

LOUIS RIEL

Louis Riel

Louis Riel was born in the **Red River Colony**, in what is now Manitoba. Riel was the son of a prominent Métis leader and a French Canadian mother. He was educated as a lawyer in Montreal but returned to his home at the age of 24. The Métis are the proud descendants of French Canadian **coureur des bois**, **voyageurs** and native women. Riel formed a provisional government



Sound file:
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to negotiate with the Canadian government and to prevent their officials from displacing the Red River settlement. Their actions, known as the **Red River Rebellion**, led to the creation of the province of Manitoba in 1870. In 1884 Riel was hanged by the government in Ottawa for high treason after organizing the defence of the Métis at Batoche Saskatchewan.

Red River Colony, settlement on the Red and Assiniboine rivers in what is now

The Lyrics

Words and music G. Scott MacLeod.

Louis Riel
Fought for the right of the Metis
Hung for high treason
But a good soul is not beaten

Oh Manitoba
Pockets full of sorrow
Red coat warfare in the
Name of monarchy and colony

Do you know where we come from?
Do you know what your history has
done?

Well you've won by the way of the gun
Don't give that politics shit
Winners always write
Their history

And the losers, lost their words
'neath the veil of democracy

Do you know where we come from?
Do you know what your history has
done?

Louis Riel
Fought for the rights of the Metis
Hung for high treason
But a good soul is not beaten

The truth is out there
Beyond the lies.

Voyageur, an adventurer who journeyed by canoe from Montreal to the interior to trade with Native furs. At the close of the 17th

Manitoba and N Dakota, fd 1812 by the earl of Selkirk. From 1801 Selkirk had sought British support for settlement in the region occupied by the Hudson’s Bay Company, but not until he and his family had gained control of the company in 1810 did his scheme become practical. In 1811 the company granted Selkirk some 300 000 km2 in the Winnipeg Basin, which he called Assiniboia. Under Miles MacDonell, Selkirk’s choice as governor, an advance party was sent from Scotland to Hudson Bay in July 1811, and finally arrived on the Red R on 19 Aug 1812. A second group joined them in Oct. MacDonell established his base near the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers (now downtown Winnipeg) with a subsidiary centre 130 km S at Pembina (N Dak).

J.M. Bumsted, The Canadian Encyclopedia, pp. 1836-1837.

Coureur des bois, itinerant, unlicensed fur traders of NEW FRANCE, known as “wood-runners” to the English on Hudson Bay and “bush-lopers” to the Anglo-Dutch of Albany (NY).

Tom Wein, The Canadian Encyclopedia, p. 526.

century, the term was applied to selected COUREUR DES BOIS, hired by Montreal merchants to arrange and sustain trading alliances with Native bands.

John E. Foster, The Canadian Encyclopedia, p.2269.

Red River Rebellion, (also known as the Red River Resistance), a movement of national self-determination by the Metis of the RED RIVER COLONY in what is now Manitoba, 1869-70.

J.M. Bumsted, The Canadian Encyclopedia, pp. 1837-1838.

Books:

Siggins, Maggie. Riel a Life of Revolution.
Morton W.L., Manitoba.

Questions:

1. How did the Metis become a people?
2. Was Louis Riel a member of Parliament?
3. How was the province of Manitoba formed?