

**The Manitoba Act**

- The passing of the Manitoba Act in 1870 was welcomed by the Métis & did the following:
  - Made both English & French the official languages of the province.
  - Provided two education systems; Protestant & Roman Catholic.
  - Rights of the Métis to their existing lands were protected and 566,580 hectares of land were reserved for the Métis to use as farmland.
- Prime Minister Macdonald ordered troops into the area to keep the peace. These militia were from Ontario & many Métis were brutalized from these “peacekeepers”. Macdonald felt the Métis needed to be held down with a strong hand.
- All settlers were given **scrips**, paper similar to money that was used to certify possession of land. The Métis were given both money scrips and land scrips but the process was slow.
- Land speculators in the Red River Valley bought almost all of the land scrips from the Métis for less than their value.
- The militia made life uncomfortable for the Métis, many left the area in the early 1870s. They moved to:
  - Fort Edmonton
  - Land near the junction of the North & South Saskatchewan rivers.
  - Dakota & Montana territories in the US

**The Métis move North & West**

- The Métis recreated their traditional settlement patterns:
  - Farms were laid out in the seigneurial (long and skinny) pattern.
  - The Catholic Church played a central role in the community.
- Their economy was based on:
  - Farming small garden plots.
  - Hunting buffalo.
  - Hauling freight for the HBC.
- By the early 1870s the bison were beginning to disappear due to actions in the USA. The US government slaughtered the bison to force FNs onto reservations.
- December 1873: The Métis adopted the “**Laws of St. Laurent**”. These laws governed all aspects of life in the settlement including the bison hunt.
- **Lawrence Clarke**, an HBC factor, was made a magistrate by the Canadian government. He used these powers to benefit the HBC & to discriminate vs the Métis.
- **Gabriel Dumont**, the Métis leader of St. Laurent, arrested and fined a group of Métis who began hunting before the official start of the hunt. These Métis appealed to Clarke who then issued warrants for Dumont and others.
- The Canadian government admitted that Dumont had acted properly, but they did not stop Clarke from arresting Dumont. Dumont was tried and fined at Fort Carlton, this invalidated the Laws of St. Laurent.
- As the 1870s came to a close the Métis found themselves in a terrible situation. Already struggling to survive, they now lost their right to make their own laws and conserve their livelihood.