Navigating
the South Saskatchewan River
Through History

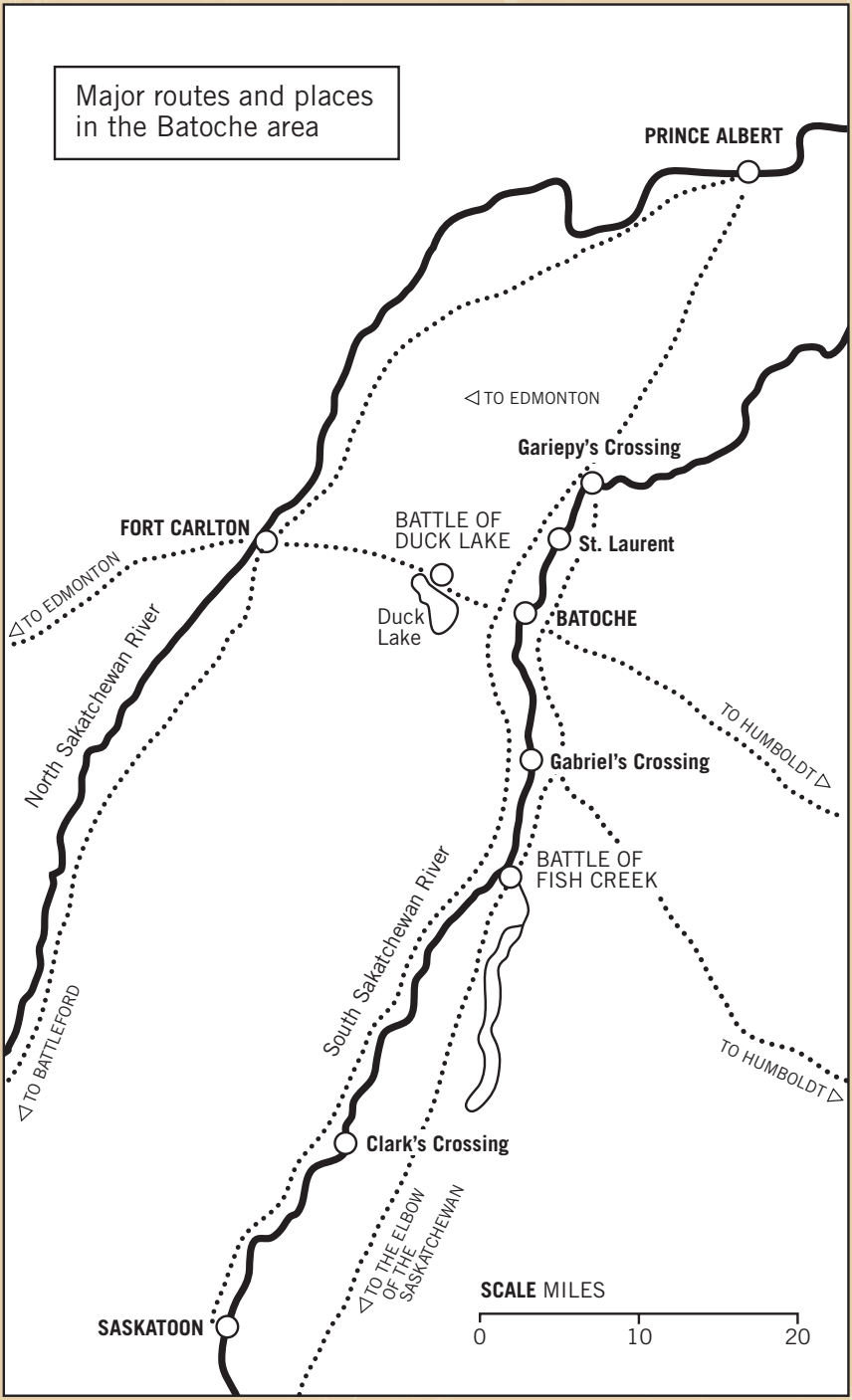
BACK TO BATOCHE

HISTORY OF THE CUPE ABORIGINAL CANOE TRIP

The Aboriginal Council of CUPE Saskatchewan organized its first canoe trip to Batoche in July 2003. In that year, there were 17 people who travelled in a fleet of canoes from Saskatoon to Batoche. The group included CUPE members, First Nation, Métis and non-Aboriginal people.

Since then, the annual canoe trip has grown in size and renown. The voyage of 40 canoeists now begins at Clarksboro Ferry (formerly, Warman Ferry and near the site of Clark's Crossing) and arrives two days later at the historic Métis community of Batoche. The canoe trip coincides every year with the Back to Batoche celebrations of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan in mid-July.

The purpose of the trip is to foster bridges between cultures and for participants to learn more about Métis culture and history and participate in Back to Batoche days.


Major routes and places in the Batoche area
PRINCE ALBERT
TO EDMONTON
Gariepy's Crossing
FORT CARLTON
BATTLE OF DUCK LAKE
St. Laurent
TO EDMONTON
Duck Lake
BATOCHE
North Sakatchewan River
TO HUMBOLDT
Gabriel's Crossing
BATTLE OF FISH CREEK
South Sakatchewan River
TO BATTLEFORD
TO HUMBOLDT
Clark's Crossing
TO THE ELBOW OF THE SASKATCHEWAN
SASKATOON
SCALE MILES
0
10
20

THE SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER

The waters of the great South Saskatchewan River are fed by glaciers and snow from the Rocky Mountains that flow though the Bow and Oldman rivers in Alberta into Saskatchewan.

The name "Saskatchewan" comes from the Cree word *Kisiskatchewani sipi*, which means "swiftly flowing river."[i] The river flows through a varied prairie landscape from the southwest to the centre of the province where it joins with the North Saskatchewan River near the city of Prince Albert.

The river and its banks are home to a diversity of wildlife, including beaver, mink, badger, muskrat, weasels, golden eagles, pelicans, cormorants, spotted sandpiper, Canada geese, falcons, pronghorn antelope, deer, coyote, fox, elk and moose.[ii] Canoeists may observe wildlife along the banks of the river or an eagle flying overhead.

The river also played an important role as a mode of transportation for First Nations and during the fur trade. Canoes, and later York boats, were used to bring supplies, hides and pemmican to trading posts and settlements along the river.

Participants on the CUPE Aboriginal Canoe Trip travel by river to Batoche in three segments. On the trip, participants will pass by several historic sites along the South Saskatchewan River.

SEGMENT 1
WARMAN TO HAGUE SECTION

- **Clark's Crossing.** Clark's Crossing was named for Mr. and Mrs. John F. Clark, who had established a ferry crossing at this point. The Dominion Telegraph Service set up a telegraph station here in 1876.[iii] General Middleton's troops arrived at Clark's Crossing in April 1885 to secure the ferry that Middleton assumed would have been taken by Louis Riel. Middleton spent five days at Clark's Crossing plotting strategy with his officers and by telegraph with the government. From this point, Middleton divided his troops and sent two columns to Batoche, one on the west side and his column on the east side of the river.

SEGMENT 2
HAGUE TO GABRIEL'S CROSSING

- **Middleton's camp and the Fish Creek battlefield.** This is where Dumont's Métis forces first clashed with Middleton's troops on April 24, 1885. On May 5, the Northcote steamship landed at Fish Creek with supplies for Middleton's troops before heading onward to Batoche.[iv]

- **Petite Ville.** Further north of Fish Creek on the west side of the river is Petite Ville, the *hivernement* village founded in the late 1860's where Métis families spent winters after the fall buffalo hunt.
- **Gabriel's Crossing.** This is where Gabriel Dumont homesteaded and ran a ferry from 1877 to 1883. Métis author and activist Maria Campbell now lives here and helps operate the Gabriel Crossing Foundation, a First Nation arts school.

SEGMENT 3
GABRIEL'S CROSSING TO BATOCHE

- **Batoche.** Now a National Historic Park, Batoche is the historic community of the Métis people and site of the Northwest resistance of 1885. The town was originally called St. Antoine-de-Padoue, but was renamed after local merchant, Xavier Letendre, who was nicknamed "Batoche." On both sides of the river at Batoche, the Métis had settled on long, narrow lots extending from the river. Running through Batoche was the Carlton Trail, which extended from Fort Garry (Winnipeg) to Fort Edmonton, and was the main overland route for the trade of fur and supplies in the west.
- **River banks near Batoche.** It was from both sides of the river that the Métis and First Nations fighters fired upon the Northcote steamer as it approached Batoche. After the three days of fighting, many Métis women and children took refuge for two weeks in damp caves dug along the banks of the South Saskatchewan River to avoid being taken by the troops. Many became ill and died from pneumonia and starvation during this ordeal.[v] A painting by Saskatchewan Métis artist Sherry Farrell Racette depicts the story of the women and children hiding in the caves.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES

During the three day canoe trip, participants have opportunities to take part in Aboriginal spiritual or cultural observances. When the canoeists take their breaks on land, they may come across sweetgrass which is cut, braided and then dried for use in smudging or ceremonies.

Sweetgrass, sage, cedar and tobacco are the four sacred plants used by Aboriginal peoples for ceremonies and purification rituals. Before these plants are picked, tobacco is placed on the ground as an offering and permission is asked from Mother Earth. Some elders teach people to also pray to the four directions before harvesting sweetgrass.

Sweetgrass is traditionally harvested in mid-June to early August when the roots are purple. Sweetgrass should be cut at least three inches above the roots and care must be taken not to damage or uproot the fragile roots.

Sweetgrass is braided because it signifies the hair of Mother Earth; the three strands of the braid represent mind, body and spirit. The braided strand represents unity and strength. Sweetgrass is always given as a gift or in an exchange and is not to be purchased.

Once sweetgrass is dried, the end can be burned creating smoke for prayers or smudging ceremonies. The smoke rises taking prayers to the Creator, attracting positive energies and dispelling negative spirits. During smudging, a person cups his or her hands and brings the sweetgrass smoke first to the heart, second to the mind, third around the body and lastly to the heart again. The sweetgrass smudging is done to cleanse the mind, body and spirit.

Sweetgrass smudging is also done in ceremonies to open a gathering, to cleanse negative energy from a home or in sweat lodges. Sweetgrass tea is considered a medicine and is used to relieve coughing, vomiting, sore throats and to help a woman expel afterbirth.

The CUPE canoeists have also gone on medicine walks with a First Nations guide and discovered the medicinal value of other plants native to Saskatchewan.

Traditional Métis food, such as bannock, is served to the canoeists for their evening meal.

MÉTIS CULTURE AND BACK TO BATOCHE

Métis culture is a blend of two cultures: First Nations and French or Scottish. The woven sash, taken from the tradition of the Quebecois, and the embroidered jackets and moccasins, from the First Nations traditions, are examples of this blend. The elaborate bead work of Métis people is usually in the form of colourful flowers. "The Métis of the north western plains enjoyed a social life that mixed the co-operative tribalism of their Cree mothers with the joie de vivre of their *Canadien* fathers."[vi] The fiddle plays a central role in Métis music. Métis dances include the jig (French) and round dances (First Nations).

The Métis developed their own language, Michif, a dialect using Cree sentence structure and verb forms and French nouns.[vii] Michael Barnholden, who translated the writings of Gabriel Dumont, wrote that the Métis of the Batoche area probably spoke Michif but that Cree was the first language of the Dumont band.[viii]

The Back to Batoche celebrations became a revival of Métis culture and traditions in Saskatchewan and a time to honour the Métis heroes from the 1885 Resistance. Traditionally, the Métis from the Red River area who had settled in Saskatchewan gathered together on *La Belle Prairie* near Batoche to celebrate *La Fête Nationale* (the national holiday) on July 24. Families would travel for days to meet friends and relatives and celebrate their Métis heritage.[ix]

The buffalo flag, designed by Xavier Letendre, was on a white background showing a Métis hunter on horse chasing a buffalo. This flag was flown above the sports grounds where the races and games took place.

"Races were the order of the day – horse races, pony races, foot races, Indian races. There were tugs-of-war and jumping contests, wrestling and weight-lifting. Prizes were usually a bag of flour, a side of bacon, a pound of tea, or some staple donated by the generous merchants of Duck Lake and Prince Albert."[x]

Today, the most common flag of the Métis people is a white infinity symbol (appears as a horizontal figure eight) on a sky blue background. The symbol has two meanings: the joining of two cultures and the existence of a people forever.[xi]

THE MÉTIS - THE BIRTH OF A PEOPLE

During the fur trade in the 17th and 18th centuries in Canada, the French and Scottish or English traders often took a First Nation wife to prepare and preserve food, bear children, maintain the home, clean beaver skins and make snowshoes. Some authors argue that the fur trade could not have been carried out without the specialized labour of First Nations women that made it possible to survive in the harsh northern climate.[xii] The marriage of European men and Indian women (métissage) also cemented trade relationships with Indian bands.[xiii]

The Hudson Bay Company (HBC) forced many of its employees to leave their new wives and families behind when their term with the company ended and they returned to Britain (the women left behind were often called "summer wives"). The Northwest Company (NWC), on the other hand, employed Quebec men as voyageurs who formed stable life-long relationships with their Indian wives.[xiv]

The children of these unions grew up in two cultures, learned at least two languages, and developed the skills of both parents thus creating a distinct culture called Métis. The Métis became the new workforce for the fur trading companies which was cheaper for the companies

than importing and training foreigners. By 1870, when the first census was taken in the Red River settlement (now Winnipeg), only 1,565 Europeans were among the total population of 11,963. There were 558 Indians, 5,757 French-speaking Métis and 4,083 English-speaking "Halfbreeds."[xv]


"Half-Breed Traders" taken in 1872

After the merger of the NWC and the HBC in 1821, many displaced French-speaking Métis joined buffalo hunters who supplied the Red River settlement with pemmican and hides. The HBC no longer needed a permanent workforce because it could draw on a large pool of unemployed Métis. The company's plans to develop an agricultural settlement failed and the HBC became dependent on the Métis for its basic food supply.[xvi]

At this time the French-speaking Métis began to develop their economic independence. They began trading with St. Paul in the United States, which was impinging on the HBC's trade and profit. In 1844, only 6 carts of furs were traded by Métis with St. Paul, but by 1869, the trade had grown to 2,500 carts delivering furs to the US.[xvii] Author Don Maclean writes that the years 1850 to 1870 were the high point of the Métis

free trade movement which "established the Métis as a new and dynamic group in the West and laid the foundations of the Métis nation."[xviii]

At the height of Métis free trade, federal surveyors arrived in Red River in 1869, trespassing on Métis land. The English Métis were also concerned when they learned the Canadian government had appointed a governor over their territory. The Métis formed the National Committee of the Métis, seized Fort Garry and set up a provisional government led by Louis Riel on November 24, 1869. Although the new governor McDougall issued an edict on December 1, 1869 claiming the territory for Canada, the democratically-elected government of Red River drew up a Bill of Rights, asking for provincial status and responsible government. On December 8 the Métis declared themselves the provincial government and two days later flew the Métis flag above Fort Garry (at the time, a golden fleur-de-lis on a white background).[xix]

Thomas Scott, an Irish Orangeman who was part of the Canadian Party, planned to overthrow the provisional government but was captured and later executed by Riel. This led to the federal government sending an ambassador to Fort Garry to negotiate with the Métis, and use the Bill of Rights as the basis of *The Manitoba Act* (passed May 12, 1870). The federal government incorporated all the demands in the Bill of Rights except

for one: no amnesty for Riel or members of the provisional government. *The Manitoba Act* specified Métis rights, protected their language and provided for 1.4 million acres of land for the Métis.[xx]

The troops that arrived with the newly appointed Lt. Governor planned to capture Fort Garry and kill Riel to avenge for the death of Scott. Riel escaped to Montana where he became a school teacher at a Catholic mission. Although Métis rights were guaranteed by *The Manitoba Act*, the troops mistreated and persecuted many of the Métis. Each Métis received scrip for either $160 or 160 acres of land but unscrupulous speculators were eager to obtain this scrip and many bought it from the Métis for a fraction of its face value.[xxi]

THE MÉTIS MOVE WEST

The loss of their land through the sale of scrip and the harsh treatment by the soldiers led to the first exodus of Métis to the west in Red River carts into present day Saskatchewan and Alberta. The most important Métis settlements were located along the South Saskatchewan River at St. Laurent, St. Antoine-de-Padoue (Batoche), St. Louis and Duck Lake. The Métis built their homes on long narrow strips leading from the river, in the

French tradition, to allow each settler access to the river for transportation and water for domestic use. Most Métis families only grew small gardens and feed for livestock while buffalo were still plentiful.

Red River carts in 1857

Gabriel Dumont was an important Métis leader who arrived in the St. Laurent area with his wife Madelaine in 1870. He was born near Red River in 1837, the third child of Isidore Dumont and Louise Laframboise. Dumont was known as a great buffalo hunter of the plains, a fierce warrior but also a diplomat, responsible for making peace treaties with the Sioux and Blackfoot Indians. He spoke French and six Indian languages fluently. Largely because of Dumont's influence, many Métis from Red River moved to the St. Laurent area. In the tradition of great native hunters, he became a member of the Society of the Generous Ones which ensured that the aged, sick and disabled in their community received a share of the buffalo hunt every year.

On December 31, 1871 in the winter camp of the Métis, an important council of Métis elders met to discuss declining buffalo herds and to elect a permanent council to govern the village of St. Laurent. Concerned

that the loss of buffalo was impacting their way of life, they agreed that Métis should settle on river front lots and take up farming as a means of survival.

At the meeting Lawrence Clarke, the Chief Factor of the HBC at Fort Carlton, spoke about how the Métis could earn money as freighters and cart men for the HBC and use their earnings to buy equipment for their transition into farming. Author McLean wrote, "Clearly, Clarke was applying to the Métis labour force at Fort Carlton the process that had proven so successful for the HBC at Red River. Clarke was using the Métis surplus population to drive down wages as more and more people had to compete for scarce jobs. His plan was eventually to replace two-thirds of the HBC's northern permanent work force with temporary, or contractual, Métis labour."[xxii]

By 1875, the HBC was paying the Métis workforce in goods rather than cash. This kept the Métis as a captive labour force for the company since the lack of capital prevented them from moving into agriculture. Métis workers were forbidden by law to strike and were therefore unable to demand wages in cash, which might have been spent elsewhere, giving them some degree of independence from the HBC.

With fewer buffalo left, the Métis of St. Laurent felt it necessary to stabilize the supply of pemmican. On December 10, 1873, they developed a written document

reflecting the democratic traditions of the Métis setting out civil rules of conduct and rules for the hunting of buffalo. Their goal was to preserve and fairly distribute buffalo meat to avoid the famine which was inflicting large populations of Indian people. The "Laws of St. Laurent," as they were called, established fines and punishment for breaching the rules. Gabriel Dumont was unanimously elected president of the council to administer the laws.

Clarke, who was Canadian magistrate for the Northwest Territories, wanted a police force and laws that would supersede the Laws of St. Laurent. Clarke wanted to obtain control of the dwindling supply of pemmican which fed his men during long winter months. By January 1874, the Métis refused to sell pemmican to the HBC because they needed it to feed their families.

In the spring of 1875, a small group of Indian and Métis illegally left to hunt buffalo in advance of annual Métis hunting party. Dumont and others arrested and fined the members of the group. An HBC employee reported this event to Clarke, who wrote to the Lt. Governor of the Territories exaggerating the situation in order to argue for a police force for Fort Carlton. Colonel French was dispatched with 50 men to investigate the situation. Dumont was arrested and tried by Clarke as magistrate. Because Clarke was lenient with

Dumont, he earned the confidence of the Métis community who was unaware of Clarke's role as an agent provocateur.

A permanent police force was established at Fort Carlton, and soon British law trumped Métis law. The Métis lost control of the buffalo hunt and Clarke soon was hiring hunters to kill buffalo for sale to the HBC. The HBC also increased its profits as the main supplier for the new police detachment. The rapid slaughter of buffalo on the prairies that ensued had a severe impact on Indian and Métis families.

The government also wanted a police force to help force Chiefs Starblanket, Mistawasis and Big Bear to sign Treaty 6 so that the Canadian West could be opened for settlement. Treaty 6 was negotiated in 1876, but Chief Big Bear did not sign until many years later.

By 1875 speculators were moving to the Prince Albert area and speculating in lands occupied by the Métis. Most of the people moving to Prince Albert between 1875 and 1880 were speculators, not settlers. By 1881 government crews had surveyed more than 16 million acres of land in the west. The Conservative government planned to finance much of the CPR railway from profits it hoped to earn from colonization companies.[xxiii]

Many of the land speculators were government functionaries and allies of the Tory government, and included men who had earned a fortune dealing in Métis scrip in Manitoba. All were betting on plans that the CPR would build railway through Prince Albert and that their land would become valuable. The rail line was to go from Winnipeg through Prince Albert, onto Edmonton (the Carleton Trail) and then to the west coast through mountain valleys.

PETITIONS FALL ON DEAF EARS

During this period, the Métis tried to gain recognition of their land title and establish their rights as a community through numerous petitions to the government, all of which fell on deaf ears. On May 17, 1878 the Métis petitioned government asking for a grant of $5 per pupil to establish schools, for title to lands they occupied and capital for farm machinery. The government ignored their petition. The government also ignored a petition from Prince Albert sent in 1880, requesting a commission to investigate Métis land claims and compensate people whose lands were given to the CPR.

On September 4, 1882 the Métis of St. Antoine-de-Padoue sent a petition directly to Sir John A.

Macdonald, signed by Gabriel Dumont and 46 other Métis, asking that the land survey recognize their river lot system, and to waive the cost of $2 an acre which they could not afford to pay. The Department of the Interior denied the requests.

Local government officials, including the land agent in Prince Albert and Father André, a prominent local Catholic priest, wrote to Ottawa to support the Métis petitions and request that river lot surveys be done for the Métis. Again, the federal government rejected the requests.

By the end of 1882, the Métis were becoming desperate. All around them English-speaking neighbours were receiving title to their lands while their own petitions failed to get any response. They thought they were being persecuted because of their language and religion, when in fact, the land had been granted to the Prince Albert Colonization Company whose Tory owners had no intention of settling the land with farmers, Métis or otherwise.

Then in 1881 the CPR Syndicate unilaterally decided to run the railway across the southern prairie to enhance their profits and interests. This meant additional costs for the government for new land surveys and exploration of more difficult mountain passes. The additional costs drained the coffers and took funds away from aid that was going to Indian bands to help them in the transition from buffalo hunters to farmers.[xxiv]

THE ARRIVAL OF RIEL AND THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Louis Riel

In May of 1884 the Métis and leaders of the Popular Movement drew up a letter asking Louis Riel to come to Batoche to help them petition for their land claims. They hoped that Riel would be more successful in negotiating with the federal government. Gabriel Dumont, Moise Ouellette, Michel Dumas and James Isbister went to Montana in the summer of 1884 to bring Riel to Batoche.

Meanwhile Clarke continued to play the role of an instigator, writing alarming letters to the Department of the Interior asking for "repressive measures" against the Métis. Clarke at the same time pretended to side with the Métis and support Riel's return. Shortly after Riel's arrival in St. Laurent, Riel was having dinner at the home of William Jackson in Prince Albert. Clarke came to the door, and asked, "How is the movement coming on? Here is $20 for Riel's keep. Bring on your rebellion as soon as you can. It will be the making of this country."[xxv]

Bill of Rights – Métis of NWT (1885)

(a) That the half-breeds of the North-West Territories be given grants similar to those accorded to the half-breeds of Manitoba by the Act of 1870.

(b) That patents be issued to all half-breeds and white settlers who have fairly earned the right of possession to their farms; that the timber regulations be made more liberal; and the settler be treated as having rights in the country.

(c) That the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan be forthwith organized with legislatures of their own, so that the people may be no longer subject to the despotism of Mr. Dewdney; and, in the new provincial legislatures, that the Métis shall have a fair and reasonable share of representation.

(d) That the offices of trust throughout these provinces be given to residents of the country, as far as practicable, and that we denounce the appointment of disreputable outsiders and repudiate their authority.

(e) That this region be administered for the benefit of the actual settler, and not for the advantage of the alien speculator; and that all lawful customs and usages which obtain among the Métis be respected.

(f) That better provision be made for the Indians, the Parliamentary grant to be increased, and lands set apart as an endowment for the establishment of hospitals and schools for the use of white, half-breeds, and Indians, at such places as the provincial legislatures may determine.

(g) That the Land Department of the Dominion Government be administered as far as practicable from Winnipeg, so that settlers may not be compelled, as heretofore, to go to Ottawa for the settlement of questions in dispute between them and the land commissioner."

Calvin Racette. Conflicting Plans: Métis Development and the Canadian West. Gabriel Dumont Institute. Produced for Saskatchewan Education. 1985.

In the summer of 1884 the police force at Fort Carlton was strengthened by 200 men. Rumours began circulating that the police would attempt to capture Riel. Meanwhile, the CPR was facing bankruptcy creating a major political and economic crisis for Macdonald.

By the end of 1884, Riel realized that Ottawa would never enter into serious negotiations with him on Métis land claims or responsible government in the Northwest. Riel began to draft a Bill of Rights – a document requesting that the federal government make the NWT a province and guarantee Métis rights. Father André convinced the Métis to select Lawrence Clarke to take their petition and Bill of Rights directly to Ottawa. They agreed and Clarke left in February of 1885.

In March of 1885, rumours began circulating that the Métis were expecting a shipment of arms and ammunition from the United States. Major Crozier reported a possible Métis rebellion, and 100 police reinforcements were sent to Fort Carlton.

Clarke returned from Ottawa on March 18, 1885, and while travelling from Qu'Appelle to Fort Carlton, he met a group of Métis who asked about the government's reply to their Bill of Rights. Clarke replied that the only answer from the government would be bullets and that he had just passed a camp of 500 police on their way to capture the "Métis agitators."[xxvi]

Clarke's message was false (there were no troops on the way) and he set in motion the events that led to the military confrontation at Batoche. The Métis immediately rallied to defend themselves and began collecting all arms and ammunition they could find in the area. Major Crozier sent a telegram to Dewdney pleading for the immediate settlement of Métis land claims, which was ignored.

THE NORTHWEST RESISTANCE OF 1885

The first shot fired at Batoche

The Métis elected a provisional government and placed Gabriel Dumont in command of military action with Joseph Delorme and Patrice Tourond as his assistants.

On March 26 the Métis clashed with police forces at Duck Lake. The battle lasted half an hour, leaving five Métis, three police and nine police volunteers dead. News of the Métis victory spread to Regina and Ottawa. Shortly after, on April 2, a group of Cree men from Big

Bear's band killed Indian agents and priests at Frog Lake because they were withholding food rations despite Big Bear's attempts to prevent this. They also took Fort Pitt, a Hudson Bay post. The "Frog Lake massacre" created widespread fear of an "Indian uprising" and the Métis lost any support they would have had from European settlers.[xxvii]

The government recruited 5,000 troops and shipped them to Winnipeg, from which they marched to Batoche under the command of British General Middleton. At Clark's Crossing, Middleton separated his troops into two columns, sending one across to the west side of the river while Middleton led a column up the east side of the river to Batoche.

The first battle took place at Tourond's Coulee near Fish Creek on April 24. About 150 Métis and Indian men ambushed Middleton's army and forced them to retreat. Dumont was injured when a bullet grazed his scalp but he continued to fight. The Métis forces lost four men: two Sioux and two Métis.

Middleton's army did not move forward again for almost two weeks. The troops camped near Gabriel Dumont's homestead and looted his home and set buildings on fire. Some of Dumont's belongings, including a billiard table, were taken onto the steamship, the Northcote.

Middleton planned to attack Batoche simultaneously by land and by river by transporting troops on the Northcote steamship. The Métis, however, were prepared for the Northcote with men on both sides of the river who fired as the boat approached Batoche. Dumont ordered his men to lower the ferry cable to capsize the ship, but the cable was not lowered fast enough and it clipped only the smoke stacks which crashed onto the deck. This disabled the boat and it drifted up the river to St. Laurent.

The Northcote had arrived ahead of Middleton's troops, and once the ship was disabled, the Métis fighters were able to re-position themselves for the approaching army. The battle lasted for three days, leaving a total of 22 Métis and Indians dead, and many wounded. Many of the buildings and homes in Batoche were severely damaged or destroyed. Riel surrended to Middleton, and was tried and later hanged in Regina on November 16, 1885. Dumont and Michel Dumas fled to Montana.

McLean opines that the 'rebellion' may have been fostered by the federal government, using Clarke as an agent provocateur, to make it politically possible to get further funding for the bankrupt CPR. After the war was over, Prime Minister Macdonald had little difficulty obtaining public funds to save the rail company.[xxviii]

After the war many of the Métis dispersed to Alberta or other parts of Saskatchewan. Many had lost their homes and had their belongings and livestock looted by the soldiers. Some families remained in Batoche, such as the merchant families of Letendre and Caron. Some of the displaced Métis families lived on sections of government land and were referred to as the "Road Allowance" people.

Dumont returned to the Batoche area in 1893 and eventually received title to his land. He died in 1906 and is buried at Batoche.

The struggle for Métis land title and rights continued for decades.

---

i Dawn Dickinson and Dennis Baresco, P*rairie River: A Canoe and Wildlife Viewing Guide to the South Saskatchewan River.* Society of Grasslands Naturalists, The Federation of Alberta Naturalists. Edmonton. 2003, p.8.
ii Ibid.
iii Gordon E. Tolton. P*rairie Warships: River Navigation in the Northwest Rebellion*. Vancouver. 2007. Pp 137-138.
iv Walter Hildebrandt. *The Battle of Batoche.* Environment Canada – Parks. Ottawa. 1985. P. 29.
v Calvin Racette. *Flags of the Métis.* Gabriel Dumont Institute. Regina. 1987., p. 23.
vi Ibid., p. 110.
vii Michael Barnholden (translator). *Gabriel Dumont Speaks.* Talon Books. Vancouver. 1993. p.8.
viii Ibid.
ix Calvin Racette. *Flags of the Métis*., p. 29.
x Ibid..
xi Ibid., p. 6.
xii Don McLean. *Home from the Hill: A History of the Métis in Western Canada. G*abriel Dumont Institute. Regina. 1987, p.28.
xiii Ibid., p.29.
xiv Ibid., p. 36.
xv Ibid., p.37. "Halfbreed" was the term used for English-speaking people with European and native blood.
xvi Ibid., p.50.
xvii Ibid., pp.66-67.
xviii Ibid., p. 67.
xix Ibid., pp. 84-91
xx Ibid., pp.94-105.
xxi Ibid., p107
xxii Ibid., p. 116.
xxiii Ibid., pp 134-139
xxiv Ibid., pp. 153-157.
xxv Ibid., p. 174.
xxvi Ibid., p. 197.
xxvii Ibid., p. 211.
xxviii Ibid., pp. 228-229.

CUPE Saskatchewan

Research and writing: Cheryl Stadnichuk
Photos and archives research: Erin Morrison
Special thanks to the CUPE Saskatchewan Aboriginal Council for input and advice.

CUPE Saskatchewan
3725 E Eastgate Drive
Regina, SK S4Z 1A5
www.cupe.sk.ca
cupesask@sasktel.net

CUPE / Canadian Union of Public Employees

Printed on 100% Post-consumer paper