

## Joseph Pierre Dumas, MLA. (1875-1950)

Joseph was born at Neche, North Dakota, the son of Cyrille Dumas<sup>1</sup> (b.1841 at St. Vital), and Charlotte Venne. His father was a Ste. Agathe farmer. In 1897, he settled in Fort Garry where he established a general construction company, which built houses, roads, and public buildings throughout Winnipeg and Fort Garry. On January, 26 1898, he married Mary Nisbett, the daughter of John Nesbitt and Jeanne Wildjoox, they had no children. He served in the Manitoba Legislature from 1915 to 1920. He moved to California in 1935 and lived near Los Angeles. He died at Saugus, California on January 14, 1950. He is commemorated by Dumas Ave. in Winnipeg.

In 1916, Dumas opposed the Liberal government's *Thornton Act* which created a single English-speaking, non-sectarian public school system in Manitoba. Dumas, the MLA for St. Boniface and P.A. Talbot, MLA for La Verendrye resigned from the Liberal party to sit as independents. Dumas characterized the law which abolished French-language school rights as "the most unjust" ever to be inflicted on the province.



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<sup>1</sup> Cyrille was the son of Michel Dumas Sr. and his second wife Henriette Landry. His half-brother Michel Dumas Jr. was one of the four Metis men who went to Montana in 1884 to get Louis Riel to return to the North West Territory and lead the Metis Resistance.

Louis Riel Institute