

Thomas Scott: Called a White Rebel of the 1885 Resistance.

Thomas Scott, although a Scottish Canadian, had been married to a Metis woman, the late Sarah Thompson, and was an active advocate for the Metis cause. An Orkneyman, Scott had been employed for fourteen years with the Hudson's Bay Company. He left the service and was employed as a trader for Stobert and Eden, he also farmed at the Ridge, 28 miles from Duck Lake along the trail to Prince Albert. He was considered a leader among the English and Scotts Half-Breeds of the area.

After his arrest one of Middleton's suppliers stole all his cattle and fed them to the troops, his hay and 1,400 bushels of grain were also taken. He and William Henry Jackson became known as the "White rebels of Prince Albert." Scott was active in the March 20, 1885 meeting at Lindsay School and was sent as a delegate to meet with Riel on March 21, 1885. At that time he indicated support for the cause but told Riel that he disapproved of any resort to arms.

Reporters of the day noted that: Thomas Scott, an English half-breed (sic), was one of several white settlers in the Prince Albert district who had supported the constitutional attempts to secure a redress of grievances. Scott, too, had been arrested when he came to Prince Albert (to sell some pork) and he, also, was held without charge from April 3 to May 23 when "he was allowed to depart without ever knowing why he had been imprisoned."¹ As a result, Flinn concluded that the Habeas Corpus Act must be enforced in the west and that the North West Mounted Police should be disbanded and replaced by "garrisons of soldiers who would command the respect of the Indians ..."²

Subsequently Canadian authorities prosecuted Scott and he and Jackson were both charged with treason although at trial it was apparent he had never taken up arms. The only evidence against Scott was one letter to the Metis.

Ridge, 23rd March 1885

To the French Council:

At a meeting held at the Lindsay school to-night, which was largely attended the voice of every man was with you, and we have taken steps which I think, will have a tendency to stop bloodshed and hasten a treaty. We will communicate with you within forty-eight hours after you get this. Notify us of any steps, if any is liable to take place.

Yours respectfully,
Thomas Scott

¹ P.A.M., George A. Flinn Papers. Cited in "Assignment: The 1885 Rebellion" by W. Leland Clark *Manitoba Pageant*, Winter 1978, Volume 23, Number 2. George Flinn was a Minneapolis newspaper reporter working for the *Winnipeg Daily Sun* in 1885.

² Ibid.

Scott was arrested on April 1, 1885 and subsequently acquitted at trial on August 15, 1885. He subsequently applied for Metis scrip for his deceased children.

Scott, Thomas; address: Lindsay, Saskatchewan; heir to his deceased daughter, Emma Finlayson Scott; born: 3 December 1878 at Lindsay, Saskatchewan; died: 23 June, 1879 at Lindsay, Saskatchewan; father: Thomas Scott (Scotsman and deponent); mother: Sarah Thompson (Métis); scrip cert.: form D, no. 173 for \$240.00; claim no. 117

Scott, Thomas; address: Lindsay, Saskatchewan; heir to his deceased son John Thompson Scott; born: 30 May 1880 at La Corne, Saskatchewan; died: 16 January 1881 at Lindsay; father: Thomas Scott (Scotsman and deponent); mother: Sarah Thompson (Métis); scrip cert.: form F, no. 41 for 240 acres; claim no. 118



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