

THE MÉTIS IN THE 1870S

Social Studies 10 12/03/13

The Manitoba Act: 1870

- The passing of the Manitoba Act was welcomed by the Métis.
 - majority of the population were Métis; felt their rights were protected by the new legislation.
 - The act made French and English the official languages; provided both a Protestant and Roman Catholic education system.
 - 1.4 million acres of land was reserved for Métis farmland.
- The transition from settlement to province was not as smooth as planned.

Red River post Resistance:

- Macdonald ordered troops to the area to maintain peace after the rebellion at Red River.
 - They did NOT act as peace agents.
 - Métis were brutalized: arson, assault, rape, murder
 - The actions were not condoned, but neither they punished (see quote page 166)

Obtaining land title

- To have the title to the land that was reserved for them, the Métis had to have scrip.
 - A piece of paper similar to money.
 - two kinds:
 - *Money scrip*
 - *Land scrip*
 - 160 or 240 (acres/dollars worth)



Problems:

- Surveying was slow. Land not available until 1875.
- Land grants for the children not what expected.
 - Open prairie
 - Far from rivers
 - Distributed by lottery (no control)
- What are some reasons this would be problematic for the Métis?

The Métis Flee Westward

- Problems occurred when land speculators arrived at Red River
 - Buy and sell land for profit.
- Various factors make Métis want to sell quickly (and cheaply)
 - Militia's presence
 - Slow process of land distribution
 - Decreased buffalo
- The speculators sold the scrips for full value to make a profit.

The Métis Flee Westward

- Many Métis began to leave and move westward in the early 1870s.
 - They mainly moved to the Northwest to try and recreate the culture they had enjoyed before in the years prior to 1869.
 - Fort Edmonton
 - Prince Albert
 - Also, south to the Dakota and Montana territories of the US.

The Métis in the Northwest

- The Métis begin to recreate the pattern of establishment they had at Red River.
 - Farms were laid out in the seigneurial system style.
 - Catholic church at the center of the community.
 - Income was drawn from subsistence living, buffalo hunting, and hauling freight for the HBC
- The beginnings of the new start were good and profitable.

The Métis in the Northwest

- 1870' s brought change.
 - The bison began to disappear.
- December 1873 the Métis adopted the “Laws of St. Laurent.”
 - The laws governed all aspects of life in the settlement including the hunt.
 - New hunting rules were strict to conserve the bison as long as possible.

Lawrence Clarke and the Laws...

- Clarke
 - Chief factor at Fort Carlton.
 - He believed the Métis were inferior.
 - Deliberately used his power against them
 - Paid as little as possible
- When NWT formed, He asked the government for a magistrate to enforce law in the Fort Carlton area.
 - He was made the magistrate.
 - He used his powers for the benefit of the HBC.
 - Objections to low pay = imprisonment

The Métis in the Northwest

- The winter of 1874-75 was very difficult for the Métis.
 - No bison = very little to eat.
 - Pemmican was impossible to make this year, = a loss of food, as well as, a loss of income.
- Spring of 1875, a group of Métis began to hunt bison before the official hunt was to begin (breaking laws...)
 - The participants were arrested and fined by Gabriel Dumont, the hunt captain
 - Those arrested appealed to Chief Factor Clarke, and he issued warrants for Dumont's arrest, and others.
 - Undermined Métis Law
 - Seen as a direct attack

What Happened to the Bison?

1. Turn to page 172 to find out 😊
2. Analyze images 5-4, 5-5, and 5-6 answering each question in the caption
 1. Answer question 3 with a partner