

# THE REIGN OF TERROR AGAINST THE MÉTIS OF RED RIVER

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## THE REIGN OF TERROR

**The village of Winnipeg was yesterday in the hands of this rabble [the Canadian military] for four hours ...this took place some time after the close of the [election] poll [of December 30, 1870] ...During this time Colonel Jarvis of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, was informed, and a picket went to surround these unhappy soldiers and bring them to the fort. The guard however did not arrive soon enough to prevent these fellows of Dr. Schultz from running through the village crying “Death to the Pope! Death to Catholics! Death to the Half Breeds! Death to the priests!” and from burning Donald Smith in effigy.<sup>1</sup>**

The first attempt to subvert Métis self-government by Canadian military forces took place in late 1869. The Lieutenant Governor designate William McDougall travelled to Red River via the United States with enough arms to take control of the territory. Colonel J. S. Dennis was already at Red River supervising the surveys and Captain D.R. Cameron accompanied William McDougall. On September 17, 1869 McDougall submitted a memorandum to cabinet requesting arms and ammunition. This was approved on September 22 and on September 28, 1869. The Department of Militia and Defense issued a memorandum to ship 100 Spencer carbines, 250 Peabody rifles complete with bayonets and 10,000 rounds of ammunition. This was far in advance of any Métis threat or actions to stop the surveys.

However, the Métis received information on what the government was planning and started taking countermeasures. William McDougall the Lieutenant Governor designate was met at Pembina on November 30, 1869 by Janvier Ritchot and André Nault and given a letter from the National Committee of the Métis (dated Oct. 21, 1869) ordering him not to enter the Northwest without permission of the Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> *Le Nouveau Monde* January 23, 1871, the *Globe* February 18, 1871. The troops were unhappy because Donald Smith had defeated Schultz in the election. About 100 Red River Expeditionary Force Volunteers participated in this riot.

Subsequently McDougall, his secretary J.A.N. Provencher and Captain Cameron proceeded to Red River but the Métis at La Barrière stopped them where the trail crosses the La Salle River. Under military guard they are then escorted back across the border. On November 2, 1869, Riel and Father Ritchot erect a wooden cross next to this barrier before the Métis take occupation of Fort Garry.

Once Manitoba had been brought into Confederation the Canadian Government sent a British military force accompanied by Ontario and Quebec militia to establish sovereignty and to visit vengeance upon the Métis. British Army Colonel Garnet Wolseley led this Red River Expeditionary Force (RREF) of 1,200 men. On August 24, 1870, he and his forces entered Fort Garry unopposed as the Métis had left the vicinity. The militia was then stationed at Upper and Lower Fort Garry. Later a group was stationed at Pembina. The Quebec contingent was kept out of Winnipeg being stationed at the lower fort.

Historian Fred Shore notes that:

Since the militia was stationed in Fort Garry along with the Dominion Lands Office, the first Provincial Legislature and other government offices, Métis attempts at being part of the new power system were fraught with danger. Assaults, rapes, murder, arson and assorted acts of mayhem were practiced on the Métis anytime they came near Fort Garry, while the situation in the rest of the Settlement Belt was not much better.

The troops were seemingly beyond the control of their officers whom they often either ignored or assaulted. The newspapers in Red River, Montreal, Toronto, New York and St. Paul labeled their behaviour a “reign of terror.” In the face of this abuse, many Métis began to migrate further west to Willow Bunch, Batoche, Lac Ste. Anne and St. Albert, in what is now Saskatchewan and Alberta.

### **Subsequent events:**

**February 14, 1870:** On the evening of February 14th the Portage boys were determined to trudge through 60 miles of snow in temperatures that dipped to between 30 and 40 below zero in order to save their comrades who were being held by Riel and whom Thomas Scott had assuredly reminded were rotting away in jail. Despite the cold and distance to be travelled, they were earnest in “their desire to release their friends from a duration so vile, [it] made them all cheerful under the circumstances.”<sup>2</sup> They set off under the command of Major Charles Boulton and along the way stopped at the house of Henri Coutu, where Louis Riel often spent the night. What happened there depends on which account one reads: either Boulton or Scott burst into Coutu’s residence and ransacked it in their search for Riel with Scott shouting that he would shoot that “Métis scoundrel” when he caught him.

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<sup>2</sup> Charles A. Boulton, *Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellions*. Toronto: Grip Printing and Publishing, 1886: 102.

**February 16, 1870:** Norbert Parisien was a resident of St. Norbert. In February of 1870, the “Portage Gang” of Riel opponents led by Thomas Scott and Major Boulton mortally wounded him and he died of his wounds in early March.

The group called the “Portage Gang” had come in from Poplar Point, High Bluff and Headingley to free prisoners held at Fort Garry. They first searched the home of Henri Coutu, Riel’s cousin, in a search for Riel. Not finding him, they went on to Kildonan. At dusk on February 15, the men captured Norbert, who they called a “Métis spy.” Norbert, who was reputed to be intellectually slow, was at the time, on his way home from sawing wood. Norbert was held overnight, in the cold, under the pulpit of the Kildonan Church. When he was led out of the church in the morning under guard he snatched a gun off the seat of a wagon and ran away, across the Red River ice. John Sutherland happened to be riding down the river when Norbert; fearing capture shot the gun, mortally wounding Sutherland. The Portage Gang shot and caught Norbert. As Major Boulton reported, when he caught up with the group “they were handling him severely.” He had been struck on the head with an axe, his feet were tied with a sash and he was being dragged down the river by another sash tied around his neck. John Sutherland died the next morning and had begged the group not to harm Parisien, as he was a “simple fellow who had acted out of fright.” Norbert died a lingering death on April 4, 1870. It was only through Major Boulton’s intervention that he was not lynched.

The historical accounts differ on how Parisien’s escape was brought to an end. The group of men who caught him included Robert McBain, Thomas Scott, Wildred Bartlett and the Pochain brothers. In one version, Parisien is in a hand-to-hand struggle with McBain and gets his gun from him and fires at McBain just missing him. Then a young man named Pochain brought his “flight to a temporary finish by a slight tap on the head with the back of a tomahawk.”<sup>3</sup> Thomas Scott then tied Parisien’s sash around his neck and secured the other end of the sash to a horse’s tail, making a drag rope. Scott got on the horse behind Wildred Bartlett, and they dragged Parisien in the direction of the other men for lynching. In another, André Nault claimed that while on his sickbed Parisien told him that Thomas Scott with a big staff “on reaching Parisien, who was now running for the bush, he set upon and mercilessly began to beat him.”<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Parisien avoided a lynching only through the intervention of Boulton, but he later died from the wounds received at the hands of the Portage boys.

**August 24, 1870.** The violence toward the Métis began even before the Red River Expeditionary Force (RREF) entered Winnipeg.

... Colonel Wolseley reached Fort Garry. Instead of presenting himself in friendly fashion, as the law of nations made it his duty, his arrival was that of an enemy. The Vice-President of the Provisional Government, Mr. F. X. Dauphinais, and Messrs. F. X. Pagée and Pierre Poitras, two of the people’s representatives, who on the 24<sup>th</sup> of the preceding June had voted in friendship in favour of our entry into the Confederation, were peacefully following the road which led to their

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<sup>3</sup> Rev. A. C. Garrioch, *First Furrows*. Winnipeg: Stovel Company, 1923: 229.

<sup>4</sup> A. H. de Trémaudan, “The Execution of Thomas Scott,” *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 6, Sept. 1925: 229.

homes. Wolseley had them arrested violently and dragged away to prison. One of them, P. Poitras, an old man, was ill-treated by Colonel Wolseley's soldiers to the extent of suffering serious injury.<sup>5</sup>

**August 24, 1870**, Father Kavanagh of White Horse Plains is shot at by a RREF member and thrown from his horse. A Métis named Wabishka Morin was also assaulted.

**August 1870**, Charles Mair and friends organize the North-West Emigration Aid Society and starts moving Ontario settlers onto Métis lands, specifically at Rivière aux Islets de Bois, which in 1871 they renamed Boyne (after the Orange victory in the Battle of the Boyne in the 1690). The Métis immediately reported this to Archibald who asked them to "be patient" and wait for the surveys. The surveyors did not arrive until July of 1871!

**September 3, 1870**, Francois "Wabishka" Morin was a victim of the Reign of Terror at Baie St. Paul, on September 3, 1870, "seven Canadians [soldiers] tore down the fence of old 'Wabishka' Morin at Baie St. Paul, and after threatening his life, they plundered his farm."<sup>6</sup> Francois and his family lived on his father-in-law's land.

**September 3, 1870**, the *New Nation*, reports the case of an Indian woman being stabbed to death near Fort Garry with the RREF Volunteers being suspected of the crime.

**September 6, 1870** Dr. John Christian Shultz and a number of men invade the home of *New Nation* editor Thomas Spence and at gunpoint horsewhip him, then attend his office, chase off his staff, disable the printing press and throw all the supplies outside.

**September 13, 1870**, Elzéar Goulet, age 34, is killed. On that day Goulet entered the Red Saloon in Winnipeg and was spotted by James Farquharson (Shultz's father-in-law) who points out he was the man who shot Thomas Scott and incites RREF men to catch him. Sanders and Madigan (of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ontario Rifles), Robert Mulligan and a man named Campbell (a voyageur for the RREF) start to chase him. They are seen by Captain MacDonald who calls them back, an order the soldiers temporarily obey. Minutes later, they again take up the pursuit, chase Goulet into the river and while he is trying to swim to the opposite shore they stone him, causing him to drown. Judge Francis Godschall Johnson reports to Lt. Gov. Archibald that it might be possible to make out a murder charge against Farquharson for inciting the others.

The persons against whom such a charge could possibly be made are Farquharson (who according to one witness only) called out to the people in the house "to kill him" and Saunders, Madigan, and Campbell who, pursued, and who if they shared that intent are all equally guilty.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Alexander Begg, *Red River Journals*. Toronto: Champlain Society, 1956: 549.

<sup>6</sup> Norman James Williamson, <http://everlastingexile.weebly.com/traditional-objibway-use-of-tobacco.html>

Francois Morin was born on August 5, 1813, the son of Francois Perreault a French Canadian and Marie Grant (Métis) the sister of Cuthbert Grant. Francois married Marguerite Allard, the daughter of Ambroise Allard and Lisette (Cree).

<sup>7</sup> PRO CO42/689 722 cited in Allen Ronaghan at p. 413.

Although Lord Kimberley of the British Colonial Office wrote in January 27, 1871, “there is evidence enough to send the case to trial,” Judge Johnson had already recommended in December that no one be charged.

**September 16, 1870**, Edmund Turner (one of Thomas Scott’s guards) is chased and threatened, he and his friend seek protection at Archibald’s residence.

**September 18, 1870**, In a report appeared in *Nouveau Monde*, October 15, 1870, that a young man named Cyr is severely beaten by a man identified “as living with Schultz”, James Farquharson. The young man was Lieutenant Jean Cyr; see Appendix A to learn why he was targeted.

**September 27, 1870**, the *Telegraph* reports that the house being built for James Ross was burnt to the ground, an act of arson.

**September 28, 1870** newspapers report that a Corporal Marshall attacks a soldier named Rolph, in a row boat returning to the Lower Fort. He stabs him, and is tried by court martial and sentenced to a month in prison.

**October 4, 1870**, the Toronto *Telegraph* reports that soldier vigilante squads were being formed to raid the houses of certain Métis who had taken part in the Provisional Government.

**October 6, 1870**, The St. Paul *Daily Pioneer* reports on what it calls the “reign of terror”: “Its purpose was to drive out by threats or actual violence all the French Half-Breed population, all American citizens, the Hudson’s Bay Company, and [Lt.] Governor Archibald.”

**October 8, 1870**, Corporal Youngston of the Quebec Rifles drunkenly falls out of a rowboat, his companion is unable to see him, he then drowns.

**November 5, 1870**, at Fort Garry, a man by the name of Landry was seized by 12-15 soldiers had a rope tied around his neck and was dragged for several hundred feet. He would have been killed if his son had not succeeded in getting the police. Romain Nault who was with him was struck down and kicked. The soldiers said they wanted to avenge the death of Scott.

**November 19, 1870**, the *News-Letter* published a letter reminding people that RREF officers and soldiers were not to take part in political activities and cited page 463 of Her Majesty’s Regulations, noting that this was being constantly broken. For example, Captain Macdonald has announced as a candidate at a November 3, 1870 meeting at St. John’s. Captain Thomas Howard of the Quebec Rifles later ran in St. Peter’s and defeated Joseph Monkman.

**November 30, 1870**, Rev. James Tanner is killed when leaving a political meeting at Poplar Point. Unknown men throw something at the horse and Tanner is thrown from the

wagon. Leaving the meeting a few minutes after Tanner, James Ross and other Métis had to run a gauntlet of clubs, stones and snowballs.

**December 1870**, Privates Joseph Case, John Kerr and William Williams are fighting in Company No. 7 barracks. Williams stabs Kerr who beats Williams with a large set of tongs. They are both hospitalized then court martialed, but not punished.

**December 8, 1871**, Louis Riel's house in St. Vital was attacked. Pierre Parenteau says:

December 8, 1871, when a party of armed men, led by William Buchanan, raided Riel's house in St. Vital, claiming to hold warrants for his arrest. Riel was away, and the raiders could only threaten the women of the household to vow bitterly that the Métis leader would be killed before the night had ended.<sup>8</sup>

Some of these men were arrested but were then broken out of jail by Frank Cornish (later mayor of Winnipeg) and some other friends.

**December 16, 1870**, Métis David Tait and two companions are beaten and left for dead. A soldier's kepi with a regimental number is found at the scene of the assault.

**December 18, 1870**, Métis Robert Tait (a sheriff of the Provisional Government) had 500 loads of hay destroyed by arson.

**December 22, 1870**, the *Manitoban* reported that Shultz and his enforcers, one of whom was a RREF drummer named George Lee (6 foot 4), took over a political meeting at St. Andréws. Lee grabbed Joseph McDermott by the throat and pushed him to the door. Lee later took part in the jail break mutiny of February 18, 1871.

**January 4, 1871**. On this date the Saint Paul *Daily Pioneer* reported that Toussaint Voudrie (Vaudry) and Joseph McDougall are assaulted by RREF volunteers Patrick Morrissey, Richard Wilson, David Hamilton and Robert Jamieson. Although seven of the troops were implicated, only Morrissey and Wilson were indicted and both were fined \$40.00 and \$7.50 in court costs. These individuals, accompanied by corporal James Hayes and Corporal O'Neil, had attended to Voudrie's home and propositioned the women inside. Voudrie kicked them out and was almost beaten to death when the volunteers returned with reinforcements.

The Saint Paul *Daily Pioneer* also reported on March 7, 1871 that Hugh F. "Bob" O'Lone, a former member of the Provisional Government was killed by a blow to the head from a revolver in early January.

**January 11, 1871**, Maurice Lowman, a Métis supporter, had his house destroyed by arsonists (*Manitoban*, January 14, 1871).

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<sup>8</sup> Public Archives of Manitoba *Lieutenant Governor's Papers*, Letter Parenteau et al., December 9, 1871. The men involved were former RREF members William Buchanan, William Davison and 10 other disbanded RREF members along with James Faquaharson (notorious for causing the death of Goulet). They held guns to the heads of the women threatening to shoot them if they did not say where Riel was.

**February 3, 1871**, *Le Nouveau Monde* reports that Colonel Jarvis orders Company 7 to return to its barracks from outside the fort, they then mutiny and destroy their living quarters. Private Jones is subsequently court martialed. The paper also reports that seven or eight Volunteers met two Half Breeds out on the river ice and assaulted them. They would have been severely beaten but were able to escape.

**February 4, 1871**, Volunteers threatened to tear down John McTavish's house. They also physically attacked Joseph Dubuc and threatened Joseph Royal.

**The Mutiny of February 18, 1871**, in the afternoon between 100 and 150 RREF Volunteers left Fort Garry and went to the Winnipeg police station where they demand the release of Corporal John Hawman of Company 4, who had been jailed for gambling. When they were refused, they battered open the doors and released Hawman and another inmate. Lieutenant McMurtry, officer of the day was ordered to attend to this riot but found his Corporal, John Stevenson, was drunk and had to place him under arrest. A picquet was sent out and the men return to the fort cheering Dr. Shultz as they pass his house. Colonel Jarvis and his officers addressed them and ordered one man put under arrest for insolence. The man refused to be arrested and his comrades supported him. While the men were congregated in the barracks square, the previously mentioned Stephenson loaded his rifle and fired at Colonel Jarvis, but missed and seriously wounded Corporal Joe Thompson. Only two men were eventually punished, Private George Lee and Corporal John Stevenson! Remember, under British military law one could be executed for mutiny.

The American Consul, J.W. Taylor wrote to Secretary of State Davis:

**“I cannot resist the conclusion that the Governor and his secretaries are virtual prisoners. I am informed that the Ontario troops—many of them Orangemen—are secretly plotting the expulsion of Governor Archibald.”**

**February 23, 1871**, The Volunteers attempt to burn down the offices of the *Manitoban (Daily Pioneer)*, March 14, 1871).

**March 7, 1871**, the *Daily Pioneer* reported that Bob O'Lorne was killed by a blow to the head in early January 1871.

**March 14, 1871**, the St. Paul *Daily Pioneer* publishes a letter from Winnipeg which stated “Our people cannot visit Winnipeg without being insulted, if not personally abused, by the soldier mob. They defy all law and authority, civil and military.” The paper also reports on the same date that while visiting a hotel at Pembina, André Neault is attacked by RREF Volunteers and had to escape by running across the border. The soldiers follow him, caught and bayonet him and leave him for dead. The 15 volunteers were never charged.

**March 15, 1871** the *St. Paul Press* reports that soldiers of the Ontario Battalion invaded Andréw McDermott's home at 11 P.M. They severely beat one of the servants. His two daughters want to call the police, and are told that if they do their house will be burned down. The paper also reports, "During the fall and early winter of 1870 we could always rely on several exciting fights between the soldiers and Half Breeds any afternoon after three o'clock, by which hour the soldiers who were not on duty at the garrison were at liberty to come downtown."

**April 19, 1871**, Frederick Bird, the MLA for Portage la Prairie is kicked and thrown into the mud because supporters of Schultz did not like the way he voted in the legislative assembly.

**May 1, 1871**, Charles N. Bell records (journal) that there is a fight in town between Volunteers and Half Breeds.

**May 4, 1871**, Thomas Bunn is attacked in the Davis House Hotel by a group of Volunteers. Charles Bell records in his diary that Sergeant Major Coyne, being a Free Mason backs the Volunteers. On the same date Private Evens is arrested for raping Marie La Rivière. He subsequently escapes confinement to barracks on May 6, 1871. He is re-arrested later in the month and then assaults another soldier. Other than confinement to barracks he received no meaningful punishment.

**May 11, 1871**, a Volunteer with a lead weighted "garcette" assaults a Métis named Bourassa. Bourassa disarms him then a number of RREF men came to the volunteer's assistance and publicly stone and whip Bourassa in revenge. (*La Minerve*, July 18, 1871). In his diary Charles Bell reports that one of the Volunteers commented, "These Half Breeds are tougher than cats!"

**May 23, 1871**, an Indian man is assaulted and his wife and daughters are raped (reported by the *Daily Pioneer* June 9, 1871). Although the attackers were identified to Colonel Jarvis he replied that it was none of his business. The police took statements from the woman and her daughters but no charges were laid because the police feared a repeat of the Volunteers riot of February 18, 1871.

**May 24, 1871**, Isaac Cowie and his assistant Louis Hibbert came to Fort Garry from the Qu'Appelle Lakes. Hibbert is assaulted by soldiers and beaten with belts into insensibility. He would have been killed if two women had not intervened (*La Minerve*, July 18, 1871). The paper quotes a newly-arrived Upper Canadian as saying that he had not believed the newspaper reports of Volunteer violence at Fort Garry until he saw this incident, which he said exceeded the brutality of anything he had read and left him disgusted.

**June 9, 1879**. The Saint Paul *Daily Pioneer* reported that an Indian was assaulted and his wife and daughter were raped by RREF volunteers. In the same report they note that the McLeod's were attacked by volunteers who tried to take his wife, being armed, McLeod fended them off.

**July 18, 1871.** *La Minerve* reported that on May 24, near Fort Garry, two Métis were attacked by soldiers and severely beaten. *La Minerve*, also reported that a drunken Volunteer also attacked James Wickes Taylor, the American Consul at Fort Garry on May 24. This incident was widely reported and the *New York Times* titled the report “Military Reign of Terror in Manitoba.” In his report to his superiors Taylor comments: “Outrages upon the French population are of daily occurrence—often most flagrant and cowardly in their character, and so far this incident has tended to identify me with this long-suffering population. I do not regret it.”

**May 30, 1871,** the *St. Paul Daily Press* (June 21, 1871) reported the Volunteers and Half Breeds were involved in a brawl with some 50 or 60 men being involved. Clubs, chairs and boards were used as weapons. Many men were wounded before they stopped fighting by common consent.

**June 3, 1871,** dozens of Métis and Volunteers engage in a brawl near the Davis House Hotel. Alexander Begg reported:

[In front of Davis House]... a disgraceful affair occurred... which was about the last open expression of ill-feeling between the Volunteers and French Half Breeds. Ambroise Lépine’s brother (Baptiste) and some others got into a dispute with some volunteers while drinking in the Davis House. It ended in blows and Lépine and friends were ejected into the street. A miniature battle took place then—volunteers and friends against Half Breeds. Sticks, chairs, boots, bottles, and chunks of hard mud were used. Injuries occurred. Lépine had his head cut open with a fence board.

**October 9, 1871,** Lt. Gov. Archibald writes to Prime Minister Macdonald that the Métis had been “so beaten and outraged” that they felt they were living in a “state of slavery.”

**December 8, 1871.** On the evening of December 8, an armed party of Canadians, mostly discharged Red River Expeditionary Force members invaded Riel’s home with intentions of killing him.

...December 8, 1871, when a party of armed men, led by one William Buchanan, raided Riel’s house in St. Vital, claiming to hold warrants for his arrest. Riel was away, and the raiders could only threaten the women of the household and vow bitterly that the Métis leader would be killed before the night had ended.<sup>9</sup>

**March 2, 1872.** *Le Métis* ran an editorial entitled “Les Mortes violentes” which decried murders committed by “les gens du part d’Ontario” and “par orangistes”.<sup>10</sup> They noted that Mr. Blake and the *Toronto Globe* had been calling for justice regarding the death of Thomas Scott and Ontario was offering a \$5000 reward for the arrest of his executioners,

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<sup>9</sup> PAM, Lieutenant governor’s Papers, Pierre Parenteau *et al* to Archibald, December 9, 1871.

<sup>10</sup> Tanner, Sutherland, Parisien, Goulet, and Guilemette.

they then rhetorically ask why they are not making the same offer for the arrest of the executioners of the Métis men.

**May 1, 1872,** Maxime Lépine, Pierre Léveillé and André Neault, on their way to see Lt. Gov. Archibald in Fort Garry, are accosted and threatened by a soldier named William Rogers. They complain to Captain Thomas Scott who had Rogers arrested but they had to escape through a gauntlet of 30 angry Volunteers, "...puis les trois Métis s'en retournèrent. Comme ils se dirigeaient vers la traverse de la rivière Assiniboine, une trentaine de soldats, armés de bâtons, sortaient en courant de la porte du Fort et se mettaient à leur poursuite.» They return the next day to see Lieutenant Colonel Osborne Smith to lay charges against Rogers and the others. Rogers receives a 30 day sentence (*Le Métis*, May 1, 1872).

**August 14, 1872.** *Le Métis*, in an article titled "Odieux," reported that a dozen soldiers returning from Brasserie de Smith et Galbraith attacked the home of Madame Goulet. Three went into the house; the group is then confronted by the occupants who they beat brutally. Ten of them are involved in throwing projectiles and assaults, but the eleventh tries to stop them.

Dix étaient engagés à frapper et à lancer des projectiles, même sur les femmes qui se trouvaient dans la maison. Le ouzième cherchait à arrêter les autres. M. Alphonse Carrière eut la lèvre fendue, outré les contusions et meurtriture sur les épaules et les bras. M. Maxime Goulet reçut aussi un violent coup de bâton sur la tête. La porte de la maison fut enfoncée et brisée, et des habits furent déchirés.

**September 4, 1872,** Moise Normand and Joseph St. Germain were beaten and threatened by soldiers with knives while trying to cross the bridge over the Assiniboine River. (*Le Métis*, "Encore une rixe", September 4, 1872).

**October 12, 1872.** *Le Métis*, in an article entitled "Assault brutal", reported that on the previous Friday, Crown Attorney Joseph Dubuc, who was involved in the prosecution of the election day rioters, was attacked and severely beaten by John Ingram (later to become chief of police in Winnipeg).

**March 7, 1873,** While Curtis James Bird was speaker of the Manitoba Legislature, a bill to incorporate the City of Winnipeg was introduced into the assembly When Dr. Bird gave an adverse ruling, resentment was such that he was dragged from his sleigh and a pail of tar thrown over him.

On the morning of March 7, Dr Bird was lured from his house on the pretext that a patient needed immediate medical attention. While driving in his cutter to the patient's home, Dr Bird was attacked, dragged from his cutter, and soaked with heated oil. Though the government of Manitoba promptly offered a reward of \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the offenders, they were never discovered.

**Other Events:**

- Francois Guilemette referenced earlier, the man who is alleged to have finished off Scott, is killed at Pembina.
- Laurette Goulet, 17-year old daughter of Elzéar Goulet is raped by RREF soldiers.

Sources:

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## Appendix A

### **Lieutenant Jean Cyr.** (b. 1848)

By Brian Cyr<sup>11</sup> and Lawrence Barkwell

Jean Cyr was born on December 1, 1848 at McKenzie River, the son of Jean Baptiste Cyr (b. 1825) and Marie Boucher. Jean married Madeleine Perreault dit Morin, born 1868, the daughter of Baptiste Perreault dit Morin Jr. and Catherine Grouette. They married on January 17, 1871 at Ste. Anne. The couple had five children:

- Joseph Jean-Baptiste Cyr, born 1871 at Ste. Anne. He married Melanie Vermette, the daughter of Alexis Vermette and Philomene Beauchemin, in 1892.
- William Elzéar Cyr, born 1873 at Ste. Anne, died at one month old.
- Alfred Cyr, born in 1874 at St. Boniface. He married Marie Alvina Vermette, the daughter of Pierre Vermette and Caroline St. Denis, in 1895.
- Marie Alpha Cyr, born in 1874 at Ste. Anne.

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<sup>11</sup> Brian Cyr is the former President of the National Métis Veterans Association; he is Lieutenant Jean Cyr's great-grandson. Brian Cyr was awarded the Order of the Métis Nation in June 2005 and the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Medal in September 2012.

- Mathilde Cyr, born 1884. She married William Dumas, the son of Pierre Dumas and Isabelle St. Germain in 1909 at St. Boniface.

Not much has been written about Louis Riel's Calvary during the 1869-1870 Resistance. The reports of the day record the prowess of Calvary officers like Lieutenant Jean Cyr. It is evidence that the Métis were truly "the Lords of the Plains." The *New Nation* gives the following account on May 3, 1870 (page 1):

### **The Cavalry**

Col. Commandant Gay's<sup>12</sup> men were out again several days last week, going through maneuvers as cavalry firing parties. One peculiarity of these exercises is that they are not those of mere recruits. It is, for the most part, like taking out a troop of old campaigners to keep up their acquaintance with a drill in which they had been perfected long since.

As proof of this, we would state that one day last week, the 30<sup>th</sup> ult., Lieutenant John Cyr, when armed with an old-fashioned double-barreled gun, raced the half-mile course, and, before turning at the end, had discharged twelve shots, hitting the target each time. Without pausing a moment, he ran the course again, discharging an equal number of shots before drawing rein, and with like creditable results. If this is not splendid shooting, we do not know what to call it. Another day, one of the privates fired a common musket seventeen times during the mile-dash, hitting the target at each discharge; a second scored eighteen shots in a similar run, and a third cavalryman fifteen. Some days before, a number of the infantry were engaged at target-practice, 300 yards. Out of 200 shots, 36 were centered.

Following Canada's designates assuming authority at Red River Jean Cyr became a target in the well-known "Reign of Terror." A report appeared in *Nouveau Monde*, October 15, 1870, an eastern newspaper, about a brutal attack on a young man named Cyr at Red River on September 17, 1870. The assailant was not named but was described as "an individual who lives with Mr. Schultz, who was of course, James Farquharson (Shultz's father-in-law). Farquharson had achieved much greater notoriety in the Winnipeg-Fort Garry settlement because of his leadership role in the September 13th drowning of Elzéar Goulet, a Métis who had been a member of the Provisional Government court martial which tried Thomas Scott.

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<sup>12</sup> J.E. Norbert Gay, described as a 'soldier of fortune', was a Colonel of the Third Republic of France. He came to Winnipeg and stayed at the Emmerling Hotel in January of 1870. He initially described himself as a newspaper reporter. He became a supporter of Louis Riel and engaged in drilling the Métis Cavalry on modern European cavalry tactics. Gay apparently accompanied Riel and the Métis Cavalry when they went out to reconnoiter Wolseley's troops prior to their arrival at Winnipeg.