



Artwork by George Gingras

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Gabriel Dumont was born in **St. Boniface** (now Winnipeg, Manitoba) in 1837. His father, Isadore, was a farmer and trader. He was the fifth of eleven children. Although Gabriel never attended school, he was extremely wise about how to use the land and its resources. When he was eleven, Gabriel received his first gun, which he named "le petit" or the "little one." In 1851, Gabriel took part in the **Battle of Grand Coteau** in what is now North Dakota. During the battle, the Métis defeated the **Dakota (Sioux)** with only one casualty. Gabriel then became the leader of the Métis **bison** hunt in the **St. Laurent** area (near present-day **Batoche**, Saskatchewan) when he was twenty-five. He then met and married **Madeleine** Wilkie, the daughter of a well-known Métis trader. He soon became a farmer and provided a ferry service for the Batoche area. The ferry helped people cross the river and operated at a place that has become known as "Gabriel's Crossing."

In 1884, the Métis began negotiations with the **federal government** to obtain **title** to their land. Gabriel and three others set out for St. Peter's Mission, in present-day Montana, to convince Louis Riel to return to Canada to aid the Batoche Métis. After the negotiations failed, the government sent troops to the Prairies. Gabriel then led the Métis resistance. After the Métis' defeat at Batoche, Gabriel went to the United States to avoid being imprisoned. Madeleine soon died. Gabriel and Madeleine did not have any children. At this time, Gabriel became a performer in **Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show**. He returned to Batoche in 1890 and applied for title to his land. He received this title in 1902. Gabriel lived out the rest of his life fishing, hunting, and trapping until his death on May 19, 1906. He is buried in the Batoche cemetery.

Other Resources:

Barnholden, Michael. *Gabriel Dumont Speaks*. Vancouver: Talon Books, 1993.

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Woodcock, George. *Gabriel Dumont*. Edited by J. R. Miller. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2003.

