

Chapter 4 -The Northwest to 1870-



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Hudson's Bay Company



- Founded in 1670 following the journey of **Pierre Radisson** and **Medart de Groseillier's** journey beyond New France.

- Radisson & Groseillier were the first to propose a trading company to reach the interior of the continent via Hudson Bay.
- After failing to obtain French support on their terms, they went to England in 1665 and interested Prince Rupert, cousin of Charles II.



-The Northwest to 1870-

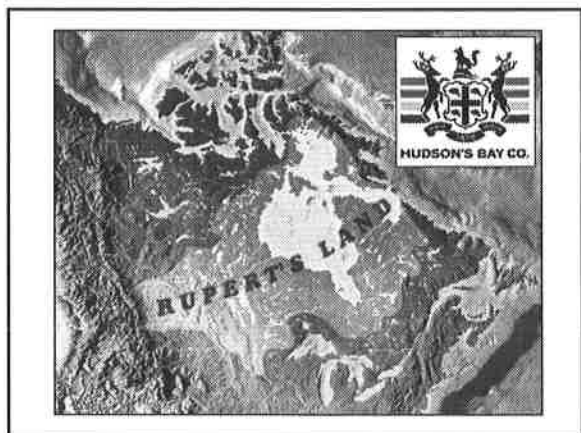


- Rupert persuaded the king and some merchants and noblemen to back the venture.
- The HBC received a royal charter, proclaimed on 2 May 1670.



Radisson & Groseillier

- The charter gave the HBC exclusive trading rights over a vast area.
- This vast area included all lands drained by rivers flowing into Hudson Bay.



-The Northwest to 1870-

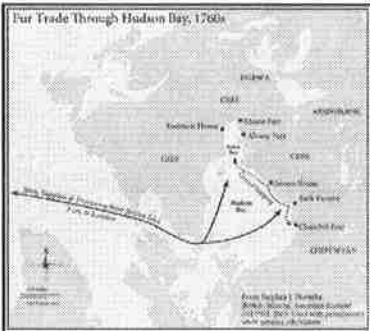



Prince Rupert
for whom Rupert's Land
was named.



- HBC built trading posts at mouths of rivers emptying into Hudson Bay.
- Assiniboin, Cree, and Ojibwa trappers were encouraged to bring furs to trading posts.
- Practiced "*Stay by the Bay*" policy for the next century.

-The Northwest to 1870-





- The company directors ran the business from London, England.

--The Northwest to 1870--



- The HBC had a rigid hierarchy.
- Bosses at the trading posts were called "factors".
- Factors, clerks and labourers were British.
- All employees were salaried.
- **Strict rules**
 - Little room for bargaining.
 - No trading furs for liquor.
 - Marriage was forbidden.



York Factory

--The Northwest to 1870--



After the Fall of New France

At the conclusion of the Seven Years War, in Montreal on September 8, 1760, the British guaranteed the people of New France:



- Immunity from deportation or maltreatment;
- The right to depart for France with all their possessions;
- Continued enjoyment of property rights;
- Freedom of worship; and
- **The right to carry on the fur trade on an equal basis with the English.**

--The Northwest to 1870--

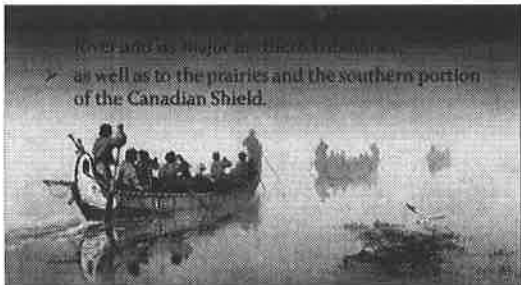
Two commercial fur trade systems dominated the northern half of the continent:

- **The Rupert's Land system, which theoretically covered the whole region draining into Hudson and James bays, and ...**



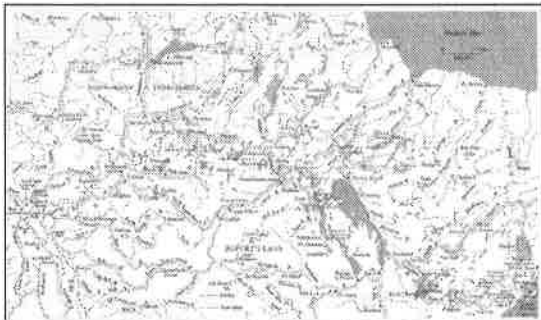
-The Northwest to 1870-

- The St Lawrence-Great Lakes system, based at Montréal



-The Northwest to 1870-

- Fur trade routes.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The St Lawrence-Great Lakes system, developed by the French, was dominated by many small partnerships.

- Trade was conducted by parties of a few men sent out to do business with the Indians in their own territory.



-The Northwest to 1870-

Formation of the North West Company

Anglo-Americans (Loyalists), English and Highland Scots merchants took over from the Canadian bourgeois and the agents of French merchants at Montréal.

- In 1776, these traders pooled resources to reduce competition among themselves and to resist inland advances of the Hudson's Bay Company.
- By 1783, these alliances led to the creation of an organization called the North West Company.

North West Company
Coat of Arms

-The Northwest to 1870-

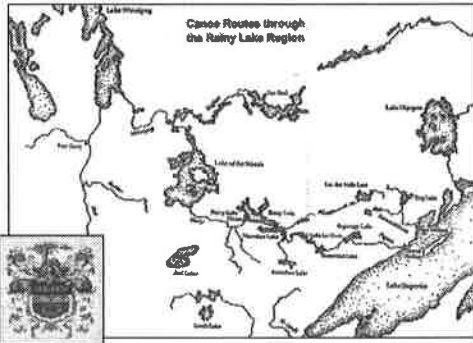
The North West Company (NWC) built their posts inland for geographical reasons.

- NWC furs had to be shipped to England from Montréal.
- Montreal was too far for natives to travel.
- A major trade depot was established at Fort William.

-The Northwest to 1870-

- In spring, trade goods were shipped from England to Fort William.
- From there, NWC employees transported goods to the inland posts.
- In summer, furs were transported to Fort William to be shipped to England.

-The Northwest to 1870-



-The Northwest to 1870-

The NWC was a vigorous, aggressive operation, based on partnerships.

- Montréal partners bought trade goods from England and arranged for fur pelts to be shipped to England.
- The *hivernants*, or wintering partners, lived in the Northwest and did the actual fur trading.

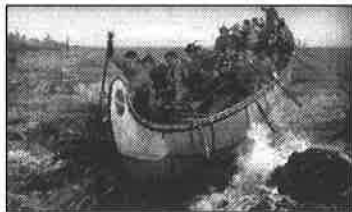


- The *hivernants* were partners in the NWC, so they shared company profits.

-The Northwest to 1870-





- The NWC employed *voyageurs* who moved cargo by canoe - throughout the northwest, and - between Fort William and Montréal.




-The Northwest to 1870-


- The NWC also employed explorers who
 - travelled and mapped new territories, and
 - established new trading posts.



Alexander Mackenzie





Simon Fraser



David Thompson
(Started with HBC)

-The Northwest to 1870-

- The NWC had a less rigid hierarchy than the HBC and was "**bullish.**"
- Trading standards were more relaxed than the HBC.
 - Bargaining over the price of furs was permitted.
 - Alcohol was traded for furs.
- Marriage was encouraged.
- By 1800, the network of NWC trading posts as far west as BC and north to Great Slave Lake.



-The Northwest to 1870-

Intense rivalry soon escalated between the two fur trading companies.



Hudson's Bay Co.

**-The Northwest to 1870-
Canoes, Boats, and the Portage**

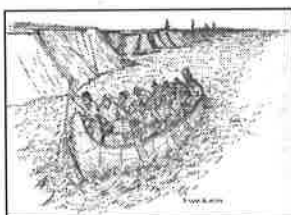
In the Northwest, the NWC relied on canoes to move goods. These canoes were made of birchbark stretched over a wood frame.



**-The Northwest to 1870-
Canoes, Boats, and the Portage**

Canot de Maitre:

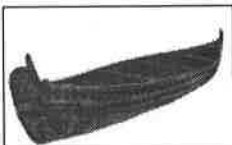
- 11 metres long and a 1.5 metres wide,
- Carried about 4000 kg of cargo, and
- Paddled by crew of 12, and
- For the journey from Fort William to Montréal.



**-The Northwest to 1870-
Canoes, Boats, and the Portage**

Canot du Nord:

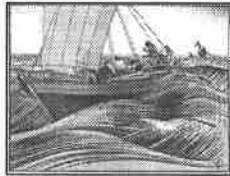
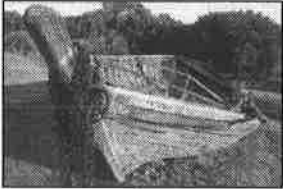
- 7 metres long and a metre wide,
- Carried about 1500 kg of cargo, and
- Paddled by crew of 6.



**-The Northwest to 1870-
Canoes, Boats, and the Portage**

The HBC developed the York Boat.

- It was about 13 metres long,
- Could be rowed or sailed by a crew of 6 to 8,
- Could carry a cargo of 3000 - 6000 kg.
- Shortcoming: Difficult to portage.



-The Northwest to 1870-

**Canoes, Boats, and
the Portage**

To get from one river system to another, or if waters were not navigable, voyageurs would have to portage.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Métis

As the North West Company pushed westward, the hivernants were forced to winter in their trading areas.

- Fur traders married daughters of Native families.
- Such marriages were encouraged by the NWC and the Native peoples.



Letitia Bird, a Cree of mixed ancestry, 1858.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Métis

- The NWC thought such marriages would ensure trading loyalty.
- The Native elders thought it advantageous to have daughters marry fur traders.
- Wives of fur traders generally enjoyed an improved standard of living.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Métis

- By 1800, there were about 4000 hivernants and voyageurs living in the Northwest.



- By the early 19th century, a significant number of people in the Northwest were of European-Native ancestry.
- As they married among themselves, a new culture evolved: the Métis.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Country-Born




John Norquay
(May 8, 1841 - July 5, 1899)
was the Premier of Manitoba of mixed English and native ancestry from 1878 to 1887.

- The HBC, not wanting to support dependents, forbade marriages and tried to enforce a policy of *celebracy*.
- This policy failed and cross-cultural marriages occurred.
- People with Native and Scottish or English ancestry preferred the term "country-born".



-The Northwest to 1870-
The Métis

- The Métis usually spoke French and Algonkian, or a dialect that combined the two languages.
- Most were Roman Catholic.
- By 1810, many Métis lived near the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers in the Red River Valley.


A map of Canada with an inset map of the Red River Valley region. The inset map shows the Red River and Assiniboine River meeting at their junction, with the Red River Valley labeled. It also shows the locations of Fort York, Fort Assiniboine, and Fort Elgin.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Métis

- The Métis farms were laid out along the river banks in the traditional French seigneurial pattern.
- The bison hunt was a seasonal event.
- The hunt was extremely dangerous.

An aerial photograph showing a grid-like pattern of rectangular fields along a riverbank, representing the traditional French seigneurial farm layout.A black and white illustration of a bison hunt in progress, showing hunters on horseback and a bison being pursued.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Métis

A detailed illustration of various items used by the Métis, including a bison, a tipi, a horse, a rifle, a bow, arrows, a basket, and various tools and clothing items.

**-The Northwest to 1870-
The Métis**

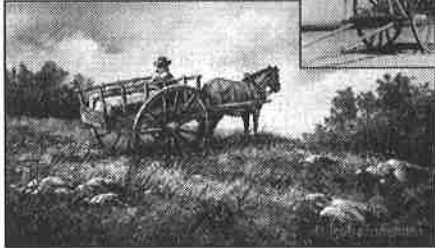


- Bison was also used to make **pemmican**, a dried meat, pounded into coarse powder and mixed with an equal amount of melted fat, and occasionally saskatoon berries or other edibles.



**-The Northwest to 1870-
The Métis**

- The Métis used **Red River Carts** for the bison hunt and farming.



**-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Colony**

- In 1812, the actions of one man, Thomas Douglas, the Fifth Earl of Selkirk, profoundly affected
 - the fortunes of the Métis, and
 - the rivalry of the HBC and the NWC.



Lord Selkirk

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Colony



Evicted Highland Crofter

In Scotland, large landowners had "enclosed" their farmland.

- Wool was more profitable than rent from tenant farmers, or "crofters."
- Enclosure meant crofters were evicted from the land in favour of sheep-grazing.
- Crofters had two choices:
 - work in Glasgow factories, or
 - emigrate to British North America and be farmers.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Colony

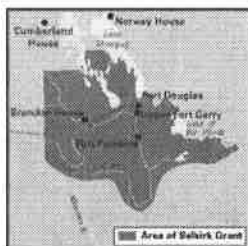
Lord Selkirk, a liberal democrat, was concerned about the plight of the crofters.

- He was also an HBC director.
- Shipping food from England to feed HBC employees was costly.
- Selkirk thought he could solve the problems of the crofters and the HBC by establishing a farming colony in the Red River Valley.



-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Colony

- In 1811, Lord Selkirk convinced the HBC to give him about 300 000 square kilometres to establish a colony.



- This land was called "Selkirk's Grant."

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- From the outset the Nor'Westers (NWC) attempted to block the establishment of the colony.
 - They saw it as a threat to the fur trade.
 - The colony lay astride the major rivers that linked the fur country to the plains where *pemmican*, the staple of their diet, was procured.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- A more ominous threat: the Nor'Westers' believed that the colony was part of a coordinated plan organized by Selkirk and the HBC to establish a presence in the Athabasca country, the most important source of the NWC's profits.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- Led by Miles Macdonell, Selkirk's appointed governor, the first colonists arrived in August of 1812.
- They wintered at the NWC post of Fort Pembina.
- Crops did not survive the first year; a new party of colonists arrived in 1814.



- In 1814, fearing that the colonists would run out of food, Macdonell issued the **Pemmican Proclamation**.
 - The sale and export of pemmican from the Red River was banned.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- The Métis were infuriated by Pemmican Proclamation.
- Macdonell further antagonized the NWC and Métis by ordering all NWC employees to vacate the Red River Valley.
- Duncan Cameron, the NWC Chief Trader led retaliation.
 - Colonists harassed and convinced to leave in 1815.
 - Macdonell was arrested and taken to Fort William for trial.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- By the end of the summer of 1815, Colin Robertson led the colonists back to the settlement.
- In the fall of 1815, Robert Semple, the new governor of the colony, arrived with 84 settlers.
- Semple conflicted with Robertson, who called him "Mr. Simple." Robertson found Semple to be too contemptuous of the Métis.
- In March 1816, Semple captured and destroyed Fort Gibraltar, the NWC post at Red River.



Robert Semple

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- The HBC's Fort Douglas now dominated the Red River.



- NWC canoe brigades were exposed, just as pemmican supplies were being moved down the Assiniboine to meet the Nor'Westers returning from Fort William.
- The HBC denied passage both to the Nor'Westers and the provision boats of their Métis allies.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- In retaliation, Brandon House, a HBC post on the upper Assiniboine, was captured by the Métis on June 1, 1816 under Cuthbert Grant.

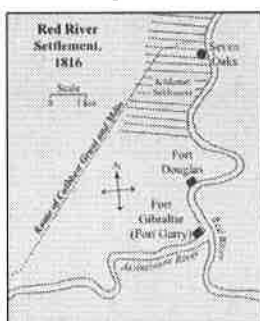


Cuthbert Grant

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- Cuthbert Grant and his men travelled northeast across the plain to intercept the Nor'Westers on the Red River.
- But they were intercepted by Robert Semple, who with 28 men, had unwisely ventured out of Fort Douglas.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- The Métis quickly enveloped Semple's party and he and 20 of his men were killed. The Métis suffered only one casualty.



- This skirmish became known as the "Battle of Seven Oaks."

Painting by C. W. Jefferys

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Colony

- In retaliation, Selkirk captured the Nor'Westers' primary base at Fort William and reoccupied Fort Douglas.
- Law suits and countersuits ensued. Only Selkirk's death in 1820 cleared the way for an end to the rivalry between the HBC and NWC.
- The Métis came to see the Red River area as a place of settlement and for several decades were a permanent element in the colony.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The HBC & NWC Merger

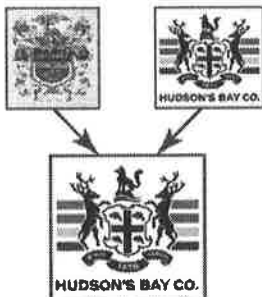
Both companies were suffering financially because of the rivalry, violence and resource depletion.



The British government demanded that the competing fur companies resolve their differences.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The HBC & NWC Merger

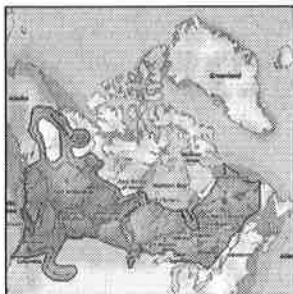


In 1821, a parliamentary Act granted exclusive trade to a coalition of the HBC and NWC.

- A new company was formed called the **Hudson's Bay Company** with 100 shares.
- The NWC partners controlled 55 shares and HBC directors controlled 45 shares.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The HBC & NWC Merger

- By 1825, the NWC Montreal fur partners had sold their shares to the HBC.
- British parliament gave the new company control over Rupert's Land and extended the trading monopoly of the old HBC.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The HBC & NWC Merger



George Simpson was appointed new head of the HBC.

- He was a "hands-on" manager - would not sit behind a desk.
- Described as dynamic and autocratic, he would arrive at trading posts unannounced.
- He was called the "Little Emperor" by HBC employees.

-The Northwest to 1870-

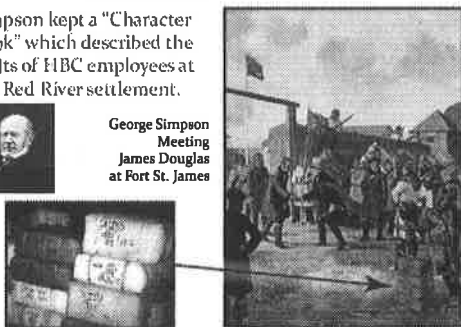
The HBC & NWC Merger

- Simpson kept a "Character Book" which described the faults of HBC employees at the Red River settlement.



George Simpson Meeting James Douglas at Fort St. James

Fur Bales



-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870



Upper Fort Garry

After 1821, the economy of the Red River Settlement was built around the needs of the Hudson's Bay Company.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

The Red River Settlement

- Experienced 40 years of relative peace.
- In 1821, the population was 50% Métis and Country-Born and 50% European.
 - By 1860, more than 80% of the population was of mixed descent.
- Had high birthrates; families often had more than ten children.



-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

Farming

- The Scottish settlers grew crops to provide food for the HBC trading posts throughout the Northwest.
- The Métis grew crops, but contributed to the settlement mostly through the bison hunt.
 - Supplied pemmican to the HBC, and
 - Buffalo robes to the community.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

The Métis versus the HBC

- It was illegal for anyone to trade fur or goods in the Red River Settlement.



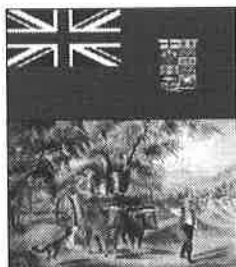
- In the 1840s, the Métis began trading furs.
- In 1849, four Métis were arrested for illegal trading.
- The men were tried and found guilty, but no sentence was ordered.
- The outcome: The HBC monopoly was broken.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

The Decade of the 1860s

- Canada became a *dominion*.
- The HBC was in decline.
- The population in Canada West was increasing rapidly.
 - Most suitable land for agriculture was occupied.
- Many Canadians were looking for new areas to settle.
- The Red River Valley was attractive because of rich soils and small population.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

Most new Canadian settlers to the Red River were Protestant and members of the Orange Order.

- Orange Order was a Protestant fraternal society, founded in 1795 in Ireland to commemorate the victory of William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.



William of Orange

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- The Orange Order was organized into lodges.



- The lodges provided Orangemen aid and organized social events.
- Orangemen who migrated to Britain and the colonies found the lodges useful in their adjustment to new environments.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- In the Canadian colonies, the Orange Order was violently anti-French and anti-Catholic.



- By 1844 the power of the Orange vote induced **John A. Macdonald** to become an Orangeman.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- Members of the Orange Order were prejudiced against the Métis because
 - they were French-speaking,
 - they were Catholic, and
 - they were of mixed ancestry.

- Dr. John Christian Schultz was one of the first Orangemen to arrive in Red River in 1860.



Dr. John
Christian
Schultz

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- Schultz opened a general store and purchased the only newspaper, the *NorWester*.
- He became popular among Canadians by agitating the Métis.
- Formed the Canadian Party, which he hoped would take control of the settlement.



Canadian Party flag flying over Schultz's Store.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

The situation at the Red River Settlement became complex.

- Economic problems: crop failures, bison were disappearing, and the HBC was losing money.
- The Métis had never made a legal claim to their territory, which posed problems for them in the late 1860s.



Métis man, 1858.

-The Northwest to 1870-
The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- The fur trade was in decline.
 - The HBC realized that it would have to diversify its commercial operations.
 - The company also saw that it would have to discontinue administrative duties in Rupert's Land.



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- John A. Macdonald and D'Arcy McGehee advocated strongly for a dominion that stretched from sea to sea.
- Rumours that Canada wanted to purchase Rupert's Land from the HBC circulated in Red River aggravated settlers.
- In November, 1869, the HBC and the Canadian government reached an agreement for the purchase of Rupert's Land.
- Canada doubled in size.
- In exchange, the HBC received £300 000, lands around its trading posts, and about 2.8 million hectares of prairie farmland.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- Long before the Rupert's Land purchase occurred, Canadian surveyors arrived in the Red River area to lay out grids for towns.



Chief factor Donald Smith addressing settlers.

- The surveyors assumed the people living in the Northwest did not own their property.
- They did not acknowledge the seigneurial pattern of farmland that had existed since the 1820s.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870



- The Métis were concerned that the Canadian government was planning to take away their land.

Louis Riel arrived in the Red River settlement at this time.

- He was a literate, well-educated lawyer.
- Fluent in French and English.
- Excellent orator.
- Assumed the leadership of the Métis, as had his father before him.

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

- Riel organized bands of Métis to confront the surveyors.
- He formed the Métis National Committee to address Métis land concerns.
- **William McDougall**, the appointed lieutenant-governor of the newly purchased Rupert's Land in 1869, was confronted by Louis Riel's men and prevented from entering the territory he had come to govern.



William McDougall

-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

The Red River Rebellion

- Riel and his men occupied Fort Garry and seized its munitions.
- Riel set up a **provisional government**, and published the **Métis Charter of Rights and Freedoms**



-The Northwest to 1870-

The Red River Settlement 1821 - 1870

The Red River Rebellion

- The purpose of the provisional government was to
 - maintain order, and
 - negotiate an agreement by which the territory surrounding the Red River Settlement could enter Confederation as the province of Manitoba.

Seeking Sovereignty The Red River Rebellion

- Led by Riel, the Metis demanded several things from the federal government, including:



- the right to enter Confederation as a province
- the right to be represented in Parliament
- the right to have both English and French as official languages in their schools and courts
- the right to control their own local affairs
- the right to maintain their traditional way of life

Seeking Sovereignty The Red River Rebellion

- English-Canadians didn't like the Metis' provisional government, so in the winter of 1869-70, a group of them tried to take control of it.



One of them (Thomas Scott) was captured by the Riel and the Metis, found guilty of conspiracy, and executed

Seeking Sovereignty The Red River Rebellion

- Prime Minister Macdonald was scared of the instability in the region, and was worried that it would leave Canada vulnerable to the United States.
- He negotiated with the Metis and allowed the Red River colony to become part of Canada – as the province of Manitoba – in 1870.
 - He also promised that:
 - They would have an elected assembly
 - English and French would be recognized as official languages
 - The Metis would receive title (official claim) to their lands
 - The Metis would receive additional lands.

Seeking Sovereignty

The Red River Rebellion

- English-Canadians wanted revenge for the execution of Thomas Scott, however, so they demanded that Macdonald do something about it
 - Macdonald sent 1200 troops to Red River to take control of the new province
 - The members of the provisional government went into hiding.
 - Louis Riel flees to the United States
