside Manitoba only 232 claimants chose land scrip; in the Qu'Appelle area only two of the 250 Metis entitled to scrip took up land.

- Snow snake is a game played with a short, smooth pole thrown across the surface of the snow to see who can send it the farthest.

- A travois is a wheel-less vehicle having two long poles and a platform used by the Plains Indians. It could be pulled by a dog, a horse or a person.

- Ralph G. Steinhauer was a Cree who became the first Native to be appointed as a lieutenant-governor in Canada; in the province of Alberta in 1974.

- Reverend James Evans was the man who, in 1841, invented a syllabic system of writing the Cree language.

- Winnipeg derives its name from the Cree Indian words meaning "muddy water".

- A tumpline is a pack strap which helps people carry heavy bundles on their backs. Its two narrow ends are tied around the bundle and a wider section in the centre of the strap passes across the carrier's forehead.

- Senator James Gladstone was the first Native appointed to the Canadian Senate in 1958.

- The Qu'Appelle river, lake and valley gets its name from a beautiful legend about an Indian woman who thought she heard her lover calling during a storm.

- Medicine Hat is named after the legend of the Cree Indian medicine man who lost his feathered headdress in a river.

- Saskatoon derives its name from the Cree word for "red berry".

## In Appreciation

I would like to extend my appreciation and thanks to the AMNSIS membership who contributed their efforts in my election campaign. I also extend my thanks to the people who gave me their confidence by voting for me. I will ensure that I continue to work to meet the trust and responsibility that has been given to me.

Thank You  
Clem Chartier  
Vice-President

# The Origin of the Metis Culture

by Larry Laliberte

The Metis people originated through a mixture of Indian and various European races. The word "Metis" is derived from the Spanish word "mestizo" which means "mixture". Explorers of Western Canada labelled the historic nation with both red and white ancestry "Metis". The Metis's father ancestors consist of various nationalities such as French, Scottish, Irish, English with most mothers being Indian.

The Metis nation originated in Canada's Northwest during the

fur trade. In the beginning the Metis nation consisted of two different characteristic groups. There were the French Metis (Bois Brule) whose native language was French and there were the English Metis whose native language was English. Most Metis were bilingual, with either French, English, and an Indian language. Many of the European fathers left their Indian wives and children to return to their home countries once their services were completed with the Hudson's Bay Company. A majority of such families were taken in by the French Metis, thus there are many French speaking Metis who have Scottish, Irish or English names.

The Metis of the great plains turned to hunting the buffalo. Since the buffalo were constantly moving for bigger and better pastures, the Metis soon became nomadic, following the buffalo.

The wives role during the hunt was just as significant as that of the hunters. After the actual hunt, the wives and children were responsible for butchering the buffalo. The hide was stretched, dried and then softened until it was in a form of a strong, heavy, leather-type material. Once prepared, the hides were used for clothing, moccasins, tents, bags used for storing, etc. The meat was cut up for easy transport. Most of the buffalo meat was made into pemmican and dry meat.

Young Metis women learned at a very early age how to clean and tan hides, prepare meat for winter storage, how to make snowshoes and baskets. They were also taught by the elderly women how to cook and make clothing for the family. Once they were old enough they made excellent wives and good mothers.

The Metis clothing style derived from a combination of both the Indian and European cultures. The women would make the basic European clothing and then add fringes, tassels, dyed horsehair, and coloured shells, all of which were taken from the Indian culture.

The Metis culture strongly and faithfully believed in religion, thus they developed ethics of peace, hospitality, love and friendship in their everyday lives. Catholicism was introduced by the missionaries,



and this became the Metis peoples' dominant religion. Religion was well practised in their everyday lives. It eventually contributed to their technique of organizing. They drafted hunting rules because of their concern for fairness. They soon developed well organized techniques in areas such as the buffalo hunt and community laws.

For example, when on a buffalo hunt, leaders were elected to lay out procedures of the hunt, and every detail was thoroughly planned to carry the hunt to its fullest potential. Rules were drafted, some of which dealt with religious duties and others to prevent any foul-ups during the course of the hunt.

Each hunt had ten captains; each captain had his soldiers who shared the scouting duties. This group of elected leaders presided over the hunting expedition. They established rules and laws and ensured that they were obeyed.

These laws formed "The Laws of the Prairies" and each captain received a copy of these laws. Whenever an important matter arose, it was solved by mutual agreement of the whole camp. The authority of the captains and soldiers was only effective during the hunt.

Many of the Metis were hired by the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company as guides and interpreters. The Metis were excellent men of the outdoors, and the various Europeans took advantage of their outdoor skills, using them as guides. Many of the exploration voyages would not have been possible if it were not for the help of the Metis. Credit was rarely given to the Metis in the exploration of Northwestern Canada. Europeans assumed all accomplishments in order to build their list of achievements in the eyes of other Europeans.

The children of the newly formed Metis Nation learned and lived parts of two cultures. The hunting and gathering culture originated from their Indian ancestors, and their style of day to day living as a group of people in the culture of their European forefathers.

As time passed, the Metis recognized the uniqueness of their own culture; thus they began to establish their own settlements. □

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# Metis History

## Introduction

In the past articles we have seen how the Indian population, within the North, was economically conquered and manipulated into becoming a source of exploitable labour — primary production labour. We have also seen how the European Mercantilists intentionally created divisions between Indian and European labour. This was done in order to keep the Indian in a particular class position and an attempt to keep the European labourer "loyal" to their European masters. The intentional creation of racism as a means by which these divisions could be maintained has been discussed, as well as the divisions created within the Indian primary production class or peasantry, between Homeguard Indians and Upland Indians or Trappers. Finally, we have also seen how the Officer class or middle class was chosen on the basis of their absolute loyalty to the European Mercantilists. This loyalty was absolutely important, because it was the Officers' responsibility to oversee the complete running of the Fur Trade and the internal political economy.

## Metis People as a Race

In the next series of articles we will see the beginnings of the rise of the Metis as a distinct people. From the middle of the 1700's until the early 1800's, with the merger of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company, the internal class structure of the Fur Trade begins to take a more distinct form and become more rigid. Arising out of the forming class structure was born a Metis or Halfbreed working class and middle class. It was the beginning of what was to follow in the 1800's — the development of open class struggle of the labouring class and middle class against the British monopoly and colonialism and the development of a national consciousness. There was also, during this time period, the further creation of divisions besides those between European and Indian. The intentional creation of differences and the social division of labour between the Scottish and Orkneyians and French Canadians was developed and the foundations of RACISM that exist between Europeans or "Whites" were more distinctly laid, as well as between Indian and European.

## Monopoly Competition

The latter part of the 1700's to the early 1800's can be considered as the era of Monopoly competition. It is the era of serious competition between the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. After the defeat of France by England in 1759, the British had complete control of the Fur Trade. By the end of the 1760's English middle class merchants from Montreal were moving into the interior and taking over what was left of the old French Fur Trade. It was these English merchants who were placed by the British within Quebec to form the new ruling elite over the French. They soon formed themselves into the Northwest Company in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company to gain control of the Fur Trade.

As these middle class merchants were at that time a new developing class, they did not have the wealth or capital equal to that of the English Mercantilists in England. As well, the Montreal merchants as a class were not as well organized as the British. Consequently, the Montreal merchants functioned mostly as individual pedlars as they moved into the interior and began trading in competition with the English. The Fur Trade was to the Montreal merchants as it was to the English one hundred years earlier, a means by which they could acquire wealth or capital and grow as a class. It was not until the 1780's that the Montreal English merchants were able to organize themselves into a company, which they called the Northwest Company.

## Exploitation of the Indian Population

Since Mercantilism must maintain itself as a monopoly — there is no such thing as Free Enterprise — the existence of the Northwest Company created intense competition between the two companies. Both companies were driven to exploit more and more of the natural resources and the Indian population. Their economic survival depended upon it. The already high level of exploitation was increased many times. The competition forced both companies to move rapidly into the interior and forced the Hudson's Bay Company away from the coast of Hudson's Bay. This inland

movement required that more and more of the Indian population be transformed into primary production labour. As a result there was a massive increase in the creation of a peasantry that would work the bush in the production of fur.

The method by which the coastal Indian population was changed into a dependent pea-

santry was again being used with the inland Indian population. There was the penetration of the Indian's classless society by using important individuals and their social network, and the introduction of material goods that the population became dependent upon. These goods would "free" the population from producing for

themselves and allow their time to be spent in fur production. The fur, in turn, would then be turned over to their masters for more trade goods. Again, the gun, traps, knife and hatchet became the tools of work for the Indian, and also allowed him to produce fur for his master. Once this process was accomplished the inland

Indian was integrated or drawn into a class society and the exploitation of his labour began. The Officer in charge of Albany Fort on the Hudson's Bay coast instructed his junior Officers, on inland penetration and how to control the Indian population in order to establish trade:

"...You are by Presents of Brandy, Tobacco, Knives, Beads, etc. etc. by kind usage to draw the natives to trade with you, be careful the presents You send to Uplanders, are sent by Indians You can trust, and when a leader come to trade with You, if you think his goods will amount to 500 Made Beaver, give Him a Captains Coat, Hat, Shirt and other things as usual, and should he ask for a little Brandy at going away give it him, never stand Hard with Him for any trifling thing. A Man that brings You 300 Made Beaver give Him a Lieutenant's coat with other things as usual and any one that brings 150 Made Beaver or near ought to have a plain Coat, with

Tobacco and Brandy given Him in proportion to the Goodness of his Goods & so of the rest. Summer Furs, if You can help it, are not to be traded, but rather then Disoblige an Indian to take them, but put of the worst of Your Goods for them. You are not on any account to trust the Uplanders large Debts for nothing will drive an Indian sooner from a place than a large Debt, therefore be very Cautious in the trusting Indians."

also

"When you meet with Indians, you are to make such presents, as You & Quastach, shall think requisite, reserving however your principal strength to operate upon such, as resort chiefly to

the Canadian Traders, in order to induce them to Trade at the Company's settlements for which purpose you will perhaps introduce the smoking of the Calumet with very happy effects, and in a speech inform them, that the Company has a great regard for them, and send you up thus far, to make them a present, that had your Canoe been larger you would have brought more, and advise them to come down to Albany, where they will meet with every encouragement & the most equitable treatment and such other arguments as seem most likely to engage them in the Company's Interest. Endeavour to render Yourself as agreeable as possible

to them remembering that your success on this occasion, will rebound to your own honour & benefit, by recommending Yourself more particularly to the Company's favour, but your clarity in this business, leaves me very little occasion, to enforce your assiduity.

Get the Names of the principal Leaders...and as far as you can, their connections, or families and whether they have much influence in their Tribe...whether a still further extension of the Trade at Henley, would be an inducement for them to resort to use, on whether a settlement farther inland, would be a means to turning the Trade, wholly into the Company's Channel."<sup>1</sup>



## Expansion of the Fur Trade to the West

The rapid inland movement created more inland fur trading posts and additional transportation routes. Besides demanding that more Indian labour be transformed into Fur production, there was also an increased need for more European

labour to work around the posts and run the transportation routes. The basic divisions that were created between European labour and Indian labour — differences between Servants and Upland and Homeguard Indians — were continually created as the Fur Trade moved into the interior.

Upland Indians were constantly kept in the bush producing fur, while the Homeguard

Indians, who were mostly mixed-bloods, were kept around the different posts producing food, some fur and doing odd jobs such as transportation. Again, if a Homeguard Indian was ever employed to do any work he would be paid in "goods" under the Indian Tariff and not in "wages" under the Servants Tariff. In this way he was always kept as a peasant Indian

and not allowed to become a Servant — in order that Indian society would not break down and there would no longer be any source of primary production or peasant labour. The following shows how Indians were used along with Englishmen for inland transportation and the loading of boats. However, the Indian labour was always Homeguard Indians and in this case the

Homeguard Indians from Albany Fort.

"...I have sent Jenkin Daniels 3 Indians & 4 Englishmen to Henley with Bale-goods, Meat & Flour in ye Dutches of York & according to your orders I have likewise dispatched John ? in the King George to Martins Fall, with 5 Indians & one Englishman, with victuals they are not so well loaded as I could wish as all the old Indians are gone only a few Boys & was obliged to send all the Englishmen I could, which prevents me from doing the business at the Factory that's required."

also

"...I have sent these Men & Indians for a supply of Shot...Poor indeed are the prospects of trade at the Factory great part of the Homeguards debts remain for them to work out by inland journeys."<sup>2</sup>

### Cheap Skilled Labour Needed for Transporting Fur

The Homeguard Indians were working off their debts to the Company by working on the transportation brigades as a supplement to European labour. They were a totally exploited source of cheap labour.

One of the problems faced by the Hudson's Bay Company in its inland penetration was the need for skilled labour to work the transportation boats. Scottish and/or Orkneyians, while found to be a good source of labour to work around the posts, did not have the skills necessary to run the canoes through the inland rivers. The Hudson's Bay Company did not wish to draw upon the Indian population to become its main source of transportation labour. The Homeguard Indians were used only in times of shortage and as a cheap source of labour. The constant use of the Indian in transportation would lead to the first step away from the peasant class towards the servant class.

So the Hudson's Bay Company came to see the French Canadians, who had been left in the interior after the fall of Quebec, as a good source of skilled, cheap transportation labour. They needed their skills in transportation, as well as their survival skills in the bush. When the Hudson's Bay Company first attempted to recruit French Canadians, they found that they were not as disciplined as the Scots. The French tended to work when they pleased, preferring the life of an Indian to that of a slave of the English. After the defeat of Quebec the French who were left in the interior adapted to and lived the life of the Indian people.

"The allowing of a Gun & Net to the Canadians when their time is expired appears to be one cause of their becoming Indians which we determine to be inimical (harmful) to the Company's interest when at Gloster."

also

"As soon as proper number of Canadians (French Canadians) is engaged in the before said Company's Service it will be necessary to guard against fraud or desertion by those Canadians..."

also

"The experience we have already had of the Canadian (French Canadian) servants particularly the lower class incline us to be less desirous of engaging them than formerly. They will not agree to sign a contract for any term of years nor will they be tyed to any discipline... We thought this the more necessary as the Canadians are apt to turn Indians and as such are capable of doing much mischief."<sup>3</sup>

The above quotations are instructions from the Officers in charge of different posts to their superiors, the Board of Directors in London.

### Social Divisions Created

The Hudson's Bay Company recruited the French Canadians on a different level than that of the Scots or Orkneyians. They paid them different wages and channeled them into more difficult jobs or work. In fact the Company saw the French Canadian as being inferior to that of the British worker. The Company saw the benefit of mixing the freight canoes with French and Scottish in order to create racial differences and prevent any organization amongst the freight brigades. Here again we have the intentional creation of a social division within the labouring class, strictly for the benefit of exploitation.

"...the nature of Canadians is as opposite to that of Scotsmen or Orkney-men as black is to white. The former are little removed from savages, indeed the reader may easily conceive what offspring must shoot from the union of a volatile, vain, shiftless tho' not ruffleless Frenchman with a toy-loving daughter of an Indian scallier."<sup>4</sup>

The push into the interior resulted in an incredible increase in expenses. More wages had to be paid out and



food provided to the increased numbers of European and French Canadian labourers. It was also becoming necessary to keep the labourer longer within the service. Initially a worker would "sign up" for two years, then return to Scotland. This constant, short term recruitment started to become extremely expensive to the Company. As soon as the labourer was taken into the interior and trained to a skilled level, it was time to send the workers back and recruit more. It now became necessary for the labourers to remain longer in order to get effective work out of them. But still the expenses continued to increase with the greater amount of workers brought into the Fur Trade.

### Labour Backlash

The keeping of labourers longer within the interior of the Fur Trade territory led to the creation of other prob-

lems—those of organization and militancy. When the European workers were required to remain longer, primarily within the transportation work, the result was that they became more organized and militant. The length and conditions of work became very difficult. Strikes began to occur and were better organized, around issues that mostly affected the conditions of work. Voyageurs or transportation workers would organize themselves around the amount of wages to be paid to all the workers, as opposed to each individual worker. Work stoppages would occur over how far the transportation brigades were to travel over a particular period of time. The shorter the time period, the harder the amount of work that had to be done. For example, at Cumberland House during the 1790's the voyageurs engaged in a series of strikes resulting in wage increases, which the Company saw as being a serious threat to

them. The workers also organized around better treatment while working on the brigades. The reason for these series of annual strikes was because the cost of transporting goods for the workers was added on to the price of the goods at Cumberland House. The wages that the workers were paid inland, i.e. Cumberland House, was the same as if they were on the coast, yet the price of goods were being increased. The result was that their wages were worth less and the Company was passing the expense of the inland trade onto the backs of the workers.

"...Out of thirty Men whose times expire this year only three entered into Contract, viz. John Irvine, Steerman and Canoe Builder, James Tate Steerman and Summer Master at Manchester and Magnus Spence Steerman. Seven others promise to give their answer tomorrow. They appear this year to make a higher demand for wages than any preceding one, and it is evident a Combination is entered into among the whole. But what is still more extraordinary most of them are inclinable to return for two years only, that all their times might expire at once; and as the chief part are Steersmen, they suppose their leaving the Service all at once it will greatly distress the Inland Trade; if not totally stop it."<sup>5</sup>

Although these voyageurs were Scots, it was their children, the new halfbreed generation that was coming, who would soon move into their positions within the wage-labouring class.

The increased costs or overhead expenses became so great that the Governor and Committee of the Company were forced to engage in "cost cutting". The following is a communication between London and the Officer in charge at York Factory, which was the main administration depot of the Company in the 1790's:

"It is impossible for you to judge how much the Amount of our Aggregate Expenses are. Servants' wages & provisions are enormously heavy beyond your conception and we are determined to lessen them by every means in our power at the same time not to lose sight of our Meritorious Servants nor let them go unrewarded."<sup>6</sup>

The Hudson's Bay Company was further placed in a difficulty by labour shortages in Europe. Wars in Europe were making it difficult to recruit, as

all unemployed surplus labour was being pressed into the British Armed Services.

The Hudson's Bay Company was faced with a problem. They needed more skilled labour, but at the same time they needed it cheaper. The competition with the Northwest Company was increasing their expenses to the point where they were being forced to need a new source of labour. A source of labour that offered the skills they needed, could be obtained more cheaply and would be readily available when they needed it. Ideally, that labour source should come from within the territory in which they were working.

Next we will see the beginnings of the rise of the Metis working class and middle class. □

#### Footnotes

1. Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter HBCA) B3/B/5, f.1d 28 Sept., 1767 Humphrey Martin, Albany Fort to Thomas Moore, East Main.

HBCA B3/b/12, f.17d 28 March, 1775 Thomas Hutchins, Chief, Albany Fort Instructions to Edward Jarvis.

2. HBCA B3/b/31, f.27d 8 July, 1794 John Kipling, Albany House to Mr. McNab.

HBCA B3/B31, f.17 9 April, 1794 John Thomas to (John McNab), Albany Fort.

3. HBCA B3/b/29, f.12A 12 Dec., 1791 Edward Jarvis, Albany Fort to Messr's Kipling, Hodgson, Goodwin, Sutherland & Best.

HBCA All/5, f.167 1791 Officers, Albany Fort to Governor and Committee, London.

HBCA All/5, f.179 17 August 1791 Officers, Gloucester House to Governor and Committee, London.

4. HBCA B42/a/136a., f.17a-18a William Auld's Memorandum Book, 1810-1811.

5. HBCA B239/a/91, f.28 7 July, 1791 York Post Journal.

6. HBCA A6/16 f.128 31 May, 1799 Governor and Committee, London to Officers, York Factory.

Ron Bourgeault has been compiling historical research for the Association of Metis & Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan for the past four years. Currently Bourgeault is residing in Ottawa, researching out of the National Archives.

The first of this series appears in our March/82 issue, Volume 13, No. 3.

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SASKATCHEWAN

## Announcement

As of June 1, 1982, a toll-free number will be available to residents of Northern Saskatchewan who wish to contact the provincial Ombudsman.

If you need assistance with a problem involving the Saskatchewan Government you may wish to contact the Ombudsman by calling:

112-800-772-9787  
1-800-772-9787

The following list of publications have been produced by the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan. They all concern the history of Metis people and the issue of Aboriginal Rights. All are available on loan or for sale from the Gabriel Dumont Institute Library.

### Publications

**Aboriginal Rights: Theory, Origins, and Practise**

**A Summary and Review of Research Findings Regarding the Rights and Claims of the Non-Status Indian Peoples of Saskatchewan.**

**Canadian Indigenous People in Relation to the Early Concepts of International Law**

**The Concept of the Supremacy of Parliament and How it Relates to and Affects the Rights of Aboriginal People in Canada**

**Expropriation in Relation to Aboriginal Land Title—Native Law Centre**

**Extinction of Aboriginal Claims in Canada—Law and Practise**

**The Federal-Indigenous Trust Relationship**

**Government Policy Respecting Native People: Its Development and Purpose**

**Half-Breed Land and Money Scrip: Was This a Constitutionally Valid Method of Extinguishing the Claim to Indian Title?**

**The History of the Metis Hunting and Fishing Rights of Non-Status Indians**

**Indian-An Analysis of the Term as Used in 91(24) of the BNA Act**  
**Indian and Metis Issues in Saskatchewan to 2001**

**Indigenous Nations and the Right to Self-Determination**

**Louis Riel-Justice Must Be Done**  
**Metis Nationhood Claim Outside Manitoba After 1870**

**Metis Struggles of the Twentieth Century**

**The Nationhood Claim of the Metis: The Historical and Empirical Basis of the Claim in 1870**  
**Nation: What Does it Mean and What are its Implications?**

**The Nature of Aboriginal Title—Is It Transferrable or Assignable?**

**The Nature of Indian Title**  
**Overview: How the Government Dealt with the Indians**  
**Overview: How the Government Dealt with the Metis**

**Overview: Relationship Between the Metis and the Indians**

**The Question of Half-Breed Scrip as an Extinguishment of Aboriginal Title**

**The Roman Catholic Church and the Metis Nation**

**Speculation in Half-Breed Land and Scrip**

**Who Is An Indian?**

Summer reading for young people. All these books are written by or are about Metis people. Some have been reviewed already in *New Breed*. All are available from the Gabriel Dumont Institute Library. Enjoy the summer. Read a book!

**Carpenter, Jock. Fifty Dollar Bride. Marie Rose Smith - a chronicle of Metis life in the 19th century. Sidney, British Columbia: Gray's Publishing Ltd. 1977 ISBN 0-88826-070-9.**

**Campbell, Maria. Little Badger and the Fire Spirit. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977 ISBN 0-7710-1882-7.**

**Campbell, Maria. People of the Buffalo: How the Plains Indians Lived. Illustrations by Douglas Tait and Shannon Two Feathers. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1976 Juvenile.**

**Campbell, Maria. Riel's People: How The Metis Lived. Illustrated by David MacLagan. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre 1978 Juvenile.**

**McNamee, James. Them Damned Canadians Hanged Louis Riel! Toronto: MacMillan 1971.**

Young adult. Louis Riel is one of many characters in a reconstruction of Canada's "Wild West".

**Sealey, D. Bruce, ed. Stories of the Metis. Winnipeg: Manitoba Metis Federation Press, 1975.**

A sequential series of stories in fact and fiction that tell of the history of the Metis people from their beginning to the present day.

**Truss, Jan. A Very Small Rebellion. Essay by Jack Chambers. Edmonton: J.M. Lebel, 1977 Juvenile.**

**Woodcock, George. Gabriel Dumont, The Metis Chief and his Lost World. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1975.**

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# Ile-A-La-Crosse: past & present

## Clothing



Julie Morin Bouvier, Michel Bouvier, Metis couple from Ile-a-la-Crosse. Circa mid-1800's. Note the sash worn by Michel.



Robert Gardiner Sr. of Ile-a-la-Crosse  
circa 1935



Frank Fiddler and Margaret Laliberte.  
A wedding in Beauval circa 1912



Robert Gardiner Jr. circa 1930



Catherine Daigneault demonstrating  
style of dress worn by her generation in  
early 1900's

# Elders



Coronne Roy circa 1940



Maurice sisters: Beatrice Belanger and Josephine Daigneault



Catherine Iron Daigneault circa 1975

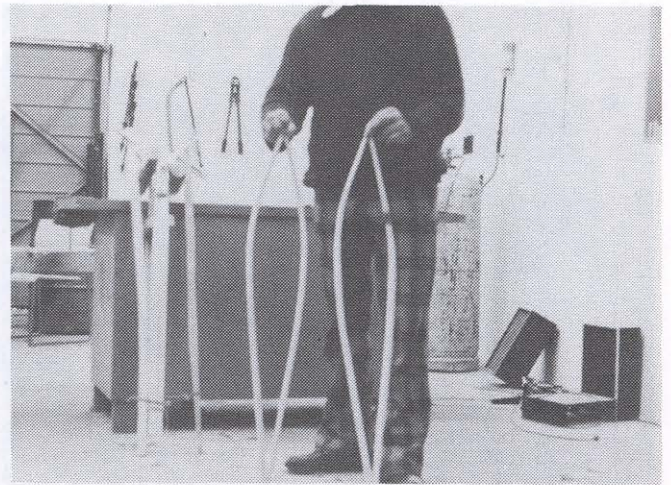
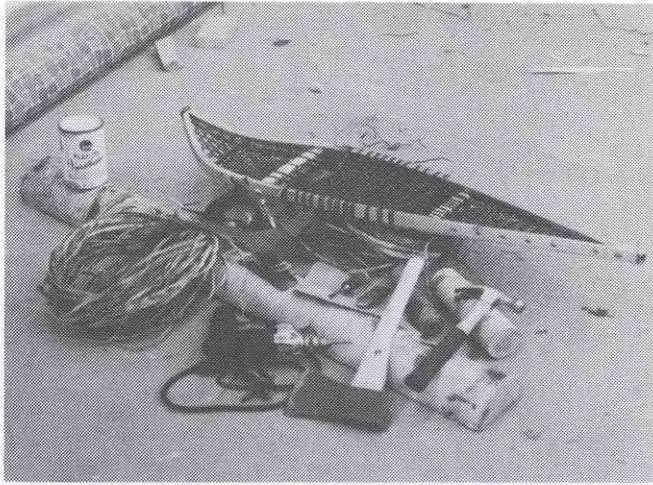


Mrs. Bouvier-Deisjarlais circa 1935



Front Row: Beatrice Belanger, Clementine Daigneault, Marie-Rose McCallum, Flora Bouvier, Catherine Daigneault  
Second Row: Victoria Daigneault, Marie-Rose Deisjarlais, Evangeline Daigneault, Eva Hoffman circa 1965

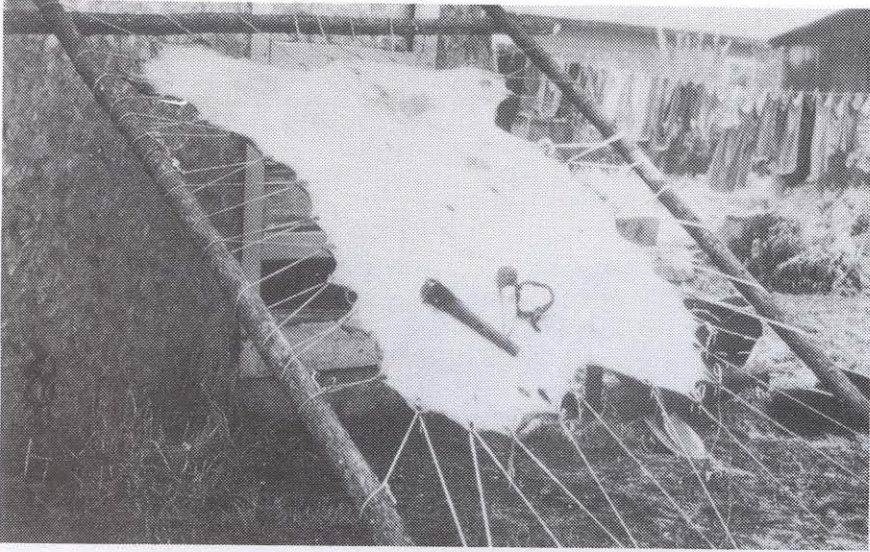
# Craftsmanship



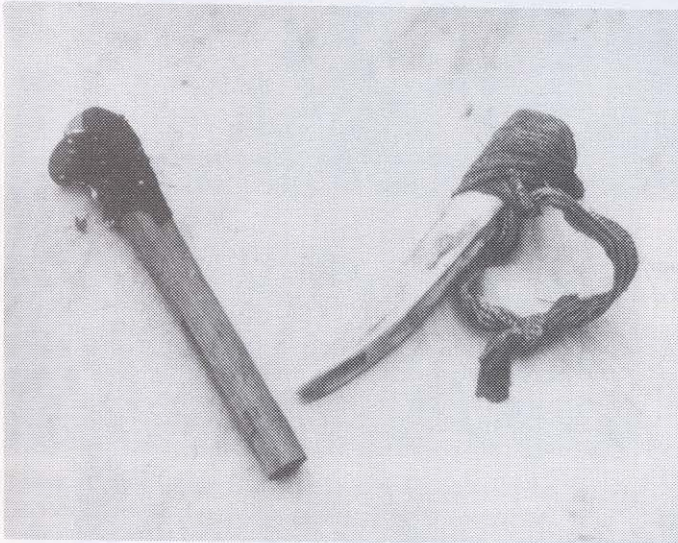
**snowshoes** Albert Daigneault making snowshoes at Ile-a-la-Crosse Industries in 1974. Snowshoes are made of birch, caribou hide and rawhide.



## tanning



These tools—one of wood and metal scraper, the other of bone and metal scraper are used in scraping fur and flesh from animal hides. Here a moose hide is stretched out. The next step is smoking the hide.



**basketry** A basket of birchbark and spruce root made in Patuanak. The baskets were once used as containers for food.

## Wehta Matowin

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**STARTING SALARY:** Based on qualifications and experience.

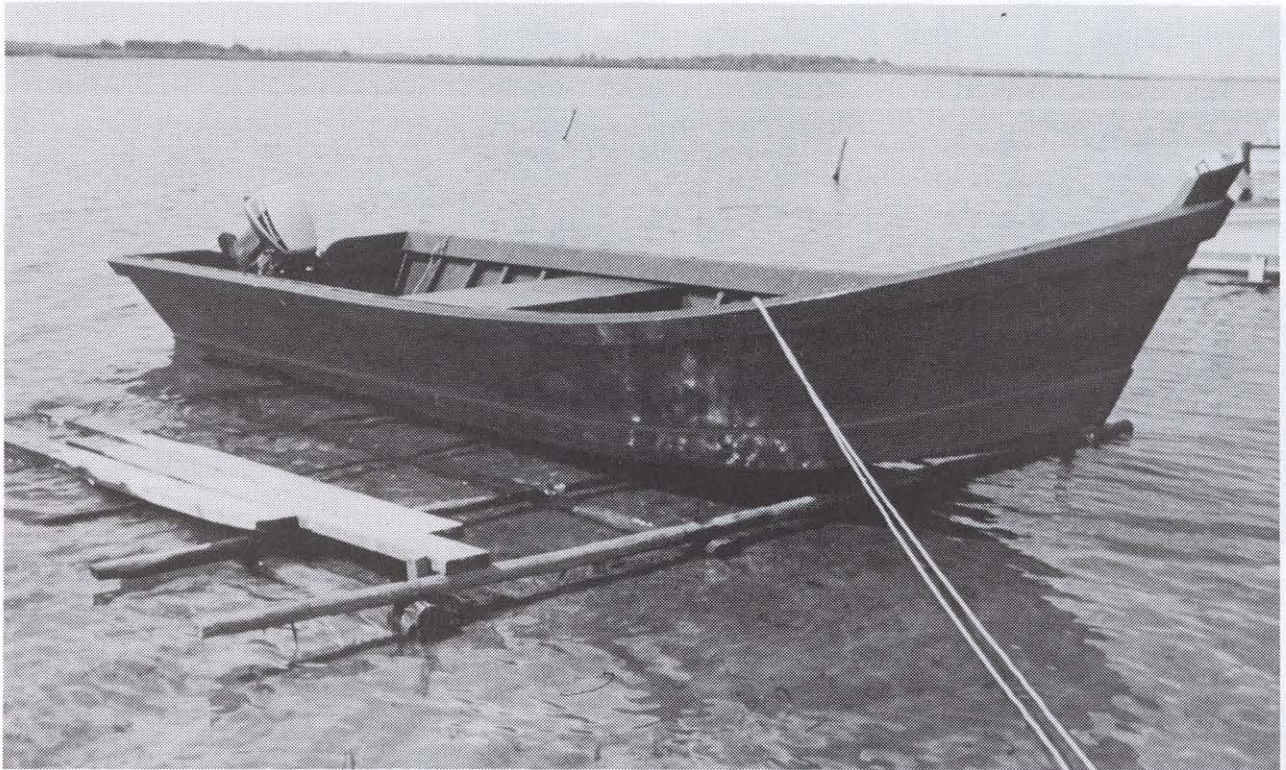
Please apply in writing stating qualifications and experience and giving other pertinent information.

### APPLICATIONS TO:

Wayne McKenzie, Chairman  
Saskatchewan Native Communications  
Wehta Matowin Corporation  
210-2505-11th Avenue  
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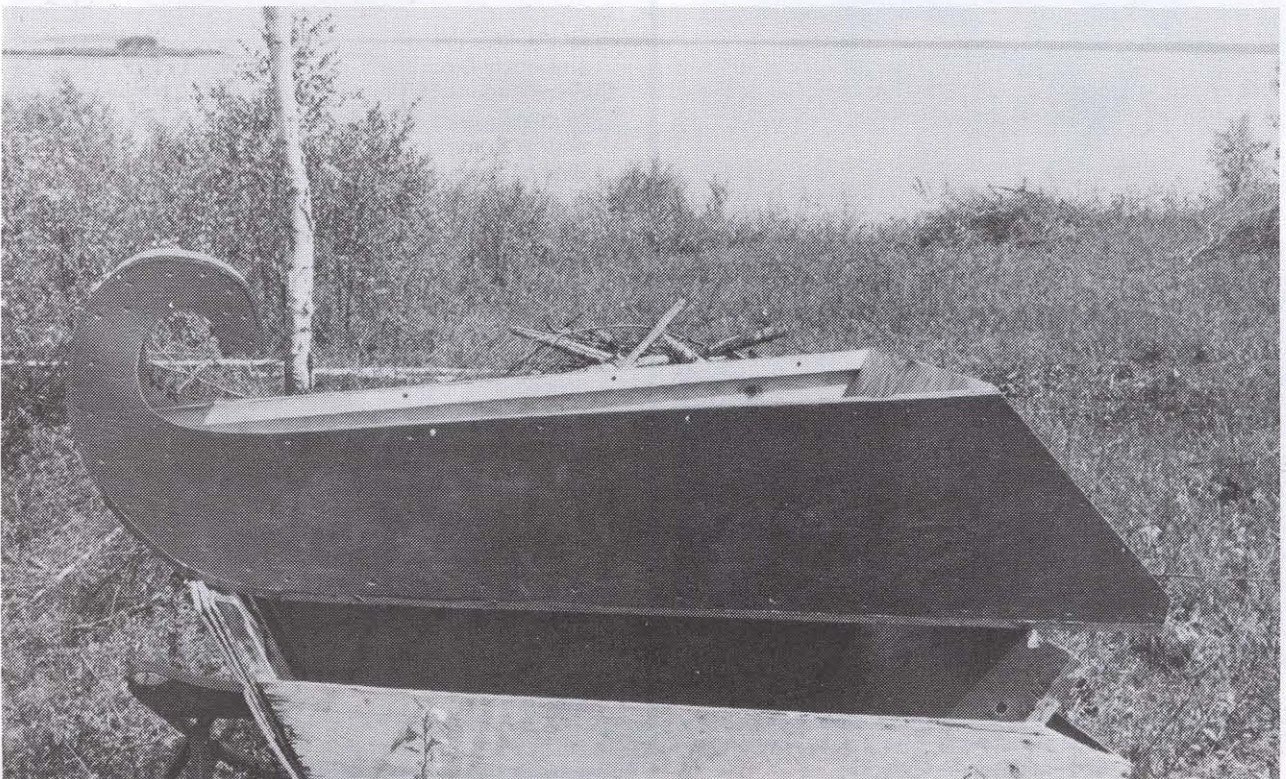
## skiffs

The skiff, once the main form of transportation in Ile-a-la-Crosse, is now transportation for fishermen. The skiffs are made in Ile-a-la-Crosse from plywood and 2 x 4's.

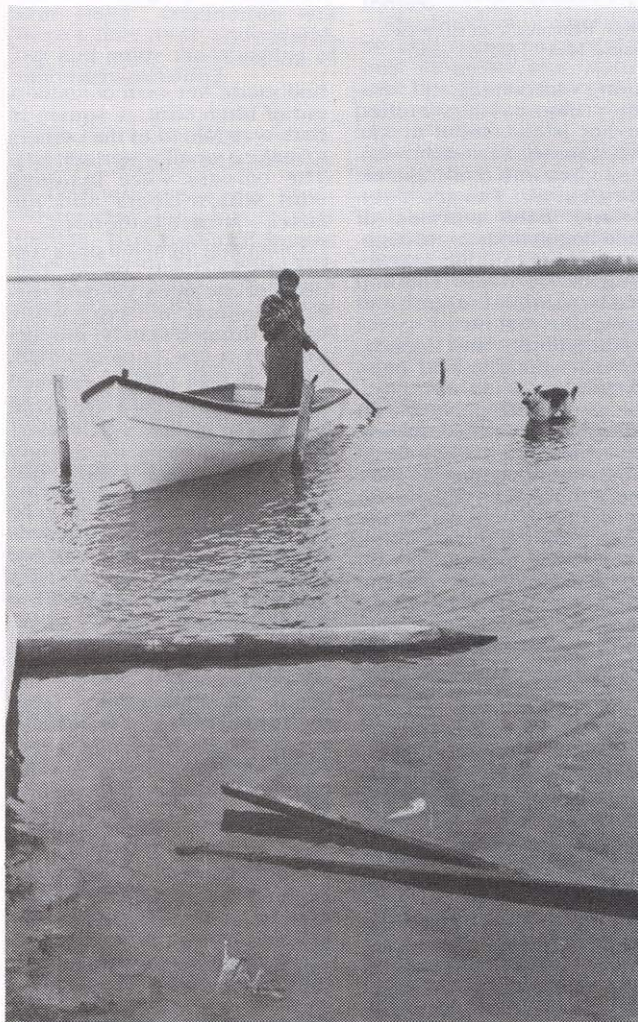


## toboggans

A toboggan constructed by wood-worker, Etienne Corrigan. Etienne once constructed toboggans from birch and attached canvas to the sides.



## hunting & fishing



above: Russell Lariviere on Lac Ile-a-la-Crosse. Fishing remains important in the economy of Northern people.  
below: A trapper returning, Leon Iron in Canoe Lake



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The Executive Director is responsible to the Board of Directors for the overall management of the organization.

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522-2621

## Birch Sugaring

by Rebecca Kennel

Ed. Note: Reprinted from the Western People, March 11, 1982 issue.

Spring was coming and Josephine Diagneault watched from her island home in Lac Ile-a-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan. The sun became more intense in the clear air. The snow settled and bare patches of ground began to show through. Warm days meant life was returning to the trees. The sap would be rising in the birch and to Josephine that meant sweet syrup for family and friends. This was what she had been waiting for and she was ready.

The sleds were packed with bedding, a tent, dried moose meat, smoked fish and a large cast iron kettle. Josephine rode in one of the sleighs with her tin pails and paraphernalia. While several grandchildren pulled her, the whole expedition was escorted across the lake to the mainland by several aunts and uncles.

Camp was set up in a good stand of birch. The large canvas tent was pitched with an airtight heater inside to take part of the chill out of the still cold nights. Spruce boughs were cut and laid on the frozen ground and homemade feather robes went on top to complete the bed. Here Josephine would stay with five or six of her grandchildren for sometimes a week or more.

With almost three-quarters of a century behind her, Josephine had seen a lot of winters change to spring and seldom had she missed the chance to tap the rising sap in the birch trees and boil it down to syrup. She had first gone with her own mother, then with her children and now with her grandchildren.

It was with an experienced eye that she selected the trees. Small ones would not produce enough sap. Large ones were rejected as well, her preference being for the medium-sized trees. The same tree was not used two years in a row, to give the tree a chance to recover.

With the trees selected, Josephine would make an upwards slanting cut with her hatchet, just under the bark. The resulting curl of bark was propped open with a small twig and it was from this piece that the sap dripped. Tin pails were propped against the tree with a willow stick or tied around the tree with string to catch the watery liquid.

In earlier years, before tin pails were available, Josephine

had made her own containers out of birch bark. A square of bark was folded at the corners to make a small watertight box. The corners were fastened with willow roots and the boxes were tied to the trees.

Collecting the filled pails was the responsibility of the children. Some trees yielded several gallons of sap, while others dripped slowly, producing only a few cups of liquid. All of it was carried back to camp where Josephine was boiling it in a large kettle over an open fire.

The boiling of the sap required close attention. A blazing hot fire was needed to keep the liquid boiling. Forty gallons of sap produces only about one gallon of syrup and all this moisture must be boiled off. If the syrup is not cooked long enough, it will be too watery and will most likely ferment. If it is boiled too long it will turn to sugar. Josephine knew what the consistency of the finished product must be; when a few sugar crystals formed around the outside edges of the kettle, the syrup was ready to be poured off into other containers to cool.

When the pails of sap on the trees did not need tending, there were other things for the children to do. In the open patches where the snow was gone there were cranberries to pick, sweeter now from the winter's freeze. Wood had to be gathered to keep the fire under the kettle burning all day long. There were rabbit snares to check for a meal of fresh meat.

There were mischievous times as well. Josephine's large can of tobacco was often dipped into when she wasn't watching and smoked in a sunny spot out of sight in the woods and with the woods full of spring and with interesting places to explore, work was not always first on the children's list of things to do.

Josephine managed to make about three to four gallons of syrup every year. Then things would be packed on the sleighs and they would be escorted back across the lake to the small island to enjoy for the rest of the year the sweet results of their labor.

Josephine, now 95, still sees spring come from her home in Ile-a-la-Crosse but it has been nearly 25 years since she made the trip to make birch syrup. □

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# Batoche Highlights

by Vi Sanderson,  
Larry Laliberte, and  
Vye Bouvier

In this special issue of New Breed, most of these news articles are based on the true history of the Metis. I hope everyone attending our "Metis Heritage Days" celebration will have a little more understanding and enjoy the meaning of our yearly gathering.

## The Fort Carlton Prairie Fire

Ft. Carlton - August 25th, 1874 - Wednesday morning in Fort Carlton, two runaway horses knocked over Theodore Ouellet on main street. The horses then got tangled up in Mrs. Angeline Lepine's clothesline.

Father Andre, the owner of the team, said a noise from the blacksmith shop frightened the horses. The horses bolted and ran into a water wagon, breaking the trace chains and freeing the sleigh. Theodore Ouellet sustained minor bruises.

Mrs. Angeline Lepine has asked Father Andre for five shillings for damage to her clothesline and washing. Father Andre has agreed to pay it. □

## Council Overturns Town Crier's Decision

Ft. Carlton - August 25, 1874 - The town crier, after fining Mrs. Madeline Bouvier three shillings for having her cow at large, had his decision overturned by the town council yesterday.

The incident occurred when several young boys of the village assaulted Mrs. Bouvier's cow by shooting stones at it with slingshots early Wednesday afternoon. The cow panicked and broke out of the fence, then stampeded down main street. It finally came to a halt in Pierre Buyat's vegetable garden, causing substantial damage to all vegetables.

The town crier was called in. He immediately impounded the animal and fined Mrs. Bouvier three shillings. She felt she was being unjustly treated and took the matter directly to the Town Council.

After all facts of the incident were presented to the Council they not only overturned the town crier's decision but imposed a two week - six p.m. curfew to the young boys found at fault. Arrangements are being made by the parents of the young boys to compensate Pierre Buyat for his damaged vegetable garden. □

## Dumont Charged

Ft. Carlton - July 28, 1874 - Five free hunters have charged Gabriel Dumont, local Metis leader and hunting captain, with unlawful interference. The complaint was placed before Justice of the Peace Lawrence Clarke.

Apparently, Mr. G. Dumont warned the free hunters at the start of the summer's buffalo hunt in May that they would have to obey community laws regarding the hunt and not start before anyone else. The St. Laurent community's hunting date was set for the first of July.

The hunters seem to have left ten days ahead of time, and according to Dumont were warned by letter to halt and turn back. The five complainants then charged Dumont with stopping them and fining them five louis each, which he took out in goods. The hunters were Peter Ballandine, Batise Primeau, Alexandre Cadein, Theodore Cavenant, and William Whiteford, all of no fixed address.

Dumont is the president of the St. Laurent Council as well as hunt captain. Justice of the Peace Lawrence Clarke is the Ft. Carlton Hudson's Bay Co. factor (manager). □

## Louis Riel Invited to Saskatchewan Territory

Ft. Carlton - March 22, 1884 - At an open air meeting held at the home of Isadore Dumont in St. Laurent on March 22, 1884, several people suggested Louis Riel, Metis leader, be invited to the Territory of Saskatchewan. Riel still has a warrant out for his arrest, because of his leadership role in the 1870 rebellion in Manitoba. Riel is presently teaching in a Metis community in Montana.

Seven resolutions, including a demand for Metis Land Titles, and more Metis representation on the Territorial Council were passed. The group also blamed government for the neglect of Indian people.

The Metis elected six members to draw up a Bill of Rights, which will be submitted at the general assembly to be held in May.

Despite poor weather conditions of melting snow, and thick, sticky mud everywhere, about 200 Metis attended the meeting. Because there were so many horses and buggies, the men erected extra posts. □

# Sundries...

## Birch Bark Containers

When you're in the bush and need a container for whatever reason, look for a birch tree.

A fair-sized piece of birch bark can be shaped at either end to form sides and fastened tight with split twigs.

You'll have a useful, biologically safe, non-polluting, reusable container for water, soup, whatever!

## Moccasins

The word moccasin itself is Algonkian, meaning a low, heelless shoe with a vent at the instep, often beautifully decorated. There are two basic types of construction, soft-soled and hard-soled.

Each tribe had its own distinctive style. An eastern style had a vent over the instep, and a western style tended to have a sole on the bottom.

The farther eastern tribes, such as the Iroquois, had very small vents. Moving to the west, the vents became larger, then among the plains tribes such as the Sioux and Blackfoot, the "mitt-moccasin", with an unseamed top and sole attached, was in use.

The tribes who made great use of the horse developed leggings to protect the calf of the leg from abrasion on saddle-pads. The Apache developed a handsome, knee-high moccasin resembling a riding boot.

## Sturgeon Skin Useful for Making Windows

Don't throw away that sturgeon skin after cleaning and scaling! The skin from this fish can be used for windows.

Simply stretch and dry the skin as you would an animal hide. Once dried the skin becomes transparent and can be used for window panes in your cabin.

An old-timer tells us the only problem is you have to be sure the cat doesn't eat your windows!

## And Justice For All...

Ever wonder what kinds of laws were enforced in Saskatchewan in the 1800's? Here's just a few:

● To pay for transporting any criminal charged with murder to Red River for trial, each citizen of the village shall be obliged to pay the sum of three shillings.

● Any person having a family who owes a debt and refuses payment thereof, the magistrate upon proper complaint and proof, shall levy upon and sell said debtor's property to the extent of two-thirds if necessary for the satisfaction of said claims and costs. The remaining one-third being exempt, and left for the support of said debtor's family.

● Any person who shall catch or harness in any way the

horse of another without permission of the owner, shall be liable to a fine of one pound ten shillings and costs, the half of said fine to be paid to the informer.

● Any person finding a lost horse on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River and delivering him to the owner shall be entitled to a reward of one pound ten shillings, said reward is collectable the same as any other debt.

● Any person guilty of seduction under promise of marriage shall be obliged to support the child until it is of age to earn its own living.

● Any man guilty of adultery with a married woman after having been warned by the husband of said married woman shall be fined the sum of four pounds ten shillings.

● Any person who drives a sleigh of any kind without bells, on the public road, shall be fined the sum of three shillings.

● Any person refusing to assist a constable when called upon by him shall be fined the sum of five shillings.

And that's the way it was in 1885!

# Wakaw Lodge

# Motel

Wakaw, Saskatchewan

(306)233-4345

Fully Modern Rooms

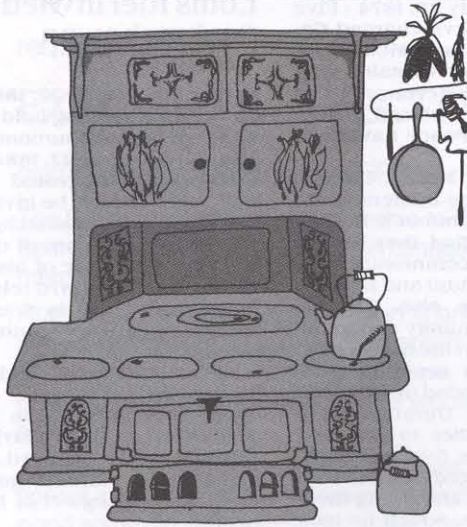
Air  
Conditioned

Waterbed  
Ice

Colour  
T.V.

Just 20 minutes from Batoche!

# from the kitchen



## Moose Bone Lard or Fat

Boil moose bones for three hours on top of the stove or outside on an open fire. Take the fat from the broth, skimming with a spoon, and place in container to harden. Then it is ready to eat with dried moose meat, crushed dried meat or pemmican.

## Moose Broth

(Re: Moose Bone Lard recipe)  
 1. Drink as is—add salt to taste. Eat with dried moose meat.  
 2. Make a soup with it—mix flour, rolled oats, meat from moose bones, boil together until thick like gravy. Serve with bannock.

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## Dried Meat

Cut a piece of moose meat (about 2 lbs.) into 16-inch strips. Then place the strips of meat over the outdoor fire to dry. When the meat is dark brown in color, its cooked. Serve with butter or moose lard. It can also be cooked in the oven. This is called panisu wan or pasta weyas.

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## Crushed Meat with Onions

Grease a frying pan with margarine or butter. In the pan combine crushed meat, green onions, and sugar. Stir well while cooking. Should be done in 5 minutes.

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Cracklings/Fat

Cut moose fat into small pieces. Put pieces in a pan and melt the fat until all you have left is cracklings from the fat. Use the fat for frying or making bannock. You can eat cracklings separate from the fat.

Cranberry Jam

- 4 cups cranberries
1 cup sugar
6 cups water
2 tblsp. flour

Boil cranberries in the water, add sugar and stir. When the berries are just about cooked, add flour to thicken. Cool, and serve with dried fish.

Handwritten title for Cranberry Jam in Inuktitut.

Handwritten recipe for Cranberry Jam in Inuktitut.

Dry Fish

Scale, clean and remove the head and tail from the fish, when cleaning be sure to open the fish from the back. Next, thin the meat and remove the bones, now lightly slice both sides of the fish taking care not to cut through. In the same manner as drying meat, dry the fish in an open fire, or if you are so inclined, use an oven. When done, serve with cranberry jam or sauce.

Handwritten title for Dry Fish in Inuktitut.

Handwritten recipe for Dry Fish in Inuktitut.

Pemmican

(From pasta weyas or dried crushed meat)

Pemmican is made from dried deer, buffalo and moose meat. Crushed fat from the animals and put into moulds (like a firm ball). You can mix lard and sugar or mix with cracklings and let set. Can be used as a base for soup. Another way you can use pemmican is to combine green onions, sugar and butter or margarine. Mix well. Fry for about 5 minutes.

Handwritten title for Pemmican in Inuktitut.

Handwritten recipe for Pemmican in Inuktitut.

Bannock

- 4 cups flour
1 1/2 tblsp. baking powder
2 tblsp. lard
2 1/2 cups warm water

Mix flour, baking powder and a pinch of salt together. Add lard to flour mixture, mixing well. Make a well in the centre, add water. Stir. Knead the dough. Poke holes in top of dough before baking. Shape and bake at 450° until golden brown. Serve with butter, syrup or jam.

Rolled Stick Bannock

Use the same bannock recipe as on this page only roll the dough on a stick. Bake in an open fire. Be careful to turn the stick for even browning.

Handwritten title for Rolled Stick Bannock in Inuktitut.

Handwritten recipe for Rolled Stick Bannock in Inuktitut.

## Come Together My People

We the Metis Nation  
Struggle for Metis salvation  
Every Metis must fight  
For our aboriginal rights.

Our people are poor  
and our hearts are sore  
But yet we must still strive  
To keep our nation alive.

We hear our children cry  
And we see our people die.  
But our struggle must go on,  
Until all genocide is gone.

They pick at our remaining culture,  
Like a flock of starving vultures.  
Now is the time to stand and defend,  
Or our Nation will come to an end.

No longer can we wait,  
For them to seal our fate.  
We have to fight together  
Or remain this way forever.

Dwayne Ross  
Regina, Sask.

## Riel

With upturned face and fearless eye  
And heart which knew no craven sigh,  
In heroic silence, there to die,

Stood Riel

For days long gone and deeds long dead  
To Orange hate he bows his head —  
For Scott's blood in rebellion shed

Dies Riel

Forth from his cell with regal air,  
As steps a lion from out his lair,  
"Where shall we find his equal, where?"

Brave Riel

He Stands beneath the scaffold's shade —  
Casts one last look o'er field and glade;  
With dying lips the hero prayed —

Brave Riel

That Heaven might rout the tyrant band  
Which holds with iron blood-stained hand  
His native home — his prairie land —

Brave Riel

And thus he dies, the true-souled one,  
His chequered weary face is run,  
The Martyr's Crown is nobly won —

Brave Riel

Oh! Brothers of his race and creed,  
Whose hearts will long and sorely bleed,  
Be ours the task to 'venge the deed —  
Be ours to fan the fervid flame,  
To hand down Riel's noble name  
To endless glory — deathless fame —

Brave Riel

Taken from:  
Montreal Daily Post,  
November 19, 1885

# Poems

## Changing Times

As I stand on these plains  
I can see that the land is not the same  
Change of seasons,  
bring back memories  
The way the buffalo herds once roared  
across these unforgotten plains.

The traditional way is fading  
Fading bit by bit  
But, the spirits are still  
looking upon us,  
and we know it's here forever.

Vivian Janvier  
La Loche, Sask.

## Bitter Icing

When I was a child, life was so easy,  
people were people, happy and free.  
We could run in the fields, roam through the hills,  
wade in the water or pick all the flowers,  
In that life we cared, then it was fair.

As I grew older, things sort of changed,  
we moved to the city, was more like a grave.  
Suddenly life just wasn't the same, the first day  
of school, I thought would be fun, turned out to  
be hell with no where to run.

That's when you know that you're not the same,  
too young to know why, but that never changed it,  
you're free in a country to live, no, exist, you're taught  
that you're small, degrading and useless.

There's times that you'd wish that your skin was white,  
so you could have things, perhaps a new life, opportunity  
knocking at your front door, instead doors were slamming  
time after time, there's always a dead end, so why should  
we try!

So society wins, time and again, you end up a housewife with  
three lovely kids and sometimes you're lucky, religion, you know,  
end up with ten, no husband or home. Welfare gives money,  
enough to exist, so your kids grow up on the same shitty ship.

But one day you wake up, everyone does, and sooner or later,  
we all learn to grip at the bitterness there for the life we  
have lived. They shunned us and shamed us to no points end  
and we all just let them, so who was dumb?

If God said we're equal, then someone's unbalanced and a recipe  
is no good with too much of one ingredient. So this person here  
is going to start baking from scratch and I know in the end my  
cake won't taste too bad.

And I'll teach my children to love all mankind, after all things  
we say do expand in their minds, I am a Metis, and I'm proud to  
be and I'll make my children even prouder than me. If we keep  
on trying to make our lives right, just think of what they'll  
be and we made it right.

Margaret Fisher  
Regina, Sask.



DITION.  
OK A. M.  
... will appear

# RIEL!

Half-Breed  
... me.

The Un-  
... regarding

Precautions  
... His

Warrant by  
... Last

His Will--He  
... His

cial Mention  
... Mac-

the Sabbath--  
... ayings--  
... affold.

the Gallows  
... Murderer

the last days of  
... and

... the

... letters, etc.,  
... the light of day. His  
library consisted of a Bible, given him by  
his mother, and a few Roman Catholic pub-  
lications, the presents of friends.

### THE SCAFFOLD

is situated in rear of the prison, and is in  
an enclosure about 15x10 feet, fenced to the  
height of 12 or 14 feet. The trap door  
is twelve feet from the ground. I was not  
permitted to-day to see the interior. The  
scaffold appears projecting from the prison  
wall, to which it is attached, and reaches  
almost to the roof, looking very much like a  
country box.

### PERE ANDRE

who has been in constant attendance on the  
unfortunate prisoner as spiritual adviser,  
was seen, and said he did not know whether  
Riel would be hanged or not, and could  
obtain no information on the subject. He  
said that his charge was fast breaking down,  
and was in a constant tremor of fright. He  
truly believes Riel insane. He related a  
conversation he had with Dr. Lavel, of  
Kingston, one of the medical gentlemen  
who visited this place so mysteriously  
a few days ago. He asked the doctor  
whether, after examination, he thought  
Riel insane, and the answer was that he  
had insane ideas on religion and politics,  
but he considered him a responsible being  
and remarkably acute on general matters.  
This is said to have been the view taken by  
Dr. Lavel's associates. Speaking of

### RIEL'S PAPERS

of which the reverend father has a large  
quantity, he said he had possession of Riel's  
will. It contained no political allusions. It  
first referred in affection terms to his wife  
and family, commending them to God's  
protection. He forgave his enemies and  
any who may have injured him, especially  
mentioning Sir John Macdonald. He begs  
forgiveness of all he in-  
jured in any way, and says  
that he will die at peace with all men,  
meeting death bravely. He solemnly re-  
tracts his errors in regard to the Roman  
Catholic Church, and says he will die in the  
bosom of the church. For all the faults he  
committed towards the church, he humbly  
begs forgiveness for. He says he commit-  
ted them not knowing their gravity at the  
time, and since has recognized the enormity  
of striving against the mother church. He  
especially mentions the unsubmitting atten-  
tion he has received from Pere Andre, and  
asks that the faithful, when praying for  
him, couple the name of Pere Andre. Pere  
Andre read the above in church this morning  
and has also been writing a history of the  
rebellion, and has placed it in Pere Andre's  
hands to sell for the benefit of his family.

Up to 7 o'clock a second inspection has re-  
sulted in no information that the execution  
will take place. Word was received that a  
special train will arrive here by 9 o'clock  
to-night. It is expected that a message  
from the Governor-General is on board.

### THE SPECIAL TRAIN

Kingston, Nov. 15. The special train with  
Chief of Dominion Police  
K. Gibson on board arrived at 7:20 this  
morning. The train was met by a  
large number of persons, and the  
Chief of Police, in his pos-

... the execution party went up the  
rickety ladder upstairs and proceeded along  
the loft to the far end, where was found  
Louis Riel kneeling near the door leading  
to the scaffold, with Pere Andre and  
Father McWilliams reciting prayers for dy-  
ing. Dr. Johns stood close by, also Sheriff  
Chapman. The tall form of Deputy Sheriff  
Gibson filled the door. The noose was vis-  
ible dangling beyond. Around stood a guard  
of police.

At 8:05 Pere Andre administered the last  
sacrament to Riel. Riel gave the  
responses firmly. Although pale,  
he was firm. He was dressed in  
black coat, brown tweed pants and moccasins.  
The figure of the hangman now ap-  
peared out of the gloom of the loft, holding  
straps to bind Riel. He wore a mask over  
his face.

At 8:15 Riel rose to his feet, and was  
pinioned by the hangman. Deputy Sheriff  
Gibson superintended the operation. Riel,  
standing with eyes open praying in  
French, the priests standing in front. He  
then walked firmly to the scaffold, repeat-  
ing, "In God do I put my  
trust." His head was erect, his  
step firm, never showing the least tremor;  
as he repeated the prayerful exclamation  
half a smile lit up his face. Descending  
down a few steps of the scaffold he stood on  
the drop with his feet turned northward.  
Pere Andre and Father McWilliams con-  
tinued to pray, and Riel said in English:  
"I do ask the forgiveness of all  
men, and forgive all my enemies."  
He then prayed a short time in French.  
The executioner now took his place. The  
white cap was drawn over Riel's head, both  
priests holding lighted candles, continuing  
to repeat prayers for the dying. Exactly  
at 8:21

### THE DROP FELL

giving a shock to all present. The rope  
shook violently for a moment, swaying back  
and forth, then quivered. The length of  
drop was eight feet. At the first moment  
of the fall Riel's body remained still,  
his knees drawn up violently. Three  
or four times the body swayed to and fro,  
quivering, and Riel was dead. From the  
first moment of the drop to the time when  
the body became quiescent was under two  
minutes.

Kingston, Nov. 16. At 12 o'clock the  
door of the guard room was thrown open  
and those who had passes were admitted.  
Ascending 14 steps in front the guard room  
was reversed from the left to the back of  
the building where the scaffold is erected.  
Here Riel was kneeling between Fathers  
Andre and McWilliams, and a guard of  
eighteen police on either side, and the only  
others were reporters. Dr. Johns,  
and a deputy sheriff were present. Riel  
was calm, and answers responses in  
English, clear voice, frequently casting  
glances at the onlookers. He holds a crucifix  
in his right hand, prayers over, fathers  
beside him, and the hangman who is  
passed strap around the waist, when the father  
said the prayer, and the hangman  
put the noose around Riel's neck. He was then pinioned  
and walked on the scaffold.

... St. Paul, Minn., for a  
short time, and in 1867 or 1868 he returned  
home and became a farmer in St.  
Vital until 1869—the time of the Red  
River rebellion—he was asked by the  
half-breeds of Manitoba to be their com-  
mander-in-chief. He at first declined, being  
a young man, but the half-breeds insisted  
on having him as their leader, and he was  
compelled to take command. His actions  
from the time of his banishment until 1861  
were traveling from Canada to the United  
States. He was elected for the county of  
Provencher to the Dominion House, and  
was sworn in at Ottawa, and then lived in  
an insane asylum in Quebec. He stayed in  
Washington quite a while; he also spent  
good deal of his time in Woonsocket, Rhode  
Island, where his aunt, Mrs. Joyal—mother  
of ex-Chief of Police Joyal, of St. Paul, Minn.—  
resided. About six years ago he went to  
St. Joe, Minn., where he stayed about  
year as a farmer. In the latter part  
1879 he left St. Joe to go to Montana, to a  
half breed settlement called the Sun River  
settlement. He there was a teacher in an  
industrial school. In April, 1881, he was  
married to a half-breed named Marguerite  
Bellimeurs, daughter of Jean Baptiste Bel-  
limours, of Fort Belknap. After his marriage  
he lived with his wife at Sun River, Mon-  
tana, in a small log house; was very poor,  
and pursued the life of a trapper, until he  
was asked by the half-breeds of Prisons  
Albert to go with them and take their in-  
terest in trying to get them their rights.  
Again he did not want to go with them, telling  
them he was an American citizen, and did  
not care to mix himself up in their

