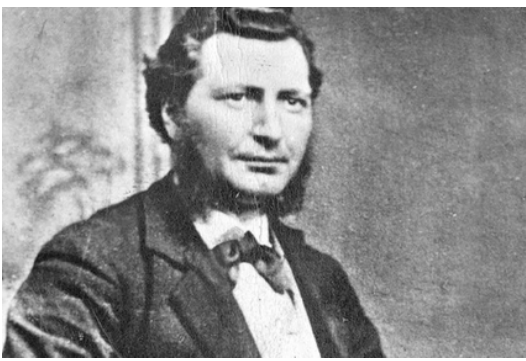


A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 1885 NORTH-WEST REBELLION

The North-West Rebellion was a fight against the Canadian government for the rights of Metis people.

1884 - THE RETURN OF LOUIS RIEL

Riel was brought back to Canada by Dumont. When back, he persuaded the unhappy people in the North-West to come together and press their case to the prime minister, John A. Macdonald as him and his government had not addressed the Metis peoples complaints. Riel formed a provisional government and made himself the president.



APRIL 24, 1885 - THE BATTLE OF FISH CREEK

About 900 men started the march to Batoche, led by Middleton. They were split into two groups, one for either side of the river. Scouts reported back to Riel and Dumont. Riel wanted to wait to attack but Dumont knew the soldiers outnumbered them and had better weapons so he wanted to ambush them to slow the troops down. Dumont won and on April 26, 150 Metis and First Nations people opened fire on the soldiers. Six soldiers died and forty-nine were injured. Only four Metis and First Nations people were killed. The Metis didn't back down and Middleton ordered the advance to stop.

MAY 12, 1870 - THE MANITOBA ACT

Because of the strength of Metis and Quebec support, Manitoba was established as basically a Metis province. 1,400,000 acres of land were set aside for the Metis people and Manitoba received four seats in federal government. However, many of the promised benefits were short-lived. The Metis didn't receive land for three years, white settlers arrived and 1,500 troops moved in. Following this, many Metis people migrated to the area of Batoche in hopes to maintain their traditional lifestyle.



MARCH 26, 1885 - THE BATTLE OF DUCK LAKE

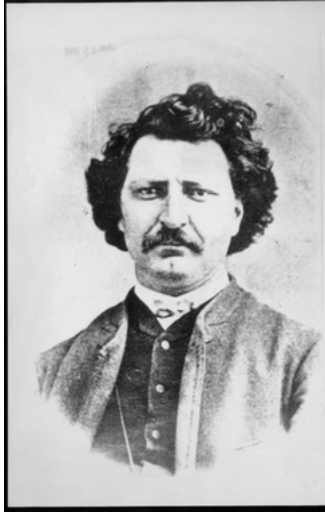
100 mounted police and armed citizen volunteers moved towards Duck Lake under the command of Superintendent Lief Crozier. A group of Metis and First Nations people met them on Carlton Trail. They tried to negotiate but it only ended in confusion. Mounties and citizens shot at the Metis and First Nations fighters so they shot back. This resulted in the death of 9 volunteers, 3 Mounties, 5 Metis people and 1 First Nations person. Many others were injured.





JULY 2, 1885 - THE SURRENDER OF BIG BEAR

After Big Bear's followers left, Big Bear and others fled to the woods to avoid capture. By the end of June, Big Bear was out of food and ammunition. On July 2, he surrendered to the North-West Mounted Police. Big Bear was charged and convicted of high treason. He was sentenced to three years in Stony Mountain Penitentiary but was released after two years. He died shortly after being released.



MAY 9-12, 1885 - THE BATTLE OF BATOCHÉ

On May 9, 1885, Middleton led about 900 militia groups in an attack against about 300 Metis, Cree and Dakota fighters. On May 12, some of Middleton's impatient men led an attack on the Metis, Cree and Dakota. Because they had run out of ammunition, the village of Batoche was captured. Twenty-five plus men from both sides died.



NOVEMBER 16, 1885 - THE HANGING OF LOUIS RIEL

Louis Riel was charged with high treason for leading the Northwestern Rebellion. His lawyers tried to argue for a plea of insanity saying he had been institutionalized twice in Quebec but Riel thought having people think he was insane would be a disgrace. He argued he was sane. The jury found Riel guilty but asked the judge to have mercy and not give him the death penalty. The judge, The Honorable Hugh Richardson, however did not listen to the jury's advice and sentenced Riel to death by hanging. On November 16, 1885, Louis Riel was killed.

Today, Riel can be thought of as a father of confederation. Canadian senators are fighting to have Louis Riel exonerated. On the third Monday of February, Manitoba celebrates Louis Riel Day to honor the man who fought so hard for Metis rights.

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